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# On Tagalog as Dominant Language

TEODORO A. LLAMZON

**T**HE definition of a dominant language is one of the tasks of sociolinguistics. It is important not only to sociolinguistics itself, but also to other related fields, for example, anthropology, ethnolinguistics, sociology, typology, etc. This paper is an attempt to help arrive at a fuller definition of this notion by investigating a particular language which has been commonly held as dominant, namely, Tagalog, the national language of the Philippines. By recounting its growth and development, I hope to arrive at an enumeration of the principal factors which led to its present position of dominance among the Philippine languages.

## PREVIOUS DEFINITIONS

There have been previous definitions of the notion "dominant language." Leonard Bloomfield, for instance, treated this topic as follows: "The upper language is spoken by the dominant and privileged group; many kinds of pressures drive the speaker of the lower language to use the upper language. Ridicule and serious disadvantages punish his imperfections. In speaking the lower language to his fellows, he may go so far as to take pride in garnishing it with borrowings from the dominant speech."<sup>1</sup> Charles F. Hockett says simply: "When speakers of two languages live intermingled in a single region, usually one of the languages is that spoken by those

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<sup>1</sup> Leonard Bloomfield, *Language* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1933), p. 462.

in power: this is the *upper* or *dominant* language, and the other is the lower."<sup>2</sup> Hermann Paul treats the notion of the dominant language in his discussion of the common language (*Gemeinsprache*). He notes that a common language arises due to the necessity of communication between linguistic groups, and it is not created artificially and superimposed, but is usually one of the languages of the groups: "usually, such [a common language] . . . is one that already naturally possesses predominance [*Übergewicht*], be it on commercial, political, religious or literary grounds, or on a combination of these."<sup>3</sup> E. H. Sturtevant repeats this description when he says: "When several communities using different languages or dialects have dealings with one another they feel the need of a *common language*. Unhampered intercourse is possible only in case many members of both communities speak the same idiom. Sometimes one of the natural dialects come to serve as a common dialect, especially if its speakers are predominant in civilization or in political power."<sup>4</sup> André Martinet discusses the notion in his treatment of convergence versus divergence of languages: "A tribe that is more aggressive, more prolific, more inventive and more cultured than its own neighbors may one day impose its political and cultural hegemony over the others. Its dialect will then become the official or literary language when its hegemony is extended. . . ."<sup>5</sup> In his article on the "Language Factor in National Development," Charles A. Ferguson wrote: "In a nation with more than one major language, it is often true that one is clearly dominant over the others or, in some cases, several languages are dominant over others. One indication is numerical superiority: one language is dominant over others if it is spoken by more than half the population of the country. Another important indication of dominance is the extent to which a given language is learned

<sup>2</sup> Charles F. Hockett, *A Course in Modern Linguistics* (New York: 1958), p. 405.

<sup>3</sup> Hermann Paul, *Prinzipien de Sprachgeschichte* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1960), p. 421.

<sup>4</sup> E. Sturtevant, *Linguistic Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Edition, 1961), p. 155.

<sup>5</sup> André Martinet, *Eléments de linguistique générale* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1960), p. 155.

by native speakers of other languages in the country. . . . A third indicator of language dominance is the use of one of the languages of the nation for such clearly national uses as publication of official texts of laws or decrees, medium of instruction in government schools, normal channel of military communication."<sup>6</sup>

#### TAGALOG: A DOMINANT LANGUAGE

That Tagalog is regarded by many as the dominant language of the Philippines is clear from statements of the following linguists: Clifford H. Prator, Jr.: "The most significant recent development in the Philippine language situation has no doubt been the rise of Tagalog to a position of dominance among the other native tongues."<sup>7</sup> Trinidad A. Rojo writes: "In so far as the present tendencies are concerned, Tagalog has a tremendous advantage over other dialects. Geographical, economic, political and social factors are working very powerfully for the supremacy of Tagalog."<sup>8</sup> A. L. Kroeber says: "Not only is education among the mass of people probably most advanced among the Tagalogs, but they possess the most abundant native literature, and their language is accepted as the most elaborate and polished."<sup>9</sup> These statements reflect the common feeling in the Philippines with regard to Tagalog. Thus, when the committee composed of representatives of various linguistic communities throughout the Philippines was asked by the President to recommend one of the languages for promulgation as a national language, they unanimously recommended Tagalog.

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<sup>6</sup> Charles A. Ferguson, "Language Factor in National Development," *Study of The Role of Second Languages in Asia, and Africa, and Latin America*, ed. Frank A. Rice (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics of the Modern Language Association of America, 1962), p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Clifford H. Prator, Jr., *Language Teaching in the Philippines: A Report* (U.S. Educational Foundation in the Philippines, 1950), p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Trinidad A. Rojo, *The Language Problem in the Philippines* (Manila: The Philippine Research Bureau, 1937), pp. 42-43.

<sup>9</sup> A. L. Kroeber, *Peoples of the Philippines* (New York: American Museum of Natural History, Handbook Series 8, 1919), p. 70.

## LANGUAGE DIVERSITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines, like its neighbors, Indonesia, Malaysia, Polynesia, etc., can be characterized linguistically as a nation of great linguistic diversity. Fifty years after its discovery, the following major linguistic groups were listed in a report on *encomiendas* and tributes: Bisayan speakers, 168,000; Tagalog, 124,000; Ilocano, 75,000; Vicol, 77,000; Pangasinan, 24,000; Pampanga, 75,000; and Ibanag (Cagayan), 96,000.<sup>10</sup> The languages of the Philippines belong to the Malayo-Polynesian (or Austronesian) family of languages. Isidore Dyen of Yale University estimates that there are about 500 languages which belong to this family, or about one-eighth of the world's languages.<sup>11</sup> The area within which this vast number of languages is spoken stretches from Madagascar to Easter Island, and from Formosa to New Zealand.

In 1876, Friedrich Mueller made a classification of the languages of the world in terms of the hair form of their speakers. He classified the austronesian languages as a subdivision of "*Sprachen der straffhaarigen Rassen*" (bristly haired races), which are in turn a subdivision of the "*Sprachen der schlichthaarigen Rassen*" (smooth haired races). He divided the Austronesian language into three groups: Malayan, Melanesian, and Polynesian. This was amended by W. Schmidt in 1926: he divided the Austronesian family into two major groups: Indonesian and Oceanic, and subdivided the

<sup>10</sup> These figures were taken from John L. Phelan's article, "Philippine Linguistics and Spanish Missionaries, 1565-1700," *Mid-America*, vol. 37, no. 3 (July 1955), p. 153. A certain amount of computing and interpretation of the figures was necessary as these figures were contained in an inventory of *encomiendas*, tributes and population. The document cited contained the following entries: Cebu—35,000, Panay—60,000, Manila—30,640, Pasig—48,400, Iloko—68,520, Vicol—86,640, Pangasinan—ca. 24,000, Pampanga—74,720, Cagayan—ca. 96,000, Lumbán—2,000, Mindoro—2,800, Batangas—5,600, Bonbón—16,000, Balayán—2,400, Tuley—2,400, Calamanianes—2,500, Calilaya—4,800, Galván—ca. 3,000, Casiguiran—2,000, Balete—22,000, Marinduque—2,800, Batán—4,000; E. H. Blair and J. A. Robertson. *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1895*, 54 vols. (Cleveland: 1903-1907), Vol. 8.

<sup>11</sup> Isidore Dyen, "The Lexicostatistical Classification of the Malayopolynesian Language," *Language*, 38.1, 38-46.<sup>26</sup>

Oceanic languages into "Polynesian", "*Übergangs-Sprachen*" (South coast of the territory of the Papuans, Central New Hebrides, Central Solomons), and "Melanesian" (the remaining Austronesian languages of Melanesia and Micronesia, except Paluan and Chamorro).<sup>12</sup>

In 1931, Cecilio Lopez reported that there was no unanimity with regard to the number of Philippine languages: "The estimated number of Philippine languages varies according to different authorities. The well-known Spanish Filipino-ologist, W. E. Retana, in his latest bibliographical work on the Philippines, enumerates twenty-five different idioms; the great Philippine specialist, Ferdinand Blumentritt, in his brief survey of Philippine races and languages, mentions at least thirty; in an encyclopedic work on the Philippines prepared by the Jesuits, the number given exceeds fifty; while O. Beyer gives forty-three languages excluding the minor dialects."<sup>13</sup>

In 1939, the Philippine Census Bureau said that there were seventy languages in the Philippines, and the following speakers of the eight major languages:<sup>14</sup>

<i>Dialect</i>	<i>No. of Speakers in 1939</i>	<i>Percentage of Population</i>
1. Tagalog	4,068,565	25.43%
2. Cebuano	3,854,299	24.09%
3. Ilocano	2,353,318	14.71%
4. Hiligaynon	2,063,744	12.89%
5. Bicol	1,289,424	8.06%
6. Samar-Leyte Bis.	1,051,438	6.57%
7. Pampango	621,455	3.88%
8. Pangasinan	573,752	3.59%
Total	15,875,995	99.22%

*The Subcontractor's Monograph*, which appeared in 1955, divided the Malayopolynesian languages into four "Traditional"

<sup>12</sup> George William Grace, "The Position of the Polynesian Languages Within The Austronesian (Malayo-Polynesian) Language Family," *Memoir of IJAL* 25.3 (1959).

<sup>13</sup> Cecilio Lopez, "The Language Situation in the Philippine Islands," *Institute of Pacific Relations* 4 (Hang Chow: 1937), p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Cited by Clifford H. Prator, Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 1.

branches: Indonesian (Malayan), Melanesian, Micronesian and Polynesian. The Philippine languages were then subsumed under the Indonesian branch of the family. Within the Philippine languages, there were three groups enumerated:

- I. Northern Luzon—most of the languages north of the area where the languages enumerated under II below are spoken, Iloko being the major language.
- II. Central Philippine—Tagalog, Sugbuhanon (Cebuano), Hiligaynon, Samar-Leyte (Waray-Waray), Bikol, and most of the languages spoken in southern Luzon, the Central Islands and Mindanao.
- III. Southern Mindanao—Tiruray, Bilaan, Tagabili and most languages south of the area where those languages listed under II above are spoken.

H. Conklin has recently surveyed the Philippine languages and listed twenty-five main linguistic groups.<sup>15</sup> He has also listed subgroupings of thirty-two of the main languages, thus arriving at the grand total of one hundred fifty-six.

#### THE SPANISH ERA

Having seen the linguistic situation in the Philippines and the position of Tagalog in the Malayo-Polynesian family of languages, we are now ready to recount the story of its growth and rise to a position of dominance.

The language situation of the Philippines as the Spanish *conquistadores* saw it was quite complex. Through the help of the missionaries who came with them, a few tried to learn the most important languages of the archipelago, and the fact that they were important seemed to be the motivation for the study and analysis of the languages. There are indications that Friar Martin de Rada may have composed the first Bisayan

<sup>15</sup> Harold C. Conklin, *Outline Gazetteer of Native Philippine Ethnic and Linguistic Groups*, Mimeo. (Chicago: Philippine Studies Program, 1952). See Isidore Dyen, *A Lexicostatistical Classification of The Austronesian Languages*, Memoir 19 of *International Journal of American Linguistics* (1965).

grammar, while Friar Juan de Quiñones may have written the first Tagalog grammar. The first grammar dictionary and Catechism of which we have certain record, was written by Friar Juan de Plasencia (Franciscan) in 1582.<sup>16</sup> In 1593, the first book printed in the Philippines: *A Doctrina Christiana*, a bilingual text in Spanish and Tagalog, was written it seems by Father Juan de Plasencia.<sup>17</sup> J. L. Phelan calculates that between 1593 and 1648, as many as 81 books may have been published by the printing presses of the various religious orders in the Islands. The bulk of these were linguistic studies—grammars (*arte*), dictionaries (*vocabulario*), catechisms (*Doctrinas Christianas*) and confessionals (*confesionario*).

Continuing his narrative, Phelan goes on to comment on the publishing activities of the early years of Spanish occupation. "Publication statistics are revealing. Between 1593 and 1648, twenty-four Tagalog books appeared. In the same period only five books were published in Bisayan, three in Pampanga, two in Vicol, one in Ilokano and none in Ibanag. It was not until 1687 that the first book was published in Pangasinan. . . . What stands out immediately is the overwhelming emphasis placed on Tagalog studies. . . . The contrast is all the more startling in view of the fact that the Bisayans were the largest single ethnic group in the Spanish Philippines."<sup>18</sup>

In trying to account for this imbalance in favor of Tagalog, Phelan goes on to say: "The concentration in Tagalog to the neglect of the other languages can only be explained as the direct consequence of the strategic importance of Manila in the Spanish imperial scheme of things. . . . The Spanish missionaries' task would have been greatly facilitated had they

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<sup>16</sup> Miguel M. Selga, S.J., says that the Franciscans claim Plasencia (a Franciscan) wrote the first Tagalog grammar, while the Augustinians claim Agustín Albuquerque (Augustinian) had this honor. The latter claim that Albuquerque's manuscript was lost when the English sacked Manila at the end of the XVIII century: cf. M. M. Selga, *Estudio Bibliografico del Arte Y Reglas De la Lengua de Fr. Tomas Ortiz* (Manila: 1940), p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> John Leddy Phelan, "Philippine Linguistics and Spanish Missions, 1567-1700." *Mid America*, 37 (July 1955) p. 156.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.

been able to convert one language into a *lingua franca* or an *idioma general*. To them it seemed that Tagalog was the best developed of all the native tongues and the language that could aspire to this role." Another factor which Phelan does not mention is the fact that Tagalog seemed to have enjoyed a higher rate of literacy than the other linguistic groups in the archipelago, as Kroeber points out above.

In his introduction to a Tagalog dictionary, the Jesuit Pedro de San Lucar wrote: "There are in this language so many grammars that it alone exceeds in number. . . those that have been published for both the living and dead languages of Europe. I have read thirty-seven grammars. . . . I do not doubt that there may be many more which have not reached my hands or come to my attention."<sup>19</sup>

However, although its preeminence over the other Philippine languages was recognized, the spread and rise of Tagalog to a position of ascendancy was not significant. Its status at this particular period of its history may be described as one in which the language enjoyed a good amount of grammatical description and literary output, but the increase in native speakers or bilinguals remained very low.

#### NATIONAL LANGUAGE

By 1935, after the establishment of the Commonwealth of the Philippines, its first President, Manuel L. Quezon, began to explore the possibility of establishing one of the native languages of the nation as a common national language. He consequently had the following directives written into the Constitution: "The National Assembly shall take steps toward the development and adoption of a common national language based on one of the existing native languages."

In 1937, the Philippine Research Bureau published the recommendations of Trinidad A. Rojo on how to solve the language problem in the Philippines. The editorial committee

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<sup>19</sup> M. M. Selga, S.J., *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

which approved the monograph included such outstanding and well-known linguists as Harold H. Bender (Princeton University), Frank R. Blake (Johns Hopkins), Leonard Bloomfield (University of Chicago), Carleton Brown (Oxford University), Henry Pratt Fairchild (New York University), and Edward Sapir (Yale University). Rojo recommended that Tagalog be established as the national language for the following reasons:

1. Tagalog has great advantages over its two principal rivals, Iloko and Bisaya: as for example, Tagalog has the most periodicals, the most books, and the most highly developed literature of all the dialects in the islands. The *Encyclopedia Americana* (American Corp.: N.Y., 1932) gave the following figures:

<i>Dialects</i>	<i>Books and Pamphlets</i>
1. Tagalog	1,500
2. Panayan Bisayan	500
3. Cebuano Bisayan	120
4. Ilokano	500
5. Bikol	300
6. Pangasinan	100

According to the *Carnival Commercial Handbook* (Manila: Phil. Exposition Inc., 1937), the figures for Philippine newspapers and magazines printed in the vernacular excluding bilingual and trilingual publications are:

<i>Dialects</i>	<i>No. of Papers</i>
1. Tagalog	14
2. Bisaya	20
3. Pampango	7
4. Iloko	6
5. Pangasinan	2
6. Bicol	1

The Bisayan figures show publications in three different dialects of Bisayan. In circulation, Tagalog excels all the others combined:

<i>Dialects</i>	<i>Circulation</i>
1. Tagalog	168,218
2. Bisaya	96,082
3. Pampango	26,445
4. Iloko	31,336
5. Pangasinan	2,600
6. Bicol	1,500

2. Linguistically, as well as geographically, Tagalog occupies an intermediate position among the dialects of the Islands. It has many words similar or common to the other dialects, and is spoken in the (at the time) national capital of the Philippines.

3. The ascendancy of one dialect over its rivals is closely associated with the economic and political supremacy of its speakers.

4. Tagalog combines all the factors mentioned by Jespersen in his book, *Mankind, Nation and Individual* (chapters III and IV) as conducive to the unification of dialects: Manila is the most populous city in the Islands, the seat of a strongly centralized government, and of universities and colleges which draw students from all over the archipelago. It is the chief commercial distributing center, the dictator of fashion for the whole nation, the place where national games, conventions, festivals, and carnivals are held, and constitutes a sort of Philippine "melting pot", with an increasing rate of intermarriage between couples who speak different dialects. From Manila radiate networks of highways to the provinces.

5. Tagalog is the mother tongue of over 2,000,000 Filipinos, whereas English is the mother tongue of not even 1,000. More and more Filipinos are learning Tagalog and using it in their social gatherings both in the Islands and abroad.<sup>20</sup>

The President then formed a committee composed of representatives of different language communities in the Philippines to recommend one of the native languages for the establishment of a national language. The head of the committee with the unanimous approval of the members recommended

<sup>20</sup> Trinidad A. Rojo, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-48.

Tagalog, and on Jose Rizal's birthday, Dec. 30, 1937, the President proclaimed the establishment of a National Language (*Wikang Pilipino*) based on Tagalog.

J. R. Hayden has given three reasons for the acceptance of Tagalog as the basis of a *Wikang Pilipino* without serious objections and resistance from the other linguistic groups: a) The President made it known openly that *he* was for Tagalog, and his leadership and prestige was unrivalled; b) the program was well planned; c) the members of the committee which elected Tagalog was composed of well-respected and famous national figures, who represented the major cultural-linguistic groups.<sup>21</sup>

On June 10, 1940, the Public Schools started teaching Tagalog, but the program was carried on without much enthusiasm. When the Japanese took over the Philippines in 1942, Tagalog received the encouragement and support it needed. Thus Prator writes:

When the Japanese occupied the Islands, in their desire to eliminate all traces of American influence they not only instituted the teaching of Nippongo, but also gave a great impulsion to the use of Tagalog. The Institute of National Language was strongly supported. Classes were organized everywhere. Tagalog became an official language, and began to replace English in government. Toward the end of the occupation, the 'Philippine National Language' was even allowed at times to replace Nippongo in public life, on postage stamps, in proclamations.<sup>22</sup>

The strong impetus which the Japanese gave to the spread, study and use of the National Language soon began to show remarkable results. In 1939, 25.4% of the population spoke Tagalog, as against 26.6% who spoke English. In 1948, 37.1% indicated that they could speak Tagalog, whereas English speakers numbered only 37.2%. Thus, Tagalog had shown 11.7% increase as against 10.6% for English. The

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<sup>21</sup> J. R. Hayden, *The Philippines: A Study in National Development* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1942), pp. 585-586. Cited in *Sub-Contractor's Monograph*, HRAF—16 Chicago—5, *The Philippines*, 4 vols. (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files Inc., 1955) Vol. 1, p. 325.

<sup>22</sup> Clifford H. Prator, Jr., *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4.

seven other languages included in the count together showed an increase of only 3.6%.

The figures given above are taken from the 1939 and the 1948 census. Perhaps, it will help to give the statistics in graph form as follows:<sup>23</sup>

MAJOR LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN 1939 AND 1948:  
RANKED BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL SPEAKERS AND  
SHOWING PERCENTAGE OF INCREASE AND DECREASE

Rank Language	1939		1948		Per Cent of Change
	Per Cent of Population	Total Speakers	Per Cent of Population	Total Speakers	
1. English	26.6	4,259,549	37.2	7,156,420	+10.6
2. Tagalog	25.4	4,068,565	37.1	7,126,913	+11.7
3. Cebuano	24.7	3,950,185	25.2	4,840,708	+ 0.5
4. Iloko	14.7	2,353,318	14.0	2,687,861	- 0.7
5. Hiligaynon	12.2	1,951,005	12.7	2,436,390	+ 0.5
6. Bikol	8.1	1,289,424	8.0	1,535,411	- 0.1
7. Samar-Leyte	5.7	920,009	6.4	1,226,314	+ 0.7
8. Pampanga	3.9	621,455	3.7	707,291	- 0.2
9. Pangasinan	3.6	573,752	3.5	665,342	- 0.1
10. Spanish	2.6	417,375	1.8	345,111	- 0.8
Others	18.4	2,937,418	12.6	2,431,115	- 5.8
Total Population		16,000,303	19,234,182		
Total Speakers of all Languages		22,886,169	31,158,876		

About these figures the *Subcontractor's Monograph* made the observation that:

It is probable that the total number of Tagalog speaking individuals now exceed English speakers and that the rate of increase of Tagalog will continue to exceed English. However, it is questionable if Tagalog will supplant English in functions which it now serves, at least in the near future. It is evident, furthermore, that the growth of Tagalog, as in the case of English, will continue as a *second language*, and will not generally replace other languages outside of the Tagalog area as a *home language*.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *Subcontractor's Monograph*, ed. cit., p. 332.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 327.

This educated guess was borne out by the 1960 census, which gave the following figures:<sup>25</sup>

Tagalog speakers—12,019,193 or 44.4 percent of the population

English speakers—10,698,171 or 39.5 percent of the population

It is, therefore, true that there are now more speakers of Tagalog than speakers of English. Tagalog moreover shows a higher percentage of change: the percentage of change from 1939 to 1948 is +11.7 for Tagalog and +10.6 for English; the percentage of change from 1948 to 1960 is 7.3 for Tagalog, but only 2.3 for English.

Several factors have contributed to this spectacular rise to a position of dominance. Besides the impetus given it during the Japanese occupation, the *Subcontractor's Monograph* suggests the following:

- b) Tagalog is the language of Manila, the "big city" to which Filipinos go for higher education, and commerce; it is also the seat of government; it is the city of prestige;
- b) The Philippine Motion Picture industry promotes the spread of the National Language.

Andres V. Castillo notes:

Before the war, there were around 8 large motion picture companies besides a number of small companies with very limited production. The total investment in this industry was estimated at 1,500,000

<sup>25</sup> *Summary Report on Population and Housing (census): 1960*, pp. 15-17. Assuming the increase to continue at a constant rate of .2% yearly, C. Rafferty, while at Yale University, made the following projection (numbers rounded to nearest 1000):

Year	Total Population (million)	Tagalog Speakers	English Speakers
1960	27.1	44.4% or 12,019,193	39.5% or 10,689,171
1970	49.7	47.4% or 18,817,800	41.4% or 16,435,800
1980	52.9	50.4% or 26,661,600	43.3% or 22,905,700

pesos. The industry made rapid progress, and local production found increasing favor among the masses. In 1947 there were 15 companies in the industry with total investments amounting to around 7,000,000 pesos."<sup>26</sup>

In 1948, the film companies produced 84 features nearly all of which were in Tagalog.<sup>27</sup>

c) The press has had a strong influence on the people. The *Subcontractor's Monograph* reports:

Although the major dailies are in English, the magazine with single largest circulation was *Liwayway* (Tagalog) with 180,205 subscribers in 1953-1954. Others: *Bulaklak* (Tagalog) with 103,463, and some ten comic books including *Pilipino Komiks* with 129,989, *Hiwaga Komiks* with 70,248, and *Tagalog Komiks* with 69,770.<sup>28</sup>

Leo A. Cullum, S.J. in a study of periodicals in the Philippines reported on the basis of a comparison between the years 1954 and 1955, as follows:

According to the records of the Bureau of Posts, between July 1, 1954 and June 30, 1955 the net increase in periodicals with that office was 83....The total of all periodicals is 705....There are 395 periodicals exclusively in English. The next largest group is English-Tagalog, with 153 and the third largest, English-Tagalog-Spanish with 50. English, alone or in combination with other languages, is in 626 periodicals as against 553 last year. Publications exclusively in Tagalog number 32, and Tagalog is a partial language in 205. There are 10 periodicals which use Spanish exclusively and 73 which use it as a partial language. Cebuano is the exclusive language in 14 cases, the partial language in 17 others....The exclusively English magazines increased by 45. The exclusively Tagalog increased by 9 and English-Tagalog by 11. English-Tagalog-Spanish increased by 7....Among the the student publications 80 are exclusively English, 95 are English-Tagalog, 45 English-Tagalog-Spanish, 5 English-Spanish....Tagalog... has risen all along the line. Its total gain is 26 and only 6 of these are student publications. English too with a total gain of 73 shows only a gain of 6 in student publications.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Andres V. Castillo, *Philippine Economics* (Manila, 1949), p. 324.

<sup>27</sup> UNESCO, No. 700:92-93, cited by *Subcontractor's Monograph*, p. 329.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 330-331.

<sup>29</sup> Leo A. Cullum, S.J., reported his findings on the periodical situation in the Philippines in the following articles: "Philippine Periodical Literature," *Philippine Studies*, 2.4 (December 1954) 368-375; "Philippine periodical Trends," *PS*, 3.4 (December 1955), 424-427. The quote is from the latter article, pp. 424-426.

The most recent figures on periodicals are those contained in the *Journal of Philippine Statistics*,<sup>30</sup> taken from a survey for the years 1960 and 1961. During this period, the number of periodicals increased from 878 to 936; in other words, 58 new journals had appeared. The exclusively English journals numbered 446 in 1960 and 496 in 1961; they therefore showed an increase of 50. The exclusively Tagalog journals, which numbered 50 in 1960, increased to 53 in 1961, registering an increase of only 3. The figures for journals using English and Tagalog in combination are as follows: English combined with other native languages, 314 in 1960, and 335 in 1961, or an increase of 21; Tagalog combined with other languages, 257 in 1960, and 275 in 1961, or an increase of 18. Exclusively English journals had 2,487,608 subscribers in 1960 and 2,817,221 in 1961, showing an increase of 329,613. Exclusively Tagalog journals, however had 1,472,502 subscribers in 1960, which compared to 1,602,912 in 1961, shows an increase of 130,410 subscribers. The magazine with the highest circulation was *Liwayway*, a Tagalog publication, with 176,411 subscribers in 1960, and 165,327 in 1961. The second highest was the *Sunday Times* with 165,286 subscribers in 1960, and 154,429 in 1961. Then followed *Bulaklak*, a Tagalog magazine, with 134,661 in 1960, and 139,675 in 1961. The *Manila Times*, an English newspaper, placed fourth with 131,330 in 1960, and 122,064 in 1961. The others in order are *Pilipino Komiks*, Tagalog, with 127,063 in 1960, and 117,300 in 1961; the *Morning Star*, English-Tagalog-Cebuano, with 105,000 in 1960 and 150,000 in 1961; *Tagalog Klasiks*, Tagalog, with 100,946 in 1960 and 92,010 in 1961, etc.

To discover the rapid spread of Tagalog, the *Subcontractor's Monograph* picked out for study the island of Bohol, a Visayan speaking region. In 1939, only 1 percent of the population spoke Tagalog (i.e., 5,142 individuals out of 491,608). In 1948, Tagalog speakers had increased to 78,950 out of a population of 553,407 (14.2 percent); this shows an increase of 13.2 percent as compared with 10.2 percent for

<sup>30</sup> *Journal of Philippine Statistics*, vol. 25, no. 3 (July-September 1962), pp. 102-106.

English during the same period, i.e. 123,724 speakers in 1939 and 196,176 in 1948.<sup>31</sup> In 1960, 80,686 could speak Tagalog out of a total population of 592,194 or 13.6 percent. English speakers however numbered 8,096 or 1.4 percent of the population.<sup>32</sup> Also significant is the increase of Tagalog speakers by age groups. In 1939, only 0.1 percent of the age group 5-9 spoke Tagalog. Nine years later (1948), a significant number of approximately this same group had learned Tagalog, i.e., 32.4 percent for age groups 10-14 and 41.3 percent for age group 15-19. In contrast, the year 1939 saw only 0.2 percent of the age-group 10-14 speaking Tagalog, and 0.6 for the age-group 15-19.<sup>33</sup> Twenty-one years later (1960), 63.1 percent of the age-group 20-24 (approximately the age of those who were 5-9 in 1939) spoke Tagalog, revealing an increase of 63 percent.<sup>34</sup>

#### PRESENT TRENDS

There is a movement at present to upgrade the use as well as the study of Tagalog. The more articulate members of the community, especially the journalists, see in the National Language a form of expression that is truly Filipino. Thus, in a recent editorial in the *Philippines Free Press*, Teodoro M. Locsin wrote:

What claim has Filipino to our devotion? It fills no immediate practical need and it goes against the emotional attachment to one's own dialect. . . . Should English, then, be the National Language—in the sense of scrapping Filipino? But English is not our own, no matter how much mastery we gain of it, it will never be. It is not a Filipino speech; it cannot be; it will never take root in our soul. . . . English, no matter how serviceable, should be our second language if not our third. The first should be Filipino, for we must have a common language that is our own. . . . Let us prove our intent by doing what should be done, appropriating what is needed, getting the right people and the proper texts for the job, enriching the language as much and

<sup>31</sup> *Subcontractor's Monograph*, p. 331.

<sup>32</sup> *Census: 1960*, pp. 15-17.

<sup>33</sup> *Subcontractor's Monograph*, p. 331.

<sup>34</sup> *Census: 1960*, pp. 15-17. Of the age-group 30-34 (approximately the age of those who were 10-14 in 1939) 60.1 percent spoke English: increase of 59.9%.

as quickly as possible, never forgetting that a language should grow and may not be imposed, that growth is spontaneous while imposition is not, and is furthermore, ineffective. Let us help the development of Pilipino as a national language instead of obstructing it, subtly or crudely. . . . Let us make Pilipino truly a national language. Or let us drop it.<sup>35</sup>

This is a sample of the feeling among the educated and articulate members of the community with regard to the national language.

A second trend apropos the national language is the abandonment of the "puristic" approach in favor of enriching the language by extensive borrowing from English, Spanish, and other foreign languages. The Director of the Institute of National Language himself, J. Villa Panganiban, in a recent article in *Progress*, wrote:

Today, in our developing independence and growing nationhood, our youths are also in the clutches of nostalgia for English and a fear that a national language, completely and purely native without foreign influence, might cause our national life and culture to be stranded in lonely exclusivism in a world made smaller and smaller by scientific progress.<sup>36</sup>

There is every indication that the nation as a whole is beginning to support the most extensive use of Pilipino in its daily life. Street signs, postage stamps, and government office identification are now in Pilipino. Rotary Clubs have begun to discuss ways and means of promoting interest and use of the national language. Some universities have begun to use Pilipino instead of English at their convocations and commencement exercises. The Institute of National Language which in 1955 had a budget of ₱63,685 and 20 employees, in 1961 had a budget of 155,330 pesos and 38 employees. During the years 1960-1961, the Institute reviewed and released "53 units with an aggregate total of 9,286 pages."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Teodoro M. Locsin, Editorial: "Confusion of Language," *Philippines Free Press*, Jan. 12, 1963, p. 1.

<sup>36</sup> J. Villa Panganiban "Pilipino and the Filipino," *Progress*, 1961, *Yearbook* (Manila Times Publishing Co.), p. 148.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187.

In a recent forum sponsored by *Philippine Studies*, Mr. Dalmacio Martin, the Chief of the Curriculum Division of the Bureau of Public Schools, said:

It would seem that the use of Pilipino will soon become universal if it has not already done so. In a recent trip to Mindanao and the Visayas I found that I could speak Tagalog with the teachers and pupils in the schools and be understood. On the other hand, most observers will admit that English will never regain its former position of dominance in our educational system. Little by little it will move upward to the higher grades until its use becomes pretty much limited to the college and university levels. Its role as the medium of instruction will be taken over by the native languages of the different regions and finally by Pilipino.<sup>38</sup>

There is also an increase of interest in Pilipino among foreigners. Foreign embassy personnel are noticeably exerting efforts to learn Pilipino, and the Institute of National Language has received letters from all South American countries, Canada, the United States, Egypt, Arabia, Iran and Turkey requesting study materials in Pilipino. In the United States an increasing number of universities are teaching Tagalog, for example, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Pennsylvania, Washington, Georgetown, Johns Hopkins, Chicago, Michigan, Texas and the University of California in Los Angeles.<sup>39</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this paper, some definitions of the notion "dominant language" were presented. In these definitions, the following points were brought out as essential to the notion:

1. that it be spoken by the privileged and dominant group;
2. that it be superior to the other languages on commercial, political, religious, or literary grounds or on a combination of these;
3. that it possess numerical superiority;

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<sup>38</sup> Dalmacio Martin, "Forum: Prospects for Pilipino," *PS*, 9.2 (April 1961), 305.

<sup>39</sup> J. Villa Panganiban, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

4. that it be spoken by the group that is more aggressive, more prolific, more inventive and more cultured than its neighbors;
5. that it be learned more extensively than other languages by the native speakers of other languages in the country;
6. that it be used by the nation for publication of official texts of laws and decrees, medium of instruction in government schools, normal channel of military communication, and other clearly national uses.

In the particular case of Tagalog, the story of its development toward a position of dominance over the other languages in the Philippines reveals the following factors as the main causes for its ascendancy:

1. it is the language of the city which has the most prestige educationally, politically, commercially, and culturally;
2. compared to the other languages of the Philippines, it has a greater body of literature, thus giving the impression that it is a more "developed" language than the others;
3. against English, its closest rival for the status of a common language, the people consider it more Pilipino both in its manner of expression and its origin.

On the basis of what we observe about Tagalog as a dominant language, what may be concluded toward defining dominant language?

Of the six essential elements enumerated above, the third, that of numerical superiority, seems accounted for already by another notion in sociolinguistics, that of the "major language." It has been defined by Charles A. Ferguson as follows. "A major language of a nation is a language spoken by at least one million people or 25% of the population."<sup>40</sup> It constitutes a way of designating the status of a language in a nation in terms of the number of its speakers; to include it once more in the

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<sup>40</sup> Charles A. Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

notion of "dominant language" seems unnecessary.<sup>41</sup> The sixth seems likewise unnecessary to the definition of the notion, since the term "official language" designates precisely whether a language is used for publication of official texts of laws and decrees, and other clearly national uses. William A. Stewart defines the term "official language" as "the use of language as the legally appropriate one for all politically and culturally representative purposes. In many cases, the *official* function of a language is specified constitutionally. In addition to its representative role, an *official* language is almost always among those used for educational and literary purposes, and for wider communication within the nation."<sup>42</sup>

It is true that a dominant language is learned more extensively than other languages by the native speakers of other languages in the country, but this does not seem to pertain to the essential notion of dominant language. Rather, it seems as Ferguson points out to be rather "an important indication of dominance."<sup>43</sup> Likewise, *factor 3* in the list given for Tagalog does not seem to pertain to the essential notion of dominant language, since there are many countries where the dominant language is clearly not one of the native languages, Spanish, for example, in the South American countries, and French in Haiti.

Only three in the list above remain, and two in that given for Tagalog. All five may be subsumed under two headings: A. *Internal Factor* — namely, the fact that the language possesses a body of literature which gives it the impression of being "more developed" than the other languages; B. *External Factors*—namely, the fact that it enjoys a higher prestige over the other languages, because it is spoken by those who have political, economic, cultural, or religious superiority, and be-

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<sup>41</sup> One can probably also say that every dominant language is also ipso facto a major language.

<sup>42</sup> William A. Stewart "An Outline of Linguistic Typology for Describing Multilingualism," *Study of Role of Second Languages in Asia, Africa, and Latin America*, ed. Frank A. Rice (Washington, D.C., Center for Applied Linguistics, 1962).

<sup>43</sup> Charles A. Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

cause it is spoken in a city which is considered "ahead" of the other cities in the country.

A formal definition of the notion "dominant language," which would include all these factors could be given as follows: "a dominant language is a language which enjoys superiority over the other languages in the country by virtue of its literature, of the prestige of its speakers, and that of the place where it is spoken."