

# Language contact in the Philippines

## The history and ecology from a Chinese Filipino perspective

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This article narrates the sociohistory of the Philippines through the lens of a Sinitic minority group – the Chinese Filipinos. It provides a systematic account of the history, language policies, and educational policies in six major eras, beginning from the precolonial period until the Fifth Republic (1960 – present). Concurrently, it presents a diachronic narrative on the different linguistic varieties utilized by the ethnic minority, such as English, Hokkien, Tagalog, and Philippine Hybrid Hokkien (PHH). Following an exposition on how these varieties were introduced to the ecology is a discussion focused on contact that highlights potential theories as to how Philippine contact varieties like PHH emerged. How this account contributes to the overall language ecology forms the conclusion. Overall, this article delineates the socio-historical sources that intrinsically play a significant role in the (re)description of Philippine contact varieties. In its breadth, this article goes beyond providing second-hand information, and presents ideas that can be crucial for understanding how Philippine contact languages work.

**Keywords:** Chinese Filipino, language contact, language ecology, Philippine contact languages, sociohistory

### 1. Introduction

The role of language contact in the formation and evolution of Philippine languages is indispensable given the cornucopia of varieties and languages that can be found in the archipelago. While normative languages such as Tagalog and Cebuano are relatively well-documented with respect to their grammar and origins, the history as well as the language ecology where the more contemporary Philippine languages – mostly contact varieties – were formed have yet to be

investigated thoroughly. These ‘new’ varieties range from the local Englishes to multilingual admixtures.

For instance, in an attempt to document the different local varieties of English, Gonzales (2017) discusses three major classes by referring to existing models in contact language and world Englishes studies: (1) substrate-influenced or regional Englishes (Villanueva 2016), (2) social Englishes (Bautista 1996), and (3) X-Englishes (Schneider 2016). X-Englishes or hybrid languages significantly overlap with varieties resulting from language mixing. An example of a local mixed variety is Chavacano-Tagalog (Lipski 2012).

Contact varieties like the aforementioned varieties certainly did not abruptly emerge in a single generation. They formed as a result of the interaction between the different indigenous and foreign languages across time as well as other social factors in a certain environment. Such interaction motivated me to provide an account of the Philippine language ecology through the lens of the Chinese Filipinos, which could have significant implications for the study of local Sinitic-based contact varieties, such as Philippine Chinese English (PCE) (Gonzales 2017), and Philippine Hybrid Hokkien (PHH), a Hokkien variety spoken by the roughly 1.2 to 1.4 million Chinese Filipinos across the archipelago (Uytanlet 2014: 3). These ethnic Chinese minorities are mainly concentrated, but not confined to, Chinese enclaves such as the ones in Binondo and Quezon City in Metro Manila (Gonzales 2016, 2017). A concise account can be particularly useful for scholars and linguists interested in the language ecology of the Philippines across time. It should be noted that, in this paper, I intend to not only narrate the history but also highlight the sociolinguistic aspect of it, focusing on the interaction between Chinese Filipinos and the languages they come into contact with. Moreover, I aim to discuss how such contact across time impacts the overall language ecology of the Philippines.

First, I look into important landmarks of Philippine history in relation to the language and education policies as well as the situation and status of the following linguistic varieties: Spanish, Hokkien, English, Tagalog, Mandarin, Cantonese, Taglish *Chinotagalospaniche*, local ‘patois’, Philippine Chinese English (PCE), Early Manila Hokkien (EMH), Philippine Hokkien (PH), and PHH. I also make brief notes on other regional languages. Then, I discuss how these relate to the bigger picture – that is, the Philippine language ecology.

To begin, I present a summary of the sociohistory of the Philippines with respect to the Chinese Filipino community in tabular form (see Table 1), which is largely based on the explorations of Wickberg (1965), Ang See (1990), Tan (1993), Ang See (2005), Klöter (2011), and Uytanlet (2016). It would benefit the study, particularly the flow of the account, if I systematically narrate the important landmarks, language and education policies, and language situation in different time periods. Since the primary focus of this paper is to highlight the interactions

among the speakers (the Chinese Filipinos), the educational system and policies, and the linguistic varieties, I deem it necessary to divide the historical narrative into six major time periods,<sup>1</sup> each relating to one of the six major eras of Philippine history, as follows:

- I. Pre-colonial
- II. Spanish colony
- III. American occupation
- IV. Post-colonial/ post-war
- V. Martial law era
- VI. The Fifth Republic onwards

**Table 1.** Some major landmarks in the linguistic sociohistory of the Philippines with respect to the Chinese Filipino community

Time period/ historical situation	Language/ education policy	Language situation
<i>I. Pre-colonial (before 1521)</i>		
960 CE Direct and friendly contact between Chinese and Filipinos; flourishing trade between peoples	– Decentralized education – Oral-based transmission	900CE Baybayin (Ancient Tagalog); common system of writing
<i>II. Spanish colony (1521–1898)</i>		
1570+ Chinese immigration	– Spanish taught by friars	– Spanish as exclusive language
1603 Chinese population spike; beginning of persecution massacres	– No Chinese schools – Spanish as medium of instruction	– Local languages as inferior languages – Early Manila Hokkien, <i>Chinotagalospaniche</i> , and Hokkien, Cantonese, Tagalog ‘patois’ used
1700+ Dispersion of Christianized Chinese	1830+ Chinese schools established	– Hokkien as lingua franca (First-generation Chinese)
1830+ Increased Chinese immigration	1863 Freedom of education for locals 1897 Tagalog as official language	1890 Tagalog as language of mass announcements

(continued)

1. A single sizeable chronological narrative would offer a better and more integrated perspective of linguistic varieties and their contact with other varieties in the Philippines; more specifically, it would show how certain (contact) languages evolved in parallel to existing policies and events at that time with the least amount of digression, minimizing any compromises in the chronological flow.

Table 1. (continued)

Time period/ historical situation	Language/ education policy	Language situation
<i>III. American occupation (1898–1946)</i>		
1902 Alienation of Chinese	1898 English public school system established	1898+ English as official language
1935 Filipino hostility towards Chinese	1901 English as sole medium	1900+ Use of (unstable) hybrid Hokkien variety
1940 Chinese population control through immigration law	1912 Chinese double curriculum	1901 English as language of livelihood
	1935 Proposal for Philippine national language	1921 Mandarin as mandated language; Hokkien as prominent language; possible emergence of Philippine Hokkien and PHH
	1939 English no longer sole medium of instruction	1935 Spanish and English as official languages of Commonwealth
	1940 Tagalog as national language	
<i>IV. Post-colonial era (1946–1965)</i>		
1946+ Philippine nationalism; post-war immigration	1946+ Tagalog and English as medium of instruction	1946+ English as language of controlling domains; Taglish as lingua franca
1949 Suspension of Chinese immigration; illegal immigrants	~1963 Chinese school persecution due to unassimilation	1960+ Taglish as sign of corruption
<i>V. Martial law era (1965–1986)</i>		
1973 Lifting of immigration suspension; increased immigration	1965+ Tagalog or Filipino taught at schools; Chinese subjects optional	1970 Use of Hokkien varieties dominant at home
1973+ Chinese as minority group	1973 Philippinization of foreign schools	1973 Mandarin as international language
1975+ Mass naturalization of Chinese as Filipinos (Letter of Instruction No. 270; Presidential Decree No. 836, etc.)	1976 Adaptation of Chinese curriculum	1974+ English as language of mass media; higher class
		1979 Taglish as language of masses, anonymity, and neutrality
<i>VI. The Fifth Republic onwards (1986 – present)</i>		
1989 Pluralistic view on local born Chinese	1987 Implementation of Bilingual Education Policy (English, Filipino); English and Filipino as official languages	1988 English and Tagalog as language of utility and importance
~ 1990 New-wave Chinese immigration	1992 Rebellion against Chinese language(s)	1989+ Monolingual Hokkien speakers at a minimum; dominance of PHH
1993 Further diversity of Chinese Filipinos	1993 Chinese education only out of habit	1993 Hokkien as a language of advantage
	2000+ Hokkien or Mandarin as medium of Chinese education	2000 Mandarin as language of importance
	~ 2010 Mandarin as primary medium of Chinese instruction	2004+ English as language of wider communication, aptitude, and competitiveness

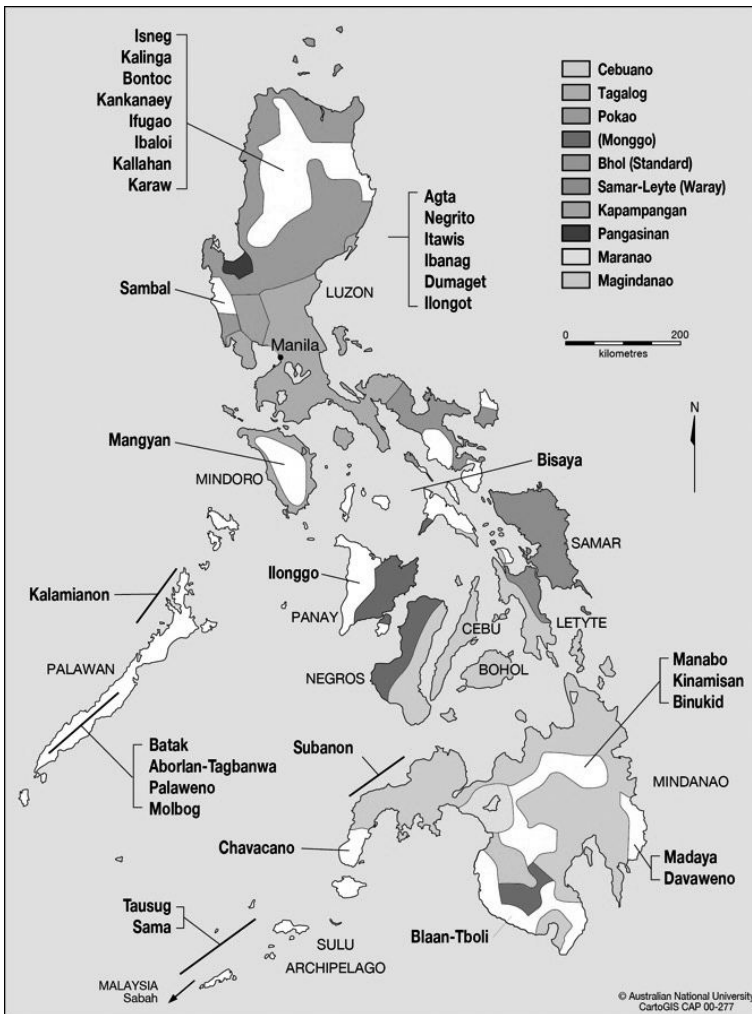


Figure 1. Map of the Philippines and the major languages for each region (CartoGIS, College of Asia and the Pacific, and The Australian National University 2016)

The information in this table is mainly sourced from Wickberg (1965), Ang See (1990), Tan (1993), Ang See (2005), Klöter (2011), and Uytanlet (2016).

Some of the dates mentioned in Table 1 are approximations. Taking my cue from Lim’s (2007) presentation of the sociohistory of Singapore, my rationale for dividing it into six time periods instead of specific years is to underscore the gradual transition of the supposed changes across time. What I present below is a description of the different languages in each of the six periods and their position in

the linguistic ecology of the Philippines, with emphasis on the most concentrated area where PHH is spoken, namely, in the capital city Manila.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Period 1: Pre-colonial Philippines (before 1521)

That the Philippines had been civilized long before the Spaniards' arrival is evidenced by an ancient form of Tagalog that has a conventional writing system known as *Baybayin*, used among different ethnic groups, as well as the widespread literacy before Spanish colonization (Gonzales and Cortes 1988; Tan 1993). Moreover, the existence of artifacts and maps during the Han Dynasty in China dating back to 202 BCE imply that the prehistorical natives were civilized, and had already been engaged in trade with the Chinese (Solheim 1964). Thus, it is highly likely that there were early contacts between speakers of the local languages and some Sinitic languages. Aside from Old Tagalog, some scholars like Enriquez (2012) and Reid (2009) suggest that other indigenous Philippine languages were spoken by different ethnic groups before colonial rule (e.g. Proto-Northern Luzon, previously identified as Proto-Cordilleran). Contact between the ethnic groups that speak these non-Tagalog languages was inevitable as wars, trade, and inter-marriages were prevalent, and "contributed to one language influencing the other" (Enriquez 2012: 4). Zayas (2004: 488) believes that these ethnic groups could have come from different cultures in the past, but through time, the cultural differences blurred, resulting in their identities being associated with their mother tongues. This means that the language that they speak (e.g. Tagalog) became their identity (e.g. Tagalog people). At this point, it should be noted that the actual (pre)history of Philippine languages and the contact between them are not so definitive since records of early Philippine languages had been largely transmitted orally.

Nevertheless, based on the scant evidence presented, it is likely that the Chinese also made contact with other ethnic groups aside from the Tagalogs. But while this may be true, evidence of such is relatively weak compared to Wickberg's (1965) claim of the 'first' actual direct contact between the Chinese and the Philippine locals beginning from the Sung Period (960–1279), where the Chinese traders had transactions with the natives. As such, it would have increased the opportunities for the Hokkien and Cantonese languages to be exposed to ancient Tagalog. What

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2. It is worth noting that I do not intend to subject other Philippine regions and languages to erasure, as ignoring them would entail ignoring potential unique language ecologies and varieties that may emerge from such an environment (Irvine and Gal 2000: 38). As such, some commentaries beyond the Manila-centric narrative have been included in the following paragraphs. Figure 1 has been provided to facilitate this discussion.

spurred the contact of the languages further was peaceful co-existence between the Chinese and the natives, which was solidified through intermarriage (Tan 1993). Uytanlet (2016: 29) refers to this period as the era when the Chinese were considered trader friends. Those that began to settle during this period are what I consider as the first-wave Chinese.

### 3. Period 2: Spanish colonization (1521–1898)

The advent of the Spanish colonization period saw the demise of pre-colonial culture. While, in the past, Filipinos and Chinese, also known as “Sangleys” (*siong lai* ‘frequent comers’) (Uytanlet 2016: 37) at this point in time, lived together as equals and partners in trade, the Spanish introduction of society stratification caused division and resentment between the two peoples. The Spanish (i.e. *peninsulares* ‘Spain-born Spaniards’, *insulares* ‘Philippine-born Spaniards’) were at the top of the social hierarchy, while the natives (i.e. *indio* ‘natives’) were at the lower part (Majul 1978; Tan 1993). To make matters worse, in the early 1500s, the Spaniards, acknowledging that they needed the Sangleys, established *parians* to house and keep the Sangley merchants near without actually having them in the society (Uytanlet 2016: 27). Nevertheless, the ethnic Chinese population in the Philippines spiked in the early 1600s (wave 2) which eventually alarmed the Spaniards, prompting them to gradually persecute and massacre the Chinese people, particularly those that chose not to convert to Christianity from 1603–1820 (Wickberg 1965; Tan 1972; Ang See 2005). Those who converted were given the liberty to disperse throughout the islands, eventually dissolving the *parians*<sup>3</sup> (Tan 1993: 24). Interestingly, the Spaniards attempted to reverse their decision by encouraging Chinese immigration again, particularly in the 1830s (Wickberg 1965; Ang See 2005). Because of that, another wave of immigrants arrived (wave 3), partially motivated by factors such as the impotent Manchu Dynasty, the Opium War, famine, and scarcity of land, which led them to flee their homeland in search of greener pastures (Tan 1993: 21). Figure 2 is a map that illustrates which regions were primarily involved in this specific wave of immigration. It is for this reason that the Spanish period, particularly the latter part, is considered the golden age of Chinese immigration. Those Chinese Filipinos who settled from the 1860s onwards had certain lines of work. For the majority Hokkien people (~90%, Doeppers 1986: 385), trade,

3. Parians are allocated places for businesses between the Chinese and foreigners. Uytanlet (2016: 27) notes that the etymology of the word *parian* is rather obscure. Different scholars have different perspectives on it. While some scholars believe that it comes from the Minnanhua word *pai-ya-tiam* ‘shops’, it could also come from the word *pariah* ‘outcast’ (Wickberg 1865).



fishing, baking, and butchering became their source of income. The Cantonese minority (known by the locals that time as *Macaos*) who formed around 10–16% of Chinese communities outside Manila (e.g. Bacolod, Baguio, Albay), and 9.5% of the Manila Chinese community, on the other hand, were associated with the restaurant and shoemaking businesses (Wickberg 1965; Weightman 1985; Doeppers 1986: 385; Chu 2010). As such, this period can also be characterized by its apparently ideal environment for language contact.

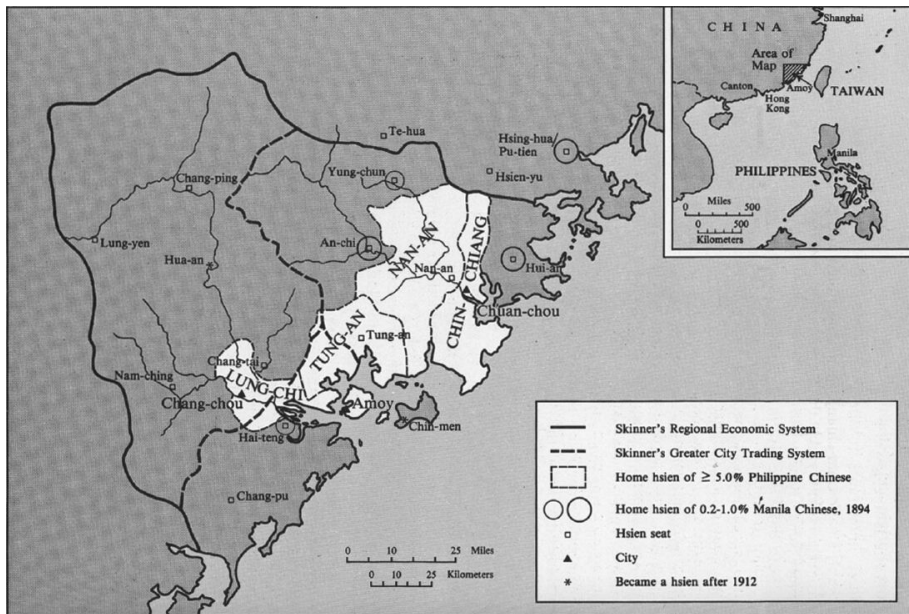


Figure 2. Source areas of Hokkien migration to the Philippines (Doeppers 1986: 386)

From a linguistic viewpoint, with the stratification of society came the stratification of languages – Spanish being an exclusive language, Hokkien and Cantonese being the middle language, and Philippine languages as the lower-tier languages (Tan 1993: 48). During this period, schools were used as venues for proselytization, where Spanish was used as the medium of instruction, as opposed to local languages, which were considered inferior (Gonzales and Cortes 1988). It was during this period that Tagalog was forcedly Latinized from *Baybayin*, and became the language of print texts, such as religious books that were used to convert the natives. In the Chinese communities, however, Hokkien became the lingua franca, as opposed to Cantonese (Ang See 2005; Klöter 2011). Ang See (2005) and Weightman (1985) both note that, of the first-generation Chinese immigrants, even the minority Cantonese spoke Hokkien, attributing it to the social and economic value of the language. Both languages, however, were used in education



(Tan 1993: 77; Chu 2010: 319). Klöter (2011: 19) identifies the Hokkien spoken in this era as Early Manila Hokkien, in which he notices distinguishable lexical features from other Hokkien varieties using texts from the sixteenth century. Despite Hokkien having social value for the Chinese community, the Spaniards tried to dampen attempts to make it a language of prominence.

Perceptibly, the significance and value attached to these languages were sub-consciously internalized if not forced into the mentality of the locals, or rather, generally, those residing in the Philippines. As such, it could be postulated that those who spoke Tagalog were now hesitant to use it, opting for Spanish instead. The long-term effects of this preference for Hispanic culture can be traced to Spanish-based words in present Tagalog (e.g. *silya* 'chair', *arroz-caldo* 'congee'). Llamzon and Thorpe (1972) argue that a third of the roots of Tagalog vocabulary come from the Spanish language. This might well also be the case for the Chinese, who may also have attempted to speak in 'broken' Spanish when conversing with the Spaniards, but perhaps not as a result of shame, but for communicative purposes such as business transactions. As for the Chinese transactions and businesses with the natives, Tagalog pidgin or code-switching was most likely used, probably mixed with several Hokkien words, which can also explain the Hokkien-influenced words in contemporary Tagalog vocabulary (e.g. *susi* 'key', *bihon* 'rice noodles', Zulueta 2007: 7; Chan-Yap 1980) that Hart (1970: 997) argues formed during this time. Although no comprehensive linguistic descriptions were made, Hugo Schuchardt notes of a pre-American period Hokkien variety with Tagalog and Spanish influence spoken in Binondo, Manila, in 1884 by Chinese mestizo children called *Chinotagalospanische* (Chu 2010:198); Wickberg (1965:32) also notes a local 'patois' involving Tagalog, Cantonese, and Hokkien in this period. Both *Chinotagalospanische* and the local 'patois' have presumably evolved and are no longer used presently.

Interestingly, in the twilight of Spanish colonization around the 1830s, the establishment of Chinese schools was authorized; access to education was also given to natives, which created more opportunities for contact (Tan 1993: 74). Tagalog, which was considered inferior, gradually regained its prestige as a language of mass announcements, and then became the official language in 1897 (Rafael 1995: 109). It was also during this time that English was proposed as a potential language of learning under the draft of the Malolos Constitution (Gonzalez 2004: 7). Amidst the interaction of the different languages in a particular area over time, the looming prominence of English foregrounds an imbalance of the prominence of the existing languages. Substantially, this era is characterized by the extreme stratification of the languages in the area.

#### 4. Period 3: American occupation (1898–1946)<sup>4</sup>

With the signing of the *Treaty of Paris*, the Spaniards ceded the Philippines to the Americans in 1898. By this time, Chinese migration to other countries had slowed down, particularly with the passing of the 1902 Chinese Exclusion Act in the United States and, concurrently, the Philippines, gradually restricting the migration of the Chinese, who were predominantly identified as the coolies (*ku li* ‘hard labor’) or laborers, as opposed to their former status as traders, as mentioned in the previous section (Jensen 1975; Tan 1993; Ang See 2005; Uytanlet 2016: 78). To make things worse, the social stratification imposed by the Spaniards still had an impact on the people, straining the relationship among different races. With regard to the hierarchy, the Spaniards were supplanted by the Americans. This stratification continued even beyond the American occupation, to the Commonwealth era in 1935. Along with the constant hostility between the Filipinos and Chinese, as well as the passing of the 1940 immigration law controlling the Chinese population, came the crystallization of the enmity between the peoples (Tan 1993). With the exception of the converted and intermarried population, most of the Chinese felt the need to isolate themselves in enclaves such as Binondo – such actions were subsequently construed by the Filipinos as suspicious. Regarding the relationship between the Chinese and the Americans, some of the Chinese had a strained relationship with the Americans when the Chinese language was initially outlawed in bookkeeping in 1921, a ruling which was later overturned after Chinese retaliation (Tan 1993: 31). At the same time, other Chinese had flourishing ties with the Americans, because they permitted them to run their Chinese schools despite the English-only curriculum at that time. Such events and relationships do indeed give us an insight into the dynamics and role of English, Hokkien, Tagalog, and other peripheral languages in language contact.

Arguably parallel to the Spanish hierarchy, the arrival of the Americans catalyzed the dominance of the English language. During the Commonwealth period (1935–1946), Spanish shared an official status with English as mandated in the constitution (Thompson 2003: 27). Spanish is still noted to be recognized for historical reasons and as a “language of law”, although English has replaced it in courts officially (Thompson 2003: 27). The promotion of English certainly did not come without complications, as the locals were having a difficult time adjusting to a foreign language (Gonzalez 2004: 8). Regardless, the Americans ostensibly attempted

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4. It should be noted that this era also includes the brief takeover of the Japanese between 1942–1945. By not including it in the narrative, I am not belittling the contributions of the sociohistory of the Japanese to the Philippine language ecology. I have only done so for the sake of brevity.

to ‘civilize’ the locals by introducing the public school system, which mandated the English language as the sole medium of instruction through the 1901 Organic Act (Gonzalez 2004). An exception to this, however, was given to the Chinese, who were permitted to establish an Anglo-Chinese school (now *Tiong Se* ‘Center-West’ *Academy*). Chinese schools at this time were able to teach Confucian concepts; Chinese females were also admitted to these schools (Tan 1993). Schools operated and funded by the Chinese had an English-Chinese double curriculum, which saw the teaching of English and Hokkien (or Cantonese), despite the latter being unofficial since Mandarin was mandated by the National Board of Education of China in 1926 (Chu 2010). The educational policies of the Chinese schools in the Philippines were modeled after those implemented in China; as such the mandate of Mandarin in schools had a direct effect on the local policies. Around the 1900s, (Philippine) Hokkien – or, as the Chinese Filipinos refer to it, *lan lang oe* ‘our people’s language’ (Chu 2010: 348) – was considered the lingua franca of the Chinese community, as opposed to Mandarin (Tan 1993: 85). Perhaps this is one explanation why Mandarin was not as prominent as Hokkien during this period. English, for the Chinese, was also almost equally important, as it was beneficial for their businesses; it was the language of livelihood.

For the natives and Chinese, English, in time, became the language of controlling domains, e.g. the government, the press, commerce, and technology (Sibayan 2000). In literature, Filipinos began writing poems, short stories, and other literary articles in English (Thompson 2003: 28). Moreover, according to a 1939 Census conducted, around one out of every Filipino claimed to speak English, making it the most widespread language (Thompson 2003: 28). Towards the end of the American colonization period, English also became functionally native, resulting in it becoming a language of power, prestige, and control (Bautista 2000; Sibayan 2000; Borlongan 2009). Also, the twilight of the American occupation saw the formation of the national language: the president of the Commonwealth, Manuel L. Quezon, made Tagalog the national language with the recommendation of the Institute of National Language in 1937 (Thompson 2003: 28). Thompson (2003: 28) believes that this choice had been influenced by factors such as linguistic and geographical position as well as literary production. In a Manila-centric Philippines, Tagalog appeared to be the most appropriate choice because it was the language dominant in Manila and almost all of the academic institutions used Tagalog alongside English, which Thompson (2003: 28) believed would have a “natural support for the development of vocabulary for academic purposes”. However, in central and southern regions, the choice of Tagalog was met with criticism, because the non-Manila natives believed that the government had manipulated the population figures to favor Tagalog instead of their language – Cebuano speakers outnumbered Tagalog speakers with a 1.5 million difference (Thompson

2003: 29). This led to decades of disharmony and resistance to the diffusion of Tagalog to the central and southern regions (Thompson 2003: 29).

The co-dominance of Tagalog and English in the American period also explains the emergence of Taglish, a contact variety involving Tagalog and English, with Spanish-influenced Tagalog being the matrix language or substrate that is still present to this day (Bautista 2004). In places outside metropolitan Manila, initial contact between English and the regional languages (e.g. Cebuano in Cebu) is also evident. From the local Chinese viewpoint, another contact language called Philippine Hybrid Hokkien also emerged, involving at least three languages. Chu (2010: 354) remarks that the early hybrid Hokkien variety, which was used by Chinese merchant families during the early American occupation emerged from “a mixture of Hokkien, English, Spanish, and .... Tagalog...”. This is different from Philippine Hokkien (PH) that, although has Philippine phonology, does not have observable Tagalog and English elements (i.e. lexicon). Unlike PHH, PH may have emerged even before the American occupation.

The emergence of such contact varieties in the American period was only possible through the internal negotiation of power and language dominance if not a tension between utility and identity that can be traced back to history. Overall, this a period where contact varieties began to emerge but had not yet stabilized due to the political and social situation in the country.

## 5. Period 4: Post-colonization (1946–1965)

The end of the World War II marked the dawn of a new Philippines free from the control of foreign colonizers, and with it came the evident rise of Philippine nationalism and increased Chinese immigration (wave 4) (Ang See 2005). Locals, both Filipino and Chinese, worked hand in hand, giving the latter the label of the *kabise* (‘boss’, derived from the Spanish word *cabeza* ‘head’) (Uytanlet 2016: 50). Concurrently, vestiges of discrimination against the Chinese were still evident; the fields of medicine, science, and education were made available largely exclusive to native Filipinos. The fact that China was overtaken by the Communists after the war also did not help the Chinese Filipino population since the change in the political order led to the suspension of Chinese immigration to the Philippines from 1949 to 1973 (Tan 1993; Ang See 2005). This most likely led to the infamous derogatory designation *Instik* (*in tsiak* ‘his/ her uncle’) which was figuratively and stereotypically used for any individual with distinct facial features that was initially used to refer to newcomers, but eventually caught up with all other Chinese (Uytanlet 2016: 104). Evidently, the immigration suspension brought forth a new generation of Chinese Filipinos that emerged from the existing Chinese population

which Ang See (2005) identifies as the second-generation Chinese. This relatively ambiguous relationship between the Chinese and the Filipinos, as well as the post-war rehabilitation of the Philippines, has much to say about the dynamics of the local languages in this period.

Both Filipinos and local Chinese were still under the same education system established by the Americans. During this time, post-war schools expanded rapidly in response to the needs of war-torn society. English and Tagalog both became the medium of instruction for local schools (Tan 1993: 51; Martin 2014). In 1959, Tagalog was ideologically renamed 'Pilipino' to increase its acceptability as a national language (Thompson 2003: 33). Although mired in controversy as a disguised purist Tagalog without foreign language influence, purist Tagalog or Pilipino was relatively unsuccessful in its dissemination, particularly in non-Manila regions; however, street Tagalog with English and Spanish influence were readily accepted and easily learned since it was the language used in comic books, radio, and movies (Thompson 2003: 33).

On the other hand, after more than three decades of English education in the Philippines, English has notably and gradually become the language of national unity and the lingua franca of the nation, meaning that Filipinos who spoke different local languages may use English to communicate with each other (Thompson 2003: 27). In other domains, the existence of Taglish may also be observed, despite it being referred to as a corruption of Tagalog and an obstacle to the emergence of a national language. While viewed negatively by some, Rafael (1995) identifies Taglish as the lingua franca of this era since it was used to address the post-war plight. English, in particular, still is the language of controlling domains (Borlongan 2009: 29).

For the Chinese, Hokkien, or rather PH and PHH, remains the lingua franca of the Chinese Filipino community and is the language was used in the bi-curricular (i.e. English, Chinese) Chinese schools until around the turn of the millenia, and was also utilized in homes, association meetings, business, etc (Tan 1993). Cantonese and Mandarin, although present, were only spoken by a minority of Chinese Filipinos. Due to the rise of communism in mainland China, the Chinese schools were placed under surveillance and close supervision to avoid transmission of Communism (Tan 1993: 79). Consequently, the Chinese schools were persecuted because they refused to assimilate into Philippine society. A dilemma for Chinese Filipinos lay between maintaining Chinese identity and stressing Filipinoness (mainly to avoid associations with Communist China). Simultaneously, the unbroken transmission of the hybrid Hokkien variety to the subsequent generations of Chinese Filipinos established a more or less stabilized PHH use in the post-colonial period. Dialectalization of the English language after the American occupation is also possible, marking the birth of Philippine Chinese English (Gonzales 2017).

## 6. Period 5: Martial law era (1965–1986)

Twenty-six years after the secession of the Americans, the Philippines was once again under political unrest under the dictatorship of President Ferdinand Marcos. Before martial law (1972–1981) was declared, most of the country was at peace and, arguably, prospering (Tan 1993: 51). In 1972, however, the whole country was put under martial law to allegedly save the republic from rebellion, civil strife, and communist takeover. On the one hand, a large number of Filipino locals were terrified and attempted to bring down the Marcos government; on the other hand, local Chinese were prospering during the Marcos regime. In 1973, Marcos released the immigration suspension, which reopened immigration opportunities for the general public including Chinese (wave 5) (Pacho 1981). According to Weightman (1985), more Cantonese people emigrated to the United States or Australia after this, while Hokkien people remained in the Philippines. Not long after this in 1975, Marcos also issued a decree to make naturalization easier than before, allowing the Chinese to enter Filipino-monopolized industries and own lands that were previously exclusive to the Filipinos (Letter of Instruction No. 270; Presidential Decree No. 836, etc.) (Tan 1993: 114).

During this period, the status and significance of English and Tagalog remained almost unchanged from the previous era, at least from the local Filipino perspective. The year 1973 also saw the renaming of the purist ‘Pilipino’ to ‘Filipino’, to represent all Filipinos and ethnic groups – and not just the Tagalogs without the /f/ sound. The renaming also signaled a shift from a purist Tagalog to an enriched Tagalog where words and sound from other foreign languages such as English and Spanish could be used (Thompson 2003: 23). It was also during this year that the new constitution was passed, mandating English and Filipino (non-purist Tagalog) as the official languages of the Philippines (Thompson 2003: 40).

With regard to education policy, some improvements to the curriculum were implemented – colleges and universities were mandated to offer six units of Tagalog in 1978, which solidified the dominance of Tagalog in society. What further strengthened the role of Tagalog is its frequent use in commercially driven mass media, particularly in film, television, and radio (Rafael 1995). While Tagalog is used at the national level, in regions outside Metro Manila, the regional languages continued to thrive. English remained powerful and was also used in mainstream media. A clear difference between Tagalog and English was that English was associated with the upper class. Towards the end of the martial law era in 1985, English was framed as a World Englishes variety, more specifically, an Outer Circle English by Kachru (1985). During this period, Taglish was also frequently used; it is still the lingua franca of society (Rafael 1995).

In relation to the Chinese Filipino community, some drastic changes were salient. In the 1960s, schools catering to the Chinese were no longer identified as Chinese schools, as learning Chinese languages (i.e. Mandarin and Hokkien) had been made optional (Tan 1993: 4). All foreign schools had to follow the Philippine curriculum to be recognized by the state, and Filipino was taught as part of the curriculum (Tan 1993: 84). Earlier in 1976, a decree was issued, banning the Chinese system of education, but this was not fully implemented due to the constitution protection of cultural minorities. As such, the ex-Chinese schools continued to offer a trilingual curriculum, with English and Tagalog classes in the morning, and Chinese classes in the afternoon. While this may appear to be a good sign of language preservation, a survey done by McBeath (1973) showed that, from a sample of approximately 2,000 students, only 44% spoke Chinese at home. Because of this, Hokkien was becoming less prominent after the shift in the Philippines' official diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China (PRC), away from the Republic of China (Taiwan), which it used to have ties with before 1973. Instead, Mandarin, the national language endorsed by the PRC, gradually became more prominent, although Hokkien was still used as a language of livelihood and other domains. In martial-law era schools, both Hokkien and Mandarin were utilized as the media of instruction for Chinese classes. So, while Chinese Filipinos still regarded Hokkien as significant, they considered Mandarin as the more powerful and useful language; it was envisioned to be the lingua franca of the Chinese Filipinos, since it was considered an international language next to or on an equal footing with English. However, its use has little currency in Chinese Filipino society as of this point; some use an unmixed Hokkien variety (Philippine Hokkien) with Filipino tones in daily in-group communication; however, a sizeable number of them use PHH, which has normally been transmitted to them generationally since the American occupation.

## 7. Period 6: The Fifth Republic onwards (1986 – present)

The restoration of Philippine democracy from the Marcos regime brought about changes to society. Evidence of economic stratification has become more apparent after the return of democracy, despite overthrowing the allegedly corrupt former president. At this point, most Filipinos were struggling out of poverty, while most Chinese were reaping the benefits of pre-Fifth Republic business investments, widening the gap between the rich and the poor. While the Chinese Filipinos have assimilated into modern Philippine society, there are still apparent demarcations between the Filipino and Chinese. See (1988) narrates how, during the earlier 1980s, Filipinos did not get the chance to mingle with the Chinese on an equal



social level and vice versa; he further notes that ethnic Chinese may have had the tendency to discriminate against ethnic Filipinos. There were mixed perceptions of the Chinese by Filipinos that the Chinese were thrifty, industrious, clannish, and dirty; moreover, they refused to marry Filipinos (Ang See 1990). Around the 1990s, another wave of Chinese immigrants called the *Sinkiaos* ‘new immigrants’ started arriving (wave 6), and contributed to diversifying the ethnic Chinese population in the Philippines. It is within this era that the diversity and multifaceted nature of the Chinese Filipino or rather the collective Chinese identity became prominent. Tan (1993: 117) notes some Chinese Filipino classifications: (1) pro-China vs. pro-Taiwan, (2) China-born vs. local-born, (3) urban vs. provincial, etc., while Uytanlet (2016: 10) identifies six: (1) old immigrants, (2) new immigrants, (3) Tsinoy, (4) overseas Chinese Filipino workers, (5) Chinese mestizos, and (6) spouses of mixed marriages.

Indeed, the Chinese Filipino society, made of those who share Hokkien and Cantonese origins, has evolved drastically from the pre-colonial period; the majority of the local-born Chinese are considered fellow compatriots. Despite some setbacks such as the infamous kidnappings of Chinese Filipinos around the 1990s, or the South China Sea vs. West Philippine Sea dispute around the 2010s, the divide between the Chinese Filipinos and Filipinos are now considered virtually non-existent.

Regarding educational policy, English and Tagalog are still dominant in society with the implementation of the Bilingual Education Policy (BEP) in 1987; both languages are still taught in schools and have established their roles in Philippine society. With regard to language itself, language ideology and practice are observed to gradually blur as the Tagalog language is now interchangeably referred to with the labels ‘Filipino’, ‘Pilipino’ and ‘Tagalog’. Any of these is used to refer to the Manila variety that is rapidly changing and spreading throughout the archipelago particularly through media (Thompson 2003: 33–34). It and other regional languages are considered the language of small talk or gossip, the wet market, and small businesses. On the other hand, English in the Philippines, or Philippine English as a world English has now become locally recognized and had been receiving substantial scholarly attention,<sup>5</sup> particularly after the landmark presentation of Braj Kachru in the Philippines in 1996 (Kachru 1997; Gonzalez 2004). English has nativized and has even been argued to exhibit endonormative stabilization (Schneider 2003; Borlongan 2016). Gonzales (2017) also notes multiple varieties within the local English, claiming that evidence of such is enough to relocate Philippine English to the level of New Zealand and Australian English

5. Synchronic studies such as Gonzales and Dita’s (2017) comparative study of Philippine English to other World Englishes as well as diachronic studies have burgeoned beginning the 2000s.

in Schneider's (2003) dynamic model. In other words, he claims that English in the Philippines has evolved in such a way that it has differentiated and diversified.

With regard to utility, English is the language of wider communication (Gonzalez 2004). For instance, in academic institutions, Bautista (2000) noted that universities are embracing this localized version of English, which has also been increasingly used in businesses, malls, and hotels (McFarland 2004). Simultaneously, English is also the language of competence, aptitude, proficiency, technology, and competitiveness (Borlongan 2009). While Martin (2014) claims that an English-only attitude still exists in Philippine society, it is perhaps commensurate with the positive attitudes towards the national language (Sicam and Lucas 2016). This shows what McFarland (2004: 74) proposed: that there exists "language spheres", one for English, and the other for Tagalog. And this also reflects the duality of society (McFarland 2004). Taglish, which is still apparently dominant in modern society, appears to bridge these two spheres and dimensions of society.

This 'sphering' can be extended to the assimilated Chinese Filipino community with the addition of two more spheres – Hokkien and Mandarin.<sup>6</sup> From 1987 onwards, Philippine Hokkien,<sup>7</sup> or rather the nativized Hokkien varieties, has already notably lost its prominence when compared to Mandarin (Tan 1993: 28), particularly with the influx of new-wave Mandarin-speaking<sup>8</sup> Chinese migrants. In her dissertation, Uytanlet (2014: 140) observed that Chinese Filipinos ideologically valued Mandarin more than Hokkien, noting Mandarin to be a language of utility. This is in contrast to Tan (1993: 86) and Poa (2004), who note that Mandarin has little use in the Chinese Filipino community, despite it being taught during primary and secondary schools if they are enrolled in a 'Chinese school'. Indeed, in the present, this still rings true to some extent, at least in the case of Chinese Filipinos. While Mandarin is formally taught (Poa 2004), it is only pursued out of habit by most; the younger generation is rebelling against what is perceived to be 'difficult'. In other domains like family businesses, sermons, or in casual conversations in restaurants, Mandarin is rarely used by Chinese Filipinos, and perhaps

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6. Cantonese is also present in the language ecology, but is fairly insignificant and negligible. Evidence by Uytanlet (2014: 251) shows that out of 39 respondents, only two have Cantonese as one of their primary languages.

7. It is worth noting that the Cantonese language is presently still spoken by a minority Cantonese Chinese Filipino group in the Philippines (<10% of the Chinese Filipinos), but may be negligible in the sphering of modern Chinese Filipino society (Doeppers 1986: 400).

8. Apart from Mandarin, the *Xinqiaos* or *Sinkiaos* 'new immigrants from China' speak a Fujianese variety of Hokkien, perhaps the variety that entered the Philippine language ecology centuries before. This variety is different when compared to the Philippine Hokkien or the Hokkien "with Filipino tones" (Tan 1993: 112).

never as a first language (see Table 2) (Poa 2004). Evidently, a disparity can be observed between the ideologies and the actual use of the language. On one hand, Mandarin is believed to be highly instrumental, but on the other, it is not typically used by Chinese Filipinos across domains. Nonetheless, Mandarin is still being taught, replacing Hokkien as the language of instruction (Uytanlet 2016: 143). This suggests that it is a more prominent language compared to Hokkien.

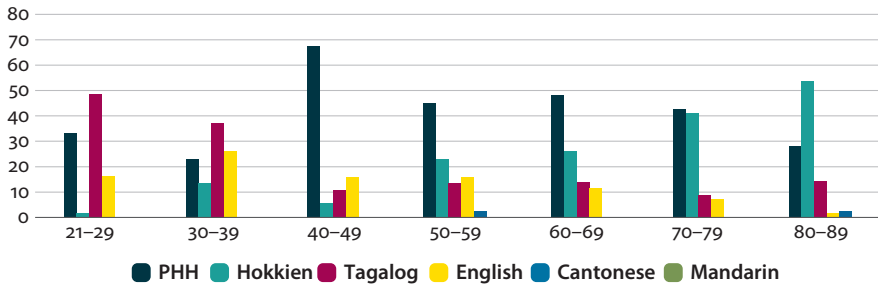
Perceptibly, Hokkien is becoming a language of additional advantage rather than the preferred choice; it is gradually shifting from a lingua franca in Chinese Filipino community to a language of the older generation. The prestigious status that Hokkien once had is gradually being passed to Mandarin and, arguably, Tagalog. Nevertheless, the Hokkien varieties remain culturally significant to local-born Chinese Filipinos as of this point. Uytanlet (2014: 180) notes that Chinese Filipino parents still make an effort for their children to learn Hokkien despite the younger generation's preference for Tagalog as a "heart language". Concurrently, the hybrid variety, PHH, is used by majority of the Chinese Filipinos in different domains (e.g. homes, businesses, casual) (Gonzales 2016). In terms of proportion, Ang See (1990) notes that as of 1989, only 10% of Chinese Filipinos spoke Chinese<sup>9</sup> exclusively at home, while 78% of the 381 students interviewed in Manila speak in a mixture of the Hokkien, Tagalog, and English (presumably PHH).

In a more recent survey conducted in 2017, I observed that this number has further decreased, and that younger Chinese Filipinos prefer to use Tagalog instead of PHH, Hokkien, or English. On a societal level, PHH is spoken particularly by those that are between 40 to 79 years of age; Chinese Filipinos ages 21 to 39 also speak this, but use more Tagalog; those that are around 80 and above also use PHH, but more use the unmixed Philippine Hokkien (see Table 2 and Figure 3). None of the respondents had Mandarin as their first language.

**Table 2.** Percentage of first language of 65 Chinese Filipinos across different age groups (self-reported)

	21–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60–69	70–79	80–89
PHH	33.33	22.88	67.63	45.24	48.36	42.74	28.00
Hokkien	1.71	13.56	5.76	23.02	26.23	41.13	53.60
Tagalog	48.72	37.29	10.79	13.49	13.93	8.87	14.40
English	16.24	26.27	15.83	15.87	11.48	7.26	1.60
Cantonese	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.38	0.00	0.00	2.40
Mandarin	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

9. Ang See (1990) here was not specific on what Chinese language was used. Evidence from other literature (e.g. Tan 1993; Uytanlet 2016) would suggest that this includes both Mandarin and Hokkien, but could also include Cantonese.



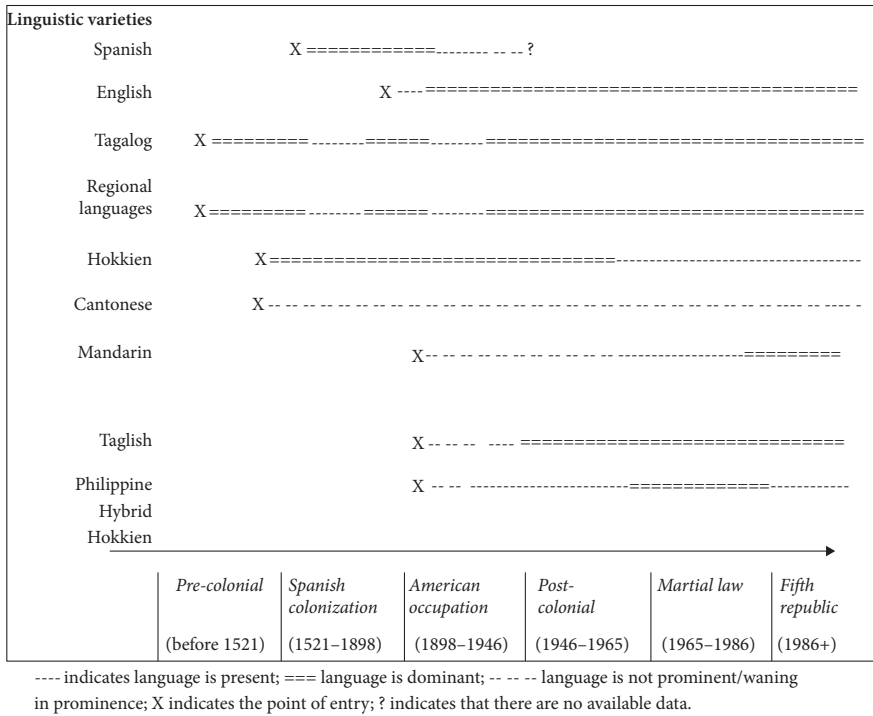
**Figure 3.** Comparison of the first language of 65 Chinese Filipinos across different age groups (self-reported)

## 8. Language contact in focus

The aim of the remainder of this article is two-fold – first, it summarizes what has been outlined from the discussion in relation to the different time periods with respect to the Chinese Filipino community (see Figure 4). Second, it discusses in-depth the contact between the languages and its implications to the regional and national language ecology. Indeed, there is much to be said about the contact among the typologically different linguistic varieties in the Philippine language ecology. One major question requiring scholarly attention is how the individual ecologies have evolved as they are and why they are such. To answer this question would require us to look back and analyze what has been narrated earlier.

From a historical viewpoint, (Old) Tagalog and other ethnic languages are spoken by the most dominant and most sizeable groups in the language ecology of pre-colonial Philippines (before 1521), and as such, are theoretically projected by scholars like Mufwene (2001) to impact the future language ecology of the Philippines. Some time later, Hokkien (~960 AD) and Cantonese (to a lesser extent) (~960 AD) ostensibly entered the language ecology. In pre-colonial Philippines, ancient Tagalog is arguably the language of prominence, since it was presumably the sole language used by the inhabitants of the precolonial Manila, at the least. Parallel to that, other inhabitants would use the language spoken by their ethnic group, which somehow stabilized in the future to become the regional language. Perceptibly, the origins of prehistoric Philippines are unclear, and, to a certain extent, only theoretical if not speculative in nature since the Philippines does not have a rich writing tradition compared to its Western counterparts (Reid 2009). Regardless, in both instances, we see that the indigenous languages were the first in their respective language ecologies. Along with natural geographical divides (e.g. rivers, mountains), the seclusion of the languages from each other could be the reason why Tagalog and other ethnic languages appeared to have no significant

stratification across the archipelago, although this, too, is speculative. It is only during and after the colonizers came that such stratification became evident.



**Figure 4.** The relative significance of major linguistic varieties in the different eras of linguistic history primarily in Manila, the Philippines, with respect to the Chinese Filipino community (after Lim 2007 for Singapore)

---- indicates language is present; === language is dominant; --- language is not prominent/waning in prominence; X indicates the point of entry; ? indicates that there are no available data.

When the Spaniards arrived in 1521, they brought with them the Spanish language (1521), which became the language of prestige. One of the probable reasons why it was so is because they had successfully embedded a centralization and hierarchical culture evident in almost all aspects of life (e.g. residence, working class, education) (Majul 1978: 14). This stratification somehow exempted the Chinese community at that time, whose language's influence (Hokkien) spiked during this era. The Chinese Filipino, at least 90% of whom are from the Hokkien language area (Doeppers 1986: 365), were considered necessary for the burgeoning economy of the Spaniards, as such, the hierarchy was not as pervasive in the community. This could have resulted in the flourishing of Hokkien in the Chinese Filipino community, despite the numerous persecutions that had taken place. One thing worth

noting is that other Sinitic languages, particularly Cantonese, were present but not dominant in the colonial language ecology.

Around the American occupation, English (1898) took over the role of Spanish and became the language of different domains (e.g. press, literature) (Sibayan 2000), although scholars like Thompson (2003: 27) have suggested that Spanish still had influence even up to the Commonwealth Era since it was mandated as an official language in the 1935 constitution. Tagalog and other regional languages appear to have been shadowed again by the colonial language – English. On the other hand, despite the anti-Sinitic sentiments of the new colonizers as evidenced in the 1902 Chinese Exclusion Act, Hokkien (PH and PHH, probably) continued to function as an in-group language and, as a result, thrived in the Chinese Filipino community. In a nutshell, we see that the languages still do not share an equal degree of prestige and prominence. There appeared to be a hierarchy with English at the peak, and other peripheral languages at the bottom. In the Chinese Filipino community, Hokkien was more influential compared to the local language (e.g. Tagalog) or Cantonese, since it was preferred as the language of in-group communication.

After the colonial era, Spanish influence waned and eventually became relatively insignificant while the prestige of some linguistic varieties had been restored and others, maintained. Several years after colonization, we can see that the language ecologies of the Philippines continued to evolve. More particularly, the effects of centuries-long stratification had diverse effects on different social groups. For instance, decades after the colonial period, some of the Tagalog-speaking people continued to patronize English over the local language for some time, resulting in an indigenous variety of English called Philippine English or, more specifically, Manila English (Bautista 2000; Gonzales 2017). The impact of the stratification appears to have been particularly felt by the scholars and those involved in the academe as well as those involved in media, who use English frequently, resulting in an acrolectal variety of the English.

In parallel, advocacies for a national language around the 20th century despite the prominence of English also influenced ‘middle-ground people’ who wanted to “fill the gap” between Tagalog and English (Thompson 2003: 40) to create Taglish. The imbalance of power during the Spanish and American colonization also affected the modern non-purist Tagalog language (Filipino), as evidenced in the lexicon of a sizeable part of the modern vocabulary. From Spanish, we have the Tagalog word *kabise* from *cabeza* ‘captain’; from English, we have *eroplano* from the English *airplane*; from Hokkien, Tagalog has words such as *susi* ‘key’, cuisine-related terms like *tokwa* ‘tofu’ and *lumpia* ‘spring roll’, and kinship terms such as *ate* ‘sister’ and *kuya* ‘brother’ (Chan-Yap 1980; Zulueta 2007; Enriquez 2012).

In the Chinese Filipino community, the unequal distribution of power and status was also felt since, after all, they were also Filipinos. What is different, then, is the inclusion and status of Hokkien, Mandarin, and Cantonese in the ecology, with Hokkien being the most dominant language. While the Filipinos' culture and language were significantly affected by the colonizer's invasion, the Chinese were not as affected as the natives since, socially, they were said to be more peaceful and useful to the colonizers, who allowed them to 'preserve' their varieties. As such, Hokkien (or rather, PH and PHH) remains and survives in the language ecology even to this day. Embedding these languages in the hierarchy, Hokkien appears to have a special status for the Chinese Filipino community. Inevitably, however, we observe that extended contact between these linguistic varieties and the Tagalog-English hierarchy created a more complex linguistic ecology. The emergence of PHH is proof of such intricate contact.

Using a 10,000-word data bank of spontaneous oral PHH or Hokaglish data, Gonzales (2016) studied the general patterns and trends that emerged from the data in the lens of code-switching. His analysis of PHH sentences reveals that the overall lexicon comprised mainly Hokkien words. This is followed by Tagalog, and then English. Some words in Mandarin are also evident, though extremely few. It is not surprising that Hokkien comprised most of the PHH lexicon. Neither is it surprising that there are more Tagalog words than English or Mandarin. I believe that three things could have characterized this as well as the structure and grammar of PHH (and potentially other Philippine contact varieties): (1) politics and power imbalance, (2) duration of contact, and (3) population size (and, subsequently, language frequency and perceptual salience).

From a political point of view, it can be hypothesized that the Chinese Filipino, being an ostensibly socially-marginalized minority group, did not have as much opportunity to use the prestigious code, English. Although access to English was not stringently restricted, the Chinese Filipinos are expected not to use English as much as the Americans, instead of communicating more frequently with the natives, resulting in more Tagalog influence. The social turbulence between the Chinese and the Americans, evidenced in the immigration bans mentioned earlier, could have also resulted in the seemingly superficial English substrate influence in the case of PHH and possibly other contact varieties.

Also, since the relations and contact between the Chinese and Filipinos have endured since pre-colonialization, it should not come as a surprise that there is more in-depth and intense Tagalog influence in PHH as opposed to English and Mandarin, which only had a relatively minimal impact because they came later in history. Hokkien was in contact with Tagalog for approximately 1,000 years, or 500, formally, English, around 120 years, and Mandarin, around 100 years (refer to previous sections). As such, it is understandable that PHH has more



Tagalog-influenced structures compared to English and Mandarin, as extended contact could encourage more borrowings and possibly conventionalization. Another alternative and complementary explanation for the strong influence of Tagalog in the language ecology would have something to do with the size and influence of the Tagalog-speaking population. Since Tagalog speakers comprise the majority of the Philippine population (Lewis, Simons, and Fennig 2016), an increase in frequency and perceptual salience of Tagalog structures is expected. And both of these could increase the proportion of Tagalog features, at least according to Mufwene's (2001) idea of the 'feature pool'. Selecting from this pool, contact varieties like PHH are more likely to get Tagalog features compared to Mandarin, for instance, as Mandarin is not frequently used. English features should also be less likely to get selected compared to Tagalog features as English speakers do not form a majority of the Philippine population (Lewis et al. 2016).

In the case of PHH, we see that since the Tagalog-speaking people were the majority and the Chinese were only an ethnic minority, as such, the contribution of Tagalog features to the 'feature pool' drawn by the Chinese Filipinos' language should be perceptibly substantial, and we observe that such is, indeed, the case.

A glimpse at the aftermath of language contact indeed offers us a satisfactory answer to the query posed earlier. As we can see, the (socio)history has unique effects on each of the individual language ecologies, giving birth to different kinds of contact varieties that have been discussed, if not mentioned, earlier. So far, we have studied the language ecologies of Manila – both the Chinese Filipinos' language ecology and the one belonging to the non-Chinese locals. The language ecology formation processes and rationale delineated here may generally be applied to other regional languages ecologies as well, with variations differing at certain degrees.

## 9. Conclusion

In response to the notable dearth of scholarship on the topic, and following Lim and Ansaldo's (2016)<sup>10</sup> Asia-centric approach on language contact, the previous sections have attempted to narrate a sociohistorical account of the minority Chinese Filipinos; it illustrated how the contact between these linguistic varieties contributed to the respective individual language ecologies of the speakers. In reality, due to the mobility of speakers across the islands as well as links to other parts of the globe, we observe that the language ecologies are not that intact, rigid, and exclusive to a specific region. We have already seen this in the discussion regarding

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10. Departing from Eurocentric studies, Lim and Ansaldo (2016: 14–16) studied different cases of language contact in 'Monsoon Asia'.

the colonizers (e.g. Americans, Spaniards) as well as traders (e.g. the Chinese). The individual languages ecologies, thus, contribute to a larger language ecology – that of the Philippines as a whole. Each of the idiosyncracies observed in each language ecology across the archipelago is one way or the other related to other ecologies; the variations in one ecology can spread and diffuse to other ecologies particularly with the advancement of technology and the looming impact of globalization in the Philippines. For instance, we have seen that the contact between the ecologies of the Chinese and the Filipinos have created varieties such as PHH and PCE (Gonzales 2017). Indeed, how Chinese Filipino varieties like these have formed can be analogized to tapestry weaving. Using threads spun from history and culture of the Chinese, Filipinos, Americans, and Spaniards, centuries of weaving with the appropriate timing and materials has created a language ecology tapestry that is overwhelmingly complex but in the same time, colorful and unique from other ecologies around the world. On a global scale, the language ecology of the Chinese Filipino community, and the Philippines, in general, is undeniably a bird of a different feather – one that is formed using the peculiarities of the diverse individual ecologies through centuries.

Indeed, the history, environment, politics and other social factors can significantly impact the formation of the (contact) linguistic varieties in the Philippines. Departing from this, this Chinese-Filipino-centric account of the Philippine language ecology has major implications for the (re)description of normative languages and contact varieties, insofar as Philippine languages are concerned. On a surface level, it provides scholars and linguists a glimpse of the sociohistorical factors that may have influenced other linguistic varieties (e.g. Chavacano, Chavacano-Tagalog) as well as possible explanations as to why such contact varieties exist. Perhaps it can also provide a further commentary of other (emerging) Philippine varieties. On a more analytical level, this account is a stepping-stone in understanding how contact varieties in the Philippines work.

The recent years have certainly seen drastic changes in the linguistic ecologies, as evidenced by the emergence of diverse contact varieties used in the archipelago. This Chinese Filipino account only introduces a facet of the dynamic Philippine language ecology – one that continues to evolve so long as there is ongoing contact among multiple varieties in an unpredictable and ever-changing society. With the only constant being variability, what scholars and linguists should, then, anticipate is how the Philippine language ecology and the contact varieties that comprise it will evolve in the foreseeable future.

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