

Chapter 26

How MTB-MLE can contribute to the growth and development of Filipino

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As multiple Philippine languages are rightfully being employed in primary education, we can learn from what each language might contribute to the Philippine language scene. Tagalog has been the basis of Filipino because of its importance in the Philippine capital area and its long history of linguistic, religious, and secular publication. However, as we compare the lexicons and grammars throughout the Philippines there are many wonderful and magnificent items worthy of adoption into a truly national language. This paper offers a few choice examples. There are, of course, multiple opposing views about national language development, and each side should be open to considering other points of view. Ultimately, the Filipino people will decide.

1 Purpose and plan

I am so very pleased to have this opportunity to honor Ricky Nolasco, who has been something of a national hero for MTB MLE.¹ This system of first-language education has come a long way from the days in 1965-66 when, as a Peace Corps volunteer, I sat in first and second grade classrooms in order to be exposed to and learn Aklanon. After all, it does make complete sense to start education for children in a language they speak and understand. Hopefully, long gone are the days (1898-1946) when Filipina and Filipino teachers were required to teach all classes in a language which not all of them controlled, such as English. This predicament was repeated to some degree when Tagalog became the medium of instruction in

¹See <https://mlephil.wordpress.com/2009/05/13/mle-profile-in-courage-ricardo-ma-nolasco/>.

the late 1970's in areas where another Philippine language was commonly used, and not all teachers were fluent in that new language of instruction. Nowadays, own-language education programs in each language as they grow and develop are in a position to be compared and contrasted with Filipino and may hopefully play an important role in contributing to and enriching the Philippine national language scene. What does this nation collectively have as a linguistic legacy and treasure? What could possibly influence and benefit Filipino?

As a Peace Corps volunteer in 1965(-1969) we were trained in Tagalog, even though we might be sent to another linguistic area. As it was, I was stationed in Aklan. Although I got to be fluent in Aklanon, Tagalog was still handy for speaking with visiting Filipinos as well as on trips to Manila for medical consultations or to other areas where the Peace Corps held workshops (e.g., Naga Bikol, Osamis City, Nasuli Bukidnon). Later, after completing my Ph.D. studies at Cornell and embarking on fieldwork in 1970-1971 for my dissertation, I conducted all research in Tagalog, for which there were always some speakers available virtually everywhere to help translate the words or sentences I was after. This worked well for all the languages for which I was able to complete questionnaires (see <http://sealang.net/archives/zorc>).

I would like to take this opportunity to create a “report card” for Tagalog. Every language has its strengths and its weaknesses, some of which are widely known, many of which remain “secret”, even to its speakers. I am not the first to do this. McFarland's (1994) “Defining a Filipino lexicon” was among the first (to my knowledge) to do this in print. A relook at both the grammar and lexicon of Tagalog and how it compares with other Philippine languages is in order.

2 Tagalog grammatical differences or losses

2.1 Deictic system

Tagalog shows a partial loss of an original four-part deictic system with a reduction to three, except for the *ga-* [simulative] set, which still tends to be in common use (see Table 1).

Some Tagalog dialects do retain the original system, and even in Manila one can hear *singko niri* ‘five pesos worth of this’, ... *niyán* ‘of that’. Note that the reduction of demonstratives as a class is not uncommon. English, for the most part, has moved from a THREE-PART system to a TWO-PART system, having lost the distal or distant deictic *yon* and *yonder*, leaving only *this-that*, *here-there*. Note also that it is mostly Greater Central Philippine languages (Blust 1991) that have a FOUR-PART deictic system, which includes a deictic equivalent of the PPH

Table 1: Tagalog deictic (demonstrative) system

Person	TOPIC	POSS.	LOCATIVE	SIMULATIVE	MOTION VERB
1	<i>irí*</i>	<i>nirí*</i>	<i>díni*</i>	<i>ganirí</i>	<i>pumariní</i>
1&2	<i>itó</i>	<i>nitó</i>	<i>dító</i>	<i>ganitó</i>	<i>pumaritó</i>
2	<i>iyán</i>	<i>niyán</i>	<i>diyán</i>	<i>ganyán</i>	<i>pumariyán</i>
3	<i>iyón</i>	<i>no'ón</i>	<i>do'ón</i>	<i>gano'ón</i>	<i>pumar'ón</i>

pronoun **kitá* ‘we inclusive’ [1&2], of which Tag *do'ón* is now a distal reflex of PSP **duʔən*. Most other Philippine languages only have a three-part system correlating with first, second, and third person pronouns.

2.2 Negative system

The Tagalog negative system is similar to that of other major languages in the Philippines and relatively limited, having just three basic forms (see Table 2).

Table 2: Tagalog negative system

<i>hindí'</i>	general negator + negative affirmative < PPH <i>*həndíʔ</i>
<i>huwág</i>	negative imperative [UNIQUE]
<i>walá'</i>	negative existential < PGCP <i>*wadáʔ</i> ‘none’ < PMP <i>*wada</i> [exist] [ACD (Blust & Trussel 2020, Blust et al. 2025), Demp (Dempwolff 1938)]

Other Philippine languages have from two to up to seven monomorphemic negators² Tagalog has lost the special functions of PWMP **bəkən*, and the distinctions between past (**wadáʔ*) and present (**həndíʔ*) negators of verbs.

Some expressions require full phrases to cover their meaning. Thus, there are the Tagalog combinations *‘áyoko* = *‘áyaw* + *ko* compared with Mangyan languages *dáyu* ‘I don’t like (it)’ [negative desiderative]. Tagalog has *‘ewan* ~ *aywan ko* ; or even the three word phrase: *hindí: ko ‘alam* ‘I don’t know’ which often has one word equivalents, as in Cebuano *‘ámbut*, Bikol *‘indá* South Bisayan and Mansakan *‘inday*, North Bisayan *‘ilám*, or Aklanon *ta’óh* [ignorance discourse particle].

Philippine languages can broadly have up to a dozen negative uses or functions, many of which do have overlaps or homonyms (see Table 3)

²One prolific system, that of Eastern Tawbuid has 13 altogether (Hannah Flemming, p.c.).

Table 3: Negative systems among Philippine languages

1 negative affirmative => “no”; Opposite of: “yes” PPH * <i>diʔ</i> , PPH * <i>həndiʔ</i> – retained as Tag <i>hindiʔ</i> .
2 negative cognitive dp - ignorance => “I don’t know” CBs& Ceb <i>ámbut</i> , Bikol <i>indá</i> , NBs-axis * <i>ilam</i> , EMn-axis * <i>inday</i> Tag phrase <i>hindi ko alám</i>
3 negative existential => “none, nothing, there is none” PGCP * <i>wadáʔ</i> . Several Philippine languages have their own equivalent of this. – retained as Tag <i>waláʔ</i>
4 negative of desire ~ negative desiderative => “don’t like” Mangyan [<i>dáyuʔ</i>] – Tag <i>áyaw ko</i> .
5 negative potential => “cannot, can’t VERB” – overlap with Tag <i>hindi maka</i> – ~ <i>naka-</i>
6 negative counterfactual => “is not (so)” [NOUN and/or ADJ] PWMP * <i>bəkən</i> – overlaps with Tag <i>hindiʔ</i>
7 negative temporal => “never, not ever” – Tagalog <i>hindi: ka’ilanman</i>
8 negative temporal dp => “not yet” – Tagalog <i>hindi: pa</i>
9 negative verb imperative => “don’t; Bisayan * <i>ayáw</i> , Tag <i>huwág</i>
10 negative verb future construction => “will not VERB” – Tag <i>hindi CV-VERB</i>
11 negative verb past construction => “did not VERB” – Tag <i>hindi V<Cum>ERB</i>
12 negative verb present or progressive construction => “is not VERBing, does not VERB” – Tag <i>hindi V<Cum>ERB</i>

Of historical interest is PWMP|PPH **bəkən* “not so” [negative predicative] which was completely lost in Tagalog and generalized into the [*hindiʔ*] negative forms. If it had been retained, it could be Tagalog **bikín*. However, the doublet, PWMP **bukən* (Malay *bukan*) offers the possibility of a Filipino <*bukón*> which would match a large number of Bisayan dialects where the assimilation of the last vowel to the penult vowel occurs.

2.3 Loss of a true imperative conjugation.

Many Philippine languages, Bisayan and Bikol dialects in particular, retain two Austronesian (PAN) imperative suffixes: Manila Tagalog has lost this, although Batangas retains it.

*-a [object focus imperative] Ceb *palitá*, Akl *bákea* ‘buy it!’ Could be Filipino <*bilhá*>

*-i [local focus imperative] Ceb, Akl *báyri* ‘pay for it!’ Could be Filipino <*bayári*>

2.4 The pronoun *kitá*

The Tagalog pronoun *kitá*, although descended from PAN **kita*, has a special function of ‘I [subj] ... you [object]’ whereas *kitá* in the vast majority of Philippine languages is simply the subject (nominative or topic) form for ‘you and I’. To fill the blank left, Tagalog had borrowed *katá* from Kapampangan for the dual and PNP **táyu* plural. Filipino should rightly allow *kitá* to be an alternate of Tagalog *katá* (which seems to have been falling out of use).

2.5 Loss of definite distinction

The loss of the distinction between an ‘indefinite’ (a banana) and ‘definite’ (the banana) DIRECT OBJECT. Tagalog marks all such objects with [nang] > orthographic “ng”. Many of the Central Philippine languages can distinguish definite vs. indefinite objects such as:

Romblomanon: *Nagbakál siyá ning ságing*. ‘He bought a banana.’

Romblomanon: *Nagbakál siyá nang ságing*. ‘He bought the banana.’

See table 17 in Zorc (1977: 85) as well as the discussion and exemplification on the two previous pages where there is a contrast between **sang* ‘definite’ and **sing* ‘indefinite’ in Central Bisayan (Masbate, Sorsogon, Gubat, Hiligaynon, Capiznon, Kawayan, and Bantayanon) as well as in Cebuano (*sa* vs. *ug*), Aklanon (*ku* vs. *it*), Kinaray-a, Gimaras, Pandan, Dispojol (*kang* vs. *it*), Bulalakawnon, Looknon, and Alcanataranon (*tang* vs. *it*). Of course, Tagalog still can handle this via focus changes:

Tagalog: *Bumilí siyá nang ságing*. ‘He bought a banana/bananas.’

Tagalog: *Binilí niyá ang ságing*. ‘He bought the banana.’

3 The Tagalog lexicon

3.1 Disorientation of body parts and a few other common lexical items

Words that are extremely consistent and widespread throughout the Philippines have either shifted in orientation or have been replaced or modified in Tagalog. For example:

PPH *qabáRa ‘shoulder’ => Tagalog *balíkat* ‘shoulder’ Replacement
PPH *baqbáq ‘mouth’ => Tagalog *bába* ‘chin’ Semantic and accent shift
PPH *baqbáq ‘mouth’ => Tagalog *bungánga* ‘mouth’ Replacement
PPH *bibíR ‘lips’ => Tagalog *bibíg* ‘mouth’ Semantic shift
PPH *bibíR ‘lips’ => Tagalog *lábi* ‘lips’ Replacement
PPH *ʔikuR ‘tail’ => Tagalog *buntót* ‘tail’ Replacement
PPH *hítaq ‘groin, crotch’ => Tagalog *híta* ‘thigh’ Semantic shift
PPH *páqah ‘thigh’ => Tagalog *pa’á* ‘foot’ Semantic and accent shift
PPH *pijáh ‘how much? [cost]’ => Tagalog *magkáno* ‘how much?’ Replacement
PPH *Ramút ‘root’ => Tagalog *gamót* ‘medicine’ Semantic shift
PPH *ʔuRát ‘vein, blood vessel’ => *ugát* ‘root’ Semantic shift

3.2 Multi-word expressions

Some common lexical items do not have a single word in Tagalog as they have in most other Philippine languages, the two most striking of which are the words meaning ‘roe’ and ‘lonely’.

The expression glossed as ‘roe’ in Tagalog is *itlóg ng isdá* ‘egg of fish’, Bisayan *bíhəd* < PWMP *bíhəd, Ilk *búgi* < PPH *búji. All other known Philippine languages have a unique word for ‘roe’.

A word glossed as ‘lonely’ is found in several wordlists³ and exemplifies why a National Language is truly needed. While an exact match may be absent in Tagalog, since ‘being alone’ is not viewed as something negative in my experience with Tagalog people, words like *nag’i’isa* ‘alone, unaccompanied’ or *ka’isa’isa* ‘sole, lone’ do not have the negative connotations of this concept (certainly from a Western point of view). Tag *lungkót* ‘sad, unhappy; sorrow’ is sometimes used, but does not quite catch the sense intended. Another possibility is either *nama-manglaw* ‘dejected, forlorn, melancholic’ or *mapanglaw* ‘desolate, morbid, lonesome; melancholy’. The glosses throughout the Philippines illustrate a dizzying diversity rarely matched in cross-linguistic comparison. Very few agreements occur such as the retentions of PAN *dəmdəm, PWMP*buləŋ or *puʔŋaw. A few tend to be macrogroup innovations such as Proto-Bashiic *maŋsáy or PGCP *míŋaw. A large number are simply unique to a given speech variety (see Table 4).

³The wordlists referenced in Table 4 are Reid (1971), Zorc (1974), McFarland (1977) (McF-NP), Yap (1977), McKaughan & Macaraya (1967), Himes (p.c.), Lobel (p.c.). It was Yap (1977) who changed the gloss to ‘melancholy’.

Table 4: Words for ‘lonely’ throughout the Philippines

Language	Word	Wordlist source
Mansaka	<i>ʔagpiʔ</i> + <i>ma-</i>	Reid #172
Ifugao-Amganad	<i>ʔahiggá</i> + <i>ma-</i>	Reid #172
Ifuago-Bayninan	<i>ʔamúyan</i> + <um>	Reid #172
Cas Dumagat	<i>ʔamwaw</i>	Reid #172, Yap #285
Gaddang	<i>ʔanap</i> + <i>na-</i> < *hanap (?)	Reid #172
Bontok-G	<i>babáwi</i> < *báwiʔ + CV-	Reid #172, Yap #285
Kankanay-N	<i>baba:wi</i> + <i>mem-</i> < *báwiʔ + CV-	McF-NP #495
Maranao	<i>bolon</i> < PWMP *buləŋ [ACD]	McKaughan, Yap #285
Binukid Manobo	<i>búlun</i> < PWMP *buləŋ [ACD]	Reid #172, Yap #285
Western Bukidnon Manobo	<i>bulun</i> < PWMP *buləŋ [ACD]	Reid #172, Yap #285
Sarangani Manobo	<i>dála</i>	Reid #172, Yap #285
Agta	<i>dəmdəm</i> + <i>mə-</i> < PAN *dəmdəm	Reid #172, Yap #285
Aborlan Tagbanwa	<i>dimdim-</i> < PAN *dəmdəm	Reid #172, Yap #285
Kalinga-G	<i>duduʔuy</i> + <i>man-</i>	Reid #172
Cebuano	<i>guʔul</i>	McF-NP #495
Tboli	<i>hahuʔ nawah</i> < Bilic NEG + *nawah	Reid #172
Kelley-I Kallahan	<i>ʔinlay</i>	Reid #172, Yap #285
Kalagan	<i>kaipin</i>	Reid #172
Manabo	<i>kasʔan</i> + <i>na-</i>	McF-NP #495
Kalamansig-Cotabato	<i>kibukul</i>	Reid #172, Yap #285
Ilianen-Manobo	<i>kilimɨnawan</i> < PGCP *mɨnaw	Reid #172, Yap #285
Blaan-Koronadal	<i>lanag nawa</i> < Bilic NEG + *nawah	Reid #172
Botolan	<i>linɨw</i> + <i>ma-</i> < Sambalic *lənəw	Reid #172
Ilokano	<i>liday</i> + <i>na-</i>	McF-NP #495
Blaan-Sarangani	<i>liduʔ</i> + <i>m-</i>	Reid #172, Yap #285
Sangil	<i>líduʔ</i> + <i>ma-</i>	Reid #172, Yap #285
Kayapa Kallahan	<i>lingayuh</i> + <i>kaman-</i>	Reid #172, Yap #285
Samal	<i>linus-linus</i>	Reid #172, Yap #285
Ifuagao-Batad	<i>lunđu</i>	Reid #172, Yap #285
Kapampangan	<i>lunkut</i> + <i>ma-</i> < SLz-axis *lunkut	McF-NP #495
Sambal	<i>lu: ɲuw</i> + <i>ma-</i> < Sambalic *lənəw	McF-NP #495
Itneg	<i>malmalday</i>	McF-NP #495
Itbayaten	<i>manʔsay</i> < Batanic *manʔsay	Reid #172
Ivatan	<i>manʔsah</i> < Batanic *manʔsay	McF-NP #495, Reid #172
Kankanay-S	<i>masmasadut</i>	McF-NP #495
Luba	<i>minmamamayu</i>	McF-NP #495
Aklanon	<i>minɨw</i> < PGCP *mɨnaw	Zorc & Reyes (1969)
Hiligaynon	<i>minɨw</i> < PGCP *mɨnaw	Yap #285
Mamanwa	<i>minɨw</i> < PGCP *mɨnaw	Reid #172, Yap #285
Dibabawon-Manobo	<i>minɨw</i> < PGCP *mɨnaw	Reid #172

Table 4: Words for ‘lonely’ throughout the Philippines (cont.)

Language	Word	Wordlist source
Tagalog	<i>pañlâw</i> + ma- < SLz-axis *pañlâw	McF-NP #495, Yap #285
Hanunoo	<i>pañlâw</i> < SLz-axis *pañlâw	Yap #285
Tadyawan	<i>pañlâw</i> < SLz-axis *pañlâw	Yap #285
Kapampangan	<i>pañlô</i> < SLz-axis *pañlâw	Yap #285
Subanon-Sindangan	<i>pindlaw</i> + m- < *pañlaw	Reid #172
Subanon-Siocon	<i>piñlow</i> + om- < *pañlaw	Reid #172
Tigwa Manobo	<i>piñpiñawin</i>	Reid #172
Malawag	<i>pobre</i> < Spanish ‘poor’	McF-NP #495
Bikol-Naga	<i>pu?ñaw</i> + ma- < PWMP *pu?ñaw	McF-NP #495, Yap #285
Batak (Palawan)	<i>puñaw</i> + ma- < PWMP *pu?ñaw	Reid #172, Yap #285
Kalamian Tagbanwa	<i>puñaw</i> + ma- < PWMP *pu?ñaw	Reid #172, Yap #285
Atta	<i>raddam</i> + ma-- < PAN *dæmdæm	Reid #172, Yap #285
Gaddang	<i>reddem</i> + ma- < PAN *dæmdæm	McF-NP #495, Yap #285
Ibanag-N	<i>reddem</i> + ma- < PAN *dæmdæm	McF-NP #495, Yap #285
Bolinao	<i>rə:rəʔ</i> + ma- < Sambalic *rəʔrəʔ	McF-NP #495
Botolan	<i>lu:luʔ</i> + ma- < Sambalic *rəʔrəʔ	McF-NP #495
Ata-Manobo	<i>sampot</i> + ma-	Reid #172
Isneg	<i>suʔsoʔot</i>	Reid #172, Yap #285
Ilongot-K	<i>sumsu</i> + mi-	Reid #172
Malay	<i>sunyi</i>	McF-NP #495
Sangir	<i>susa nauŋ</i> + ma-	Reid #172
Kankanay-N	<i>tâʔa</i> + ma-	Reid #172
Itawis	<i>temmæg</i> + na-	McF-NP #495
Balangaw	<i>tokál</i>	Reid #172, Yap #285
Tausug	<i>tumtum</i> + ma-	Reid #172
Ifugao	<i>umiʔiŋle</i>	McF-NP #495
Pangasinan	<i>urmən</i> + ma-	McF-NP #495
Isinai	<i>yonkot</i> + me- < SLz-axis *luŋkut	McF-NP #495

3.3 Homonyms

There are a few homonyms in Tagalog, but which have distinct words in most other Philippine languages.

- Butó*₁ ‘bone’ < YGroup ***butʔul** = PAN *CaqelaN > PPH ***tuqlan** ~***tuqlang**
| Could be Filipino **túlan** or **tul’án**.
- Butó*₂ ‘seed’ < YGroup ***butʔul** = Could be Filipino *similiya* (Spanish or Tag)
punla

*da'án*₁ 'path' < PPH **dálan* < PAN **zalan* > | Could be Filipino *dálan*
*da'án*₂ 'hundred' | PPH **Ratús* | Could be Filipino *gatós*

3.4 Frequent words

Words that are otherwise frequent throughout the Philippines have a unique or limited form in Tagalog.

almusal 'breakfast' (from Spanish *almorzar* 'have lunch') => *pamáhaw* is widespread throughout the Central Philippines (especially in Bisayan and Bikol)

anghang 'spicy, "hot" (food)' | This may be from a PCP ROOT **haŋ*, which has acquired a <Vr> infix in Waray, Masbate, Kamayo, and Naga Bikol *hárang*, Aklanon *háeang*, and Cebuano *hálang*. Meanwhile, Kinaray-a, Hiligaynon, and Romblo-manon have *kahang*, with a **ka*- prefix. [ZDS]

balakilan ~ *kílo* 'rafter' => PPH **kásaw*, **paRbu* in many other languages.

bayúhan 'mortar' => PMP **ləsúnj* ~ **lusúnj* from Itbayaten through Bontok, Bisayan, Hanunoo, Maranao, and Manobo.

dali 'easy' => PPH **dalíq* 'quick' ~ 'fast' [see ACD PPH **dalíq*]

gagambá 'spider' => otherwise PPH **láwaq*

ginháwa 'rest; comfort(able)' < PPH **Rahináwa* 'breathe' => semantic shift from 'breathe' in Bashiic, Ilokano, Bisayan, Manobo, Sambal, Mongondow, and Gorontalo.

kalaháti 'half' => otherwise PPH **təngáq* | Cf. Tag *gitna* 'middle'

ka'ilán 'when?' | Many Philippine languages differentiate: 'when (in the past)?' from 'when (in the future)?' such as Cebuano *anús-a* [future], *kanús-a* [past] or Aklanon *kán-o* [past], *hin-unó* [future].

kaliwá 'left' < otherwise PSP **waláh*; PAN > PNP **wiRí*

kidlát 'lightning' < mostly PPH **kilát* 'lightning'

lindól 'earthquake' < mostly PPH **línuR* 'earthquake'

malí 'wrong, incorrect' | => mostly PPH **saláq*

tandá 'old (person)' => mostly **guráng* < PAN **Rudaŋ*. | Note, however, **tanda* = 'remember; having a good memory' in several other Phil. languages.

túbig 'water' is a coinage within the Greater Central Philippines, but [*danúm*] 'water' is used throughout Luzon, in Mindoro, and on Palawan and is inherited from Proto-Austronesian. It is beautifully paired⁴ with **inúm* 'drink' so [*danúm*] should be THE Filipino word for 'water', with a doublet or synonym of *túbig*.

⁴Insofar as it may contain a root (PAN *+Num, PMP *+num) proposed by Wolff (1999) and Zorc (1990b). Since Blust insists on at least four etyma in support of any proposed root, these two instances would not qualify.

4 Sound change (phonology)

Sound change (particularly the loss of *l) has yielded a unique Tagalog [báhay] (with penult length and the shift of *l to [h]) as opposed to generalized Philippine [baláy] (retaining [l] and accent on the final syllable where it was originally).⁵ If the national language were really Filipino, using [baláy] for 'house' would not be a laughing matter since it is retained in Atta, Isneg, Ibanag, Ilokano, Remontado, Kinaray-a, Kuyonen, Hiligaynon, Masbate, Waray, Aborlan, Batak, Kalamianic, Hanuoo, Alangan, and Iraya. The vast majority of Filipino speakers say it identically in their native language, but are reluctant to use that instead of an extremely irregular Tagalog <báhay>. There are quite a few other words which are pronounced without [l] in Tagalog whereas the [l] is well-established in most other Philippine speech varieties. Note, in particular, the following three different ways that *l has changed in the history of Tagalog.

4.1 *l > h

anghit 'body odor' < possibly PAN *qangeliC 'stench of burning substances'; although probably regular < PAN *qang(e)Sit 'stench, musky odor of an animal' [ACD, RDZ]

bahaghári 'rainbow' = king+g-string? [SLz-axis *balag-hádi' Zorc]

báhay 'house' < PPH *baláy [CEDOF-x; Lobel Buhi-nən; Wolff two like; Zorc]

báhid 'stain' < SLz-axis *báled [Kpm] bálad] #081

bíhis 'change clothes' < PPH *bələs [Lobel Buhi-nən; McF-NP; Zorc]

bingíh- 'deaf' < PMP *bəngəl [Lobel Buhi-nən; Wolff; Zorc]

búho 'bamboo sp.' < PAN *buluq [CEDOF-x; Wolff; Zorc]

búhos 'pour' < PPH *búlus 'change' [Lobel Buhi-nən] < PWMP *bulus 'current' [ACD]

dámih- (*marami*) 'many' < NBs-axis *daməl 'thick' [Zorc]

hábih- 'weave' < *habəl [Dyen-Tag-l; Lobel Buhi-nən; McFarland; Zorc]

hamóg 'dew' < *lamuR [Zorc] ~ *dahəmuR [Blust-ACD; Zorc disagrees]

hánip 'chicken flea' [Lobel Buhi-nən] < *alnəp

hírin 'choke (on food)' < PCP *dələn (metathesis) [Zorc]

katíh- 'itchy' < *katəl [Lobel Buhi-nən; Wolff; Zorc]

lakíh- (*malakí*) 'big, large' < SLz-axis *dakəl [Lobel Buhi-nən; Zorc]

⁵Sources referenced in this section are: ACD Blust & Trussel (2020), CEDOF = Core Etymological Dictionary of Filipino (Zorc 4 fascicles: 1979, 1981, 1982 1985), Charles (1974), Dyen (1965), RDZ = R. David Zorc personal research, ZDS = Zorc Data Sheets (<https://zorc.net/RDZorc/PHILIPPINE-ETYMA/>), Zorc (1974), Wolff (p.c.), Lobel (2018).

pangáh- ‘jaw(bone)’ < ***pangal** [(Charles 1974); ZDS]
sahíg ‘floor’ < ***saləg** [Lobel Buhi-nən; Wolff; Zorc]
sáhing ‘resin’ < ***saləng** [Lobel Buhi-nən; Wolff; Zorc]
sáhod ‘conduit’ < ***saluD** [ACD; Zorc]
síhang ‘jaw’ < ***səlang** [Lobel Buhi-nən; Zorc]
sísih- ‘regret’ < ***səlsəl** [ACD, Lobel Buhi-nən; Wolff; Zorc]
súhay ‘prop’ < PGCP ***sulay** ‘prop, support’ [ZDS]
tibih- ‘constipation’ < ***təbəl** [Zorc, Lobel]
úhod ‘worm’ < ***quləj** [Dyen-Tag-I; Wolff; McFarland; Zorc]
umíh- ‘speechlessly smiling due to shyness’ < ***uməl** ‘dumb’ [ACD; Zorc]

4.2 *l > zero

PAN *l was lost (= zero), became a semivowel in Bisayan ~ a glottal stop in Tagalog, or else Tagalog has a long vowel in the penultimate syllable.

áhas < ***halas** ‘snake’ [Lobel Buhi-nən; Zorc] (metathesis of initial h-?)
ámag < ***alamag** ‘mold’ [Lobel 2020.12.03]
árav ‘day; sun’ < ***qaljaw** [Lobel Buhi-nən; Wolff; Zorc]
ásim ‘sour’ < ***qalsəm** [Lobel Buhi-nən; Zorc]
atipu’o < PPH ***qatipulu** ‘breadfruit’ [Blust-ACD]
bágin ~ *báging* ‘vine’ < PWMP ***balaRen** [ACD; Zorc]
ba’itáng ‘steps’ < ***balitang** [Zorc] S-L **balitang**, Kpm, Png **balitang**
bakó’od ‘highland, plateau’ [Zorc < Panganiban 1972: 92] < ***bakulud** [ZDS] ‘stoney plateau’
bálang ‘locust’ < PWMP ***balalang** ‘grasshopper ~ locust’ [Blust-ACD]
bának ‘mullet’ < ***balának** [Blust-ACD; Zorc]
bangá ~ *balangá* < ***balanga?** [Blust-ACD; Zorc]
bangó ‘fragrant’ (*mabango*) < ***banglu** [Charles, Zorc, Blust-ACD]
bá’o ‘widow’ < ***bálu** [Wolff; Zorc]
bá’on ‘provisions’ < ***bálun** [CEDOF-x; Zorc]
báwo ‘widow’ < ***bálu**
bi’ik ‘suckling pig’ < Pangasinan *bələk* [OR ***bəRək** > SLz ***bəyək**; ACD; Zorc]
bukas ‘tomorrow’ < SLz+Ivatan ***buklas** > **bulkas** (metathesis) > **bu:kas**
butó ‘bone; seed’ < YGroup ***butʔul** [ZDS, Lobel]
buwág ‘disbanded, dissolve’ < ***bulag** ‘separate, break up’
buwán ‘moon’ < ***bulan** [CEDOF-x; Wolff; Zorc]
buwíg ‘bunch, cluster of fruits’ < ***buliR** [CEDOF-x; Wolff; Zorc]
da’án ‘road, trail’ < ***dálan** [Bl-AL:607, CEDOF-x; Wolff; Zorc]

damág ‘all night long’ < PCP ***damlag** ‘morning’ [Lobel => Zorc]
da’usdós ‘a slide, sliding down an inclined surface’ < PPH ***darusdus** ‘slide down’ [ACD]
dáyap ‘lime tree’ < ***dalayap** [Blust-ACD]
huli ‘late, last’ < PMP ***udəhi** [ACD; Zorc]
ibáyo ‘other side’ < *i- + ***balyu** < ***baliw** [Blust-ACD; Zorc]
iyák ‘cry, weep’ | Ceb **hilak** [Zorc]
káhat ‘acrid ~ sharp flavor’ < PCP ***kaharat**, PBS ***kadhat** [ZDS]
kaliwá ‘leftside’ < ***kali-waláh** [Wolff; Zorc]
kámot ‘scratch’ < ***kalmut** [Zorc < Panganiban-239]
kuwágo ‘owl’ < ***kulaRu** [Zorc] [Panganiban: Kpm kulayu]
kuwintás ‘necklace’ PPH or Sp? | Akl, Ceb **kulintas** [ACD, Zorc]
pú ‘unit of ten’ < ***púluq** [Dyen-Tag-l; McFarland; Zorc]
pu’o ‘unit of ten’ < ***puluq** [Dyen-Tag-l]
puwíng ‘blinded by dirt in eye’ < ***púling** [CEDOF-x; Zorc]
sampú ‘ten’ < ***saN-púluq** [Wolff; Paz; Zorc]
sangág ‘fry rice’ < ***sanglaR** [Charles, Zorc; ACD ***sangelaR**]
sá’og ‘rivulet; gutter’ < ***saluR** [Dyen-Tag-l | Cf: Hil *sa’ogán* ‘hollow way, channel’]
sá’oy ‘rivulet; gutter’ < ***saluR** | a Kpm loan? [Dyen-Tag-l]
su’ót < ***suʔlut** ‘wear ~ put on clothes’ [Zorc, ACD]
súrot ‘bedbug’ < ***suldut** [McF-NP#444]
suwí ‘plant shoot, sucker’ < ***suliʔ** [ACD, Zorc]
tagiháwat ‘pimple, blackhead’ Cf: **talihalat** ‘black mole of irregular shape’ [Panganiban: 938,946; Zorc]
tamád ‘lazy’ < PNP ***tamlaj** [Ilk **tamlag**, Ibg **tammag**, Sbl **tamlar**, Bol, Bot **tamlad**]
ta’ínga ~ *ténga* ‘ear’ < ***talinga** [Blust 2013:607, CEDOF-x; Wolff; Zorc]
túro ‘point; teach’ < ***tulduq** [Zorc]
tuwíd ‘straight’ < ***tuqlid** [Zorc]
únan ‘pillow’ < ***qulunan** [ACD; Wolff; Zorc]
u’ód ‘worm, grub, caterpillar’ < ***quləj** [Zorc]
uwí ‘return home’ < ***ʔuliq** [CEDOF-x; Wolff; Zorc]

4.3 *l > y

(Bisayan Y) | *RLD > y-language, probably a Bisayan lect that had also moved into the southern Luzon area and had some influence on Tagalog.
dighay ~ *dighal* ‘belch (through the mouth)’ [Panganiban 1972:372; Lobel]

súyod ‘comb for lice’ < **sújud*
yungíb ‘cave’ < **lángib* [Lobel 2020.12.03]

4.4 Oxytone stress in V?V sequences

Tagalog words with identical vowels separated by a glottal stop usually have accent on the final syllable, i.e., they take OXYTONE STRESS.

This insight is drawn from Blust (2013: 178) who noted: “The requirement that identical vowels separated by glottal stop take oxytone stress appears to be unique to Tagalog, as this condition is absent even from such closely related languages as Bikol, Cebuano and Aklanon.”

da’án ‘road, trail’ < **dálan* [Bl-AL:607, CEDOF-x; Wolff; Zorc]

di’in ‘downward pressure; syllabic stress’ *do’ón* ‘there (yonder)’ [DEIC-3-LOC] *su’ót* < **suʔlut* ‘wear ~ put on clothes’ [Zorc] | The loss of glottal stop should have introduced length, <*sú’ot*>, but did not. Here, Manila Tagalog followed the shift to oxytone stress, but other Tagalog dialects do not.

u’ód ‘worm, grub, caterpillar’ < **qúləj* [Zorc]

However, the following is definitely an example of an inherited oxytonality in most languages:

sa’án ‘where?’ = Final accent on interrogatives, as with Akl *si’in*, Ceb *di’in* | Note also Ilokano *sa’án* or *ha’án* ‘no’ = Final accent on most negatives.

5 So how can Filipino be adapted?

Most attempts anywhere in the world at “language engineering” tend to fail. People will speak the way they and their peers speak. I take some comfort from my previous research on Tagalog Slang (*salitang kantó* Zorc 1990a, Zorc & San Miguel 1991). The number of “innovations” broadly introduced within the Philippine nation is quite staggering. If Filipinos can be assured that the introduction of alternate words and grammatical patterns into their national language is acceptable, saying *baláy* for ‘house’, *butá* for ‘blind’, *dálan* for ‘path; street’, *salá* for ‘wrong’, or *gatós* for ‘hundred’ could readily take hold. We must bear in mind that many countries have linguistic “institutes” that define, promulgate, and safeguard their national language:⁶ Académie Française for French, Die Taalkommissie for Afrikaans, Academy of the Arabic Language, Armenian National Academy of Sciences, Academy of the Asturian Language, State Language Work Committee for Chinese, Nederlandse Talunie for Dutch. The Philippines originally

⁶See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Academic_language_institutions.

had the INL (Institute of National Language, which is now the KWF, *Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino*). While the INL was more purist and prescriptive, the KWF has tried to be more inclusive and descriptive. I have an extremely relevant anecdote about this from my Peace Corps experiences in the late 1960's. Having been taught Tagalog, we were told to introduce ourselves as "*Ako'y ka'anib nang Pangkát Pangkapayapá'an ng Kúsang Lo'ób*". When I did so, I got puzzled faces anywhere I uttered this, even in Manila. When I shifted to: "*Ako'y Piys Kor*"⁷ there was instant recognition, smiles, and acceptance! The word for "Peace Corps" in the Philippines almost instantly became [Piys Kor] throughout the Philippines from Batanes and Ilocos to Davao and Jolo. No language regulation was necessary. Another possibility is having synonyms or alternate words for certain basic vocabulary items where there are major national differences. For example:

betel chew	<i>ngánga'</i>	<i>mamá'</i>
blood	<i>dugó'</i>	<i>dága'</i>
bolo	<i>gulók</i>	<i>sundang</i>
breakfast	<i>almusál</i> < Spanish	<i>pamáhaw</i>
cockfight	<i>sábong</i>	<i>búlang</i>
crawl	<i>gápang</i>	<i>kámang</i>
eel	<i>ígat</i>	<i>kasíli</i>
face	<i>mukhá'</i>	<i>lúpa</i>
fence	<i>bákod</i>	<i>kurál</i> < Spanish
flesh	<i>lamán</i>	<i>unúd</i>
forget	<i>límot</i>	<i>lingáw</i>
hand	<i>kamáy</i>	<i>alíma</i>
how much? (cost)	<i>magkáno</i>	<i>pilá</i>
jackfruit	<i>nangká'</i>	<i>langká'</i>
leaf	<i>dáhon</i>	<i>bulóng</i>
lie down	<i>higá'</i>	<i>higdá'</i>
old thing	<i>lúma'</i>	<i>dá'an</i>
paddle, oar	<i>gá'od</i>	<i>bigsay</i>
pull	<i>híla</i>	<i>gúyod</i>
rib	<i>tadyáng</i>	<i>gúsok</i>
sand	<i>buhángin</i>	<i>balás</i>
span (handspan)	<i>dangkál</i>	<i>dángaw</i>
thin	<i>nipís</i>	<i>impís</i>

⁷Spelled phonetically here as I said it. Many Filipinos would prefer the same spelling as English: <Peace Corps>.

This would even up the advantage native Tagalog speakers had with Filipino vocabulary, and offer widespread recognition to lexical items held in common by many native language speakers.

In closing, let's take a look at a suggested counting system in Tagalog versus Filipino (Table 5). Blust (2013) pointed out that Austronesian (PAN) had two num-

Table 5: Suggested counting system in Tagalog vs. Filipino

	Tagalog numerals	Filipino numerals for things	Filipino numerals for people
1	<i>isá</i> < *ʔəsá	<i>isá</i> ~	<i>ása</i>
2	<i>dalawá</i> < *daduhá	<i>duhá</i> ~	<i>dalawá</i>
3	<i>tatló</i> < *tatəlú	<i>tuló</i> ~	<i>tatló</i>
4	<i>ápat</i> < *ʔa-ʔəpát	<i>apát</i> ~	<i>ápat</i>
5	<i>limá</i> < *limá	<i>limá</i> ~	<i>lalimá</i>
6	<i>ánim</i> < *ʔa-ənəm	<i>ánim</i> ~	<i>ánim</i>
7	<i>pitó</i> < *pitú	<i>pitó</i> ~	<i>papitó</i>
8	<i>waló</i> < *walú	<i>waló</i> ~	<i>wawaló</i>
9	<i>siyám</i> < *siyám	<i>siyám</i> ~	<i>sasiyám</i>
10	<i>sampú</i> < *sang-púluq	<i>sampú</i> ~	<i>sampúlu</i>

bering systems, one for things and one for people. The ‘things’ system used the numerical root, whereas the ‘people system’ used either a CV- reduplication or a prothetic *a-* system. Tagalog currently shows a mixture, such that ‘1’, ‘5’, ‘7’, ‘8’, ‘9’ are based on numeral roots, whereas ‘2’, ‘3’, ‘4’ and ‘6’ are based on derivations implying people were involved. Would the Filipino nation wish to re-adapt this historical system? Given the respect shown to people over things (witness the *ang* ~ *ng* versus *si* ~ *ni* system of noun case-marking), this would be a culturally significant adaptation. Time and language use and development will tell.

Abbreviations

ACD	Austronesian Comparative Dictionary (Blust & Trussel 2020, Blust et al. 2025)
adj	adjective
CEDOF	Core Etymological Dictionary of Filipino (Zorc (1979) 4 fascicles)

Ceb	Cebuano
CV-	Consonant plus Vowel reduplication
Demp	Dempwolff (1938)
dp	discourse particle
Ilk	Ilokano
INL	Institute of National Language
Kpm	Kapampangan
KWF	<i>Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino</i> (Commission on the Filipino Language)
McF-NP	McFarland, Curt.1977. <i>Northern Philippine Linguistic Geography</i>
MTB MLE	Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education
PAN	Proto-Austronesian
PCP	Proto-Central-Philippine (Tagalog, Bisayan, Bikol, Mansakan, Mamanwa)
PGCP	Proto-Greater-Central-Philippine
PMP	Proto-Malayo-Polynesian
PNP	Proto-Northern-Philippine
PPH	Proto-Philippine
PWMP	Proto-Western-Malayo-Polynesian
RDZ	R. David Zorc personal unpublished research
SLz-axis	the Southern Luzon axis (see Zorc & Almarines 2022: 202)
Tag	Tagalog
YGroup	the “Y Group” = Philippine languages wherein PAN *R > [y] – Ayta, Bashiiic, Kapampangan, North Mangyan, Remontado (Hatangkayi/Sinauna), Sambalic, in Zorc (n.d.) = Proto-Greater-Central-Luzon.
ZDS	Zorc Data Sheets = Philippine Etyma https://zorc.net/RDZorc/PHILIPPINE-ETYMA/

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