The Emergence of *Taglish* as a Socio-Cultural Phenomenon in the light of Foucault's Archaeology of Knowledge

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Abstract: Taglish or simply a creative way of blending together Tagalog and English languages is not just a trend. It is becoming so ordinary. And what makes it even more inviting for a point of reflection is the collective tolerance in assimilating these changes into our daily interactions. If Hegel is correct that language is the soul of the people, then are we comfortable in accepting that Taglish is the contemporary Filipino's "soul"? Foucault's Archaeology of Knowledge could offer a more substantive analysis of Taglish as a social phenomenon. Society is tangled by ideologies, mind sets, interests, habitus, narratives that crisscross along a wide spectrum of social interaction. It is like a battle of discourses so that the one that emerges predominant becomes a system of control over the others. Such control results into the emergence of norms institutionalized as bodies of knowledge… that knowledge legitimized by unreflective majority becomes a power of control. As time passes by, it becomes a tradition that is so difficult to challenge. Taglish may carry within an ideology of superiority so that to get the power is to speak the language. It may even serve as a requirement for social acceptance, and once within, it shapes a new trend, a new value, a new way of looking at reality.

Keywords: Discourse, Genealogy, Panopticonism, Power-relations, Taglish

I. Preliminary Remarks

"Bro, sa'n ka mag-*dinner after class*?"

"Di ko alam bro, *what if* sa MOA na lang?"

"Sa MOA pa. Anlayo naman. Sa'n tayo sasakay?"

"Mag-*cab* na lang tayo. Di ko kase dala yung *car* ko e."

In the contemporary Filipino setting, Taglish is naturally common as a form of casual communication. By creatively playing with English and Tagalog words, the Filipino is able to make complete sentences that are understandable in its own right. In almost all cases, English words are mixed up with Tagalog words in a sentence. It is a colloquial means of communication that has grown to be a normal phenomenon in everyday life. The growth of Taglish or perhaps Vislish's/Ceblish's, Iloclish's, or any other vernacular language, for that

matter, mixed with English, is not surprising since our country is using four major languages: Filipino, Cebuano, Ilocano and English. If Taglish is common among the Tagalog speaking regions, it is also equally the same with Ilocano or Cebuano.

Filipino is our mother tongue, while English is the language we have acquired from American colonization and have embraced as our own. And so, *Taglish* has developed into a standard means of discourse here in the Philippines. The average Filipino, for instance, would normally use the English words *T.V., refrigerator, aircon, notebook, blackboard, computer,* etc. In the Filipino setting, it becomes "normal" to use English words or phrases with Tagalog to complete a sentence. This usually happens whenever a particular Filipino finds it difficult to think of the proper Tagalog word that matches what he wishes to express. This is true for example when expressing academic jargons that have always been taught in English. A student cannot, in his power, express in pure Tagalog many scientific jargons such as *photosynthesis, predation, red-blood cells, genus, species* etc. Neither can he express mathematical equations using pure Tagalog. The terms *pagdadagdag* and *pagbabawas* in place of *addition* and *subtraction* admittedly sound very unnatural even to Filipino ears. This is not necessarily always the case since there are many other English words that have taken the place of proper Tagalog words out of popular usage. Taglish has emerged not only as a popular means of communication but as a normal colloquial discourse when talking with friends and family outside school or working hours.

On the other hand, Taglish's popularity carries within it some elements of elitism, high-culture, and prestige. Such is the case it likewise becomes the arbiter for distinguishing the educated from the unlearned. What is fascinating is the fact that even among the educated (academicians), Taglish, as a social phenomenon, fails to captivate their interest. Taglish ceases to fascinate them so that an in-depth treatment of this phenomenon is nowhere to be found. As a matter of fact, very little literature is available taking this theme as a kind of intellectual exploration. Taglish simply blends perfectly with Tagalog and that linguistic turn does not invite a more intensive philosophical reflection.

If, according to Hegel, language is the soul of the people, then has Taglish become the soul of our nation? If each language uses particular symbolisms that unfold a web of culturally differentiated character, does it follow that systematic incursion of Taglish in our ordinary discourses is a distortion of meaning, and consequently, contributes further to a heightened social identity crisis? Gadamer has a profound description of the German word *verstehen,* roughly translated as 'understanding'. It addresses a specific cultural affinity among speakers so that each one understands because of their given-ness to history (*Wirkungsgeschichte Bewusstsein).* A deep-seated common experience that is brewed through many years of rituals, symbols, traditions and norms make their notion of a life-world.

Furthermore, is it not illogical to postulate that Taglish is not merely a distortion of meaning but also an *engendering* of a cultural divide among us? On one side, we see the Taglish-speaking community who are hailed and respected. Taglish becomes a symbol of breeding, a language of the rich and famous. On the other side, a group of Filipinos speaking the language with a natural crunch is differentiated from the Taglish speakers. Tagalog is the language of the *masa*, of the ordinary man, and of the uneducated. Hence, it is reasonable to construe that Taglish culture, and for whatever mindset it

brings along, shapes the culture of the common *tao.* The common people look at the Taglish speaking as if idols worthy of emulation. If any, language is a kind of cultural forgery, where a way of life is nurtured and protected, then our language lies at the mercy of a language (Taglish) and the culture that it promotes. This continues and persistent "attack" would drive away a typical Filipino way of knowing to the sidelines.

Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge* could offer a more substantive analysis of Taglish as a social-phenomenon. Philippine society is tangled by ideologies, mind sets, interests and narratives that crisscross along a wide spectrum of social interaction. What we have is a battle of discourses in which the victor of the battle emerges as the predominant system of control. Such a control results to the emergence of norms and standards that are institutionalized as governing bodies of knowledge. Such bodies of knowledge are legitimized by the unreflective majority and become a power of control. As time passes by, it becomes a tradition that is so difficult to challenge.

Hence, for all intent and purposes, this paper argues:

1. Taglish may carry within it an ideology of superiority so that to attain power is to speak the language. It may even serve as a requirement for social acceptance, and once within, it shapes a new trend, a new value, a new way of looking at reality gradually pushing the other to the margins. Even further,

2. This paper speculates that with the predominance of Taglish, a vast collection of Tagalog words whose meanings nurture a Filipino culture would die for the life of a language depends on its usage. Taglish would gradually unleash a culture that discards the old

ways leading to a distorted social consciousness and identity as Filipinos.

3. Taglish is a clear manifestation of a colonial mentality brewed in a hundred of years under the control of superior nations and "superior cultures" that the indigenous culture is viewed as inferior or even abhorrent.

II. Beyond Taglish as a Social Phenomenon

A. Taglish as the Language of the Learned

English words are sometimes even used in exchange of an already existing Tagalog word that may seem alien because some Filipinos seldom use it anymore. For example, many of my friends would rather express the sentence "*Mag-ready ka na*" when in truth, the more Tagalog way of expressing it is "*Gumayak ka na.*" Sadly, expressing the sentence through the latter merely makes you sound as if you grew up in the province. One particular response you'd hear is "*Gayak! Wow. Lalim! Nosebleed*" in which the term *malalim* denotes one who has lived in the past, and has grown in wisdom; a euphemism for OLD. Such a term connotes a negative tone as if one's very own language has already become alien to his own land. Such remark peculiarly makes you seemingly inferior to the "sophisticated" Taglish-speakers. We have grown up preferring using the words *notebook* over *kwaderno*, *board* over *pisara*, *book* over *aklat*, *room* over *silid*. In addition, we would rather be saying the phrases "*Relax ka lang*" instead of "*Huminahon ka*", "*Nag-lunch ka na ba*" over "*Nagtanghalian ka na*".

Such linguistic modifications would sound perfectly normal to the average Filipino. Yet, a tinge of elitism in Taglish is apparent. This elitism can be traced from its two languages of origin: Tagalog/Filipino and English. Having Filipino as our mother tongue, we are addressed

in the Filipino from the moment we are born. Filipino is the language we grew up with; it is the language we speak when talking to our neighbors; it is the language we speak at home with our family or out with friends; it is the language we speak on normal occasions. On the other hand, we have English. Given our educational system, in which every lesson (except Filipino of course) was taught primarily in English, we are then exposed to English as our second language. More importantly, English is the language we are *required* to speak at school. It is the language professors use to educate their students; it is the language used by doctors to explain their medical jargon; it is the language businessmen use in addressing other businessmen, their CEOs and their managers; it is the language used in senatorial debates and court hearings. Hence, English is the language of professionals and the elite. This intense exposure to two major languages gives us the means to articulate in both languages and in merging those two: English being more acquainted with the academic and professional life, whereas Tagalog being more acquainted with life outside of it.

This sense of elitism in Taglish then is undeniable. After all, in order to speak it, one must be exposed to speaking in English which is the language taught in academic institutions. Needless to say, English is the language of the learned. Many medical, political, and technical jargons are expressed in English as well. Hence, to be learned in many various professional fields would mean being able to articulate them in English.

Filipino is the language you learn at home, neighborhood − in everyday life. This implies a notion that you do not have to be educated in order to learn Filipino. Consequently, this entails a certain sense of inferiority for our own mother tongue. And so, by integrating English

words into Tagalog sentences, one elevates himself from the other who speaks in pure Tagalog sentences. As normal as Taglish is today to most Filipinos, there is always an underlying sense of superiority that separates the Taglish-speaking community from the Tagalog-speaking majority.

Along with it, Taglish as mentioned earlier becomes an arbiter for distinguishing the learned from the ignorant. You could tell by the words a person speaks whether he is educated or not; when he uses English jargons applicable to his profession or when he uses English words in day to day conversations, he is educated. The ability to wield English words using them in sentences whether Taglish or pure English reveals that person's educational attainment. Failure to wield English words with the same mastery shows otherwise.. Henceforth, Taglish tends to widen the gap between the Taglish-speaking, privileged community and the non-Taglish speaking people.

This can be problematic since Taglish as a language must be bridging that gap instead of widening it. Therefore, although Taglish has become a normal means of discourse, it fails to unify the Filipino nation the same way Tagalog does. Taglish may create bridges among Taglish speakers but it does not serve the same purpose between them and non-Taglish speakers. Instead, it creates disunity between the two factions in which the one tends to distance itself from the other group creating a feeling of hostility between two classes. Taglish characterizes the upper educated classes whereas the failure to engage in it characterizes the lower uneducated masses.

B. Taglish and the Question of Meaning

Given its everyday use, is Taglish able to capture the same meaning and essence that its

Tagalog equivalent expresses? Let us explore the following Tagalog phrases and their Taglish modifications:

Common Language	
Filipino/ Tagalog	**Taglish**
Opo, Ma.	*Yes, Ma.*
Huminahon ka.	*Relax ka lang.*

It is fascinating to note how in our common language, despite Taglish being as commonly used as Filipino/Tagalog, cannot entirely grasp the full essence of its Tagalog equivalent. For instance, the words *po* and *opo* are used to denote respect for the elder, a higher ranking official, or a mere stranger. Using *yes* in place of *opo* does indeed show its affirmative answer but without the same respectfulness and amiable tone that *opo* has. Even the word *po* cannot be translated literally to English and is an entirely unique word endemic in Tagalog. The use of *po* and *opo* reflects a culture which values the elder community and addresses them with reverence and respect. Meanwhile, although both the phrases *"Huminahon ka"* and *"Relax ka lang"* both express an imperative tone to address somebody to calm down, the former phrase is usually expressed with more conviction and has a more imperative effect on the Filipino. Its Taglish equivalent on the other hand is mainly used to address a *kabarkada* to calm down with its tone being less serious and less domineering than its Taglish equivalent. It is easily discernible that despite having equal frequency in usage, the Tagalog equivalent of our phrases indeed has more impact to the Filipino than its

lighter and more casual Taglish version. This is apparent also in metaphors and street slang..

Symbolic-Metaphoric Language	
Filipino/ Tagalog	**Taglish**
Ang pagpakumbaba ay sinasalamin ng kawayan. Habang ito'y, tumatanda, ito'y yuyuko	*Ang pagkumbaba ay nag-mimirror ng bamboo. Kung tumanda na nag ba bow-down ito*
Kung ano ang itinanim ay syang aanihin	*Kung ano ang pinaplant ay siyang hina-harvest*

Shown above are two well known Tagalog proverbs and their Taglish equivalents. It is apparent how the Tagalog versions of these proverbs have a more significant impact on the Filipino who has known them by heart. Tagalog proverbs have been an integral part of Filipino culture even during contemporary times. Consequently, Tagalog metaphors are treasured in the hearts of Filipinos that any certain modification is seemingly a form of sacrilege. That is why, any Taglish version of such Tagalog proverbs would sound peculiar despite the frequent use of Taglish.

Aside from this, reading both versions, one can objectively observe that these symbolic and metaphorical phrases have a more lasting impact, or as we would call it, *dating* on the listener when they are expressed in their pure form. Both the Taglish versions of these sayings have a minor and less serious impact on the Filipino as compared to their original Tagalog versions.

Mga Salitang Kanto	
Filipino/ Tagalog[1]	**Taglish**
P***** ina mo!	*Pakyu (F*** you) ka!*
Tinira ang bola. Butata!	*Shinoot ang bola. Na-block!*

I would finally compare the impact of Filipino street-language or *salitang balbal* with their Taglish counterparts. It is true that both versions are both frequently used in everyday communication most especially among friends. It is typical of many close friends, for instance, to curse at each other. However, there is a certain level of intensity in Tagalog curses that Taglish curses cannot express. Notice the Taglish curse *"P**** ka!"*, for instance, which is a derivation of the English "F*** you!" with the Tagalog *ka* in order to address somebody. This curse is usually expressed in a joking manner among friends. It sounds very mild as compared to the intense impact of the Tagalog curse *"P***** ina mo"*, which when expressed with much conviction would have a grave effect on the person hearing it. *Kung baga pag mangyari sa mga matatanda: MAGHAHALO ANG BALAT SA TINALUPAN!* Curses have been an integral part of our culture. Thus, in a Filipino culture where mothers are respected and revered, for one's mother to be called a *p*** (prostitute) is beyond insulting and painful to the Filipino. The Tagalog curses, as a matter of fact, have already been embedded in our identity that they definitely have a more violent impact to Filipinos than the milder Taglish curses *p**** ka, s*** naman,* etc. Meanwhile,

street slang does not necessarily include only curses. In the basketball court, for instance, the Tagalog street word *butata* is expressed whenever someone's shot gets swatted away. It is popular even among commentators in the PBA (Philippine Basketball Association) and is usually said with much force and power. To say na-*block ang* shot, on the other hand, does not have that same powerful effect to Filipinos as saying "swatted away" which has a powerful effect on Americans.

From the above three categories of Tagalog-Taglish translations, it is quite noticeable how the Tagalog versions have more significant effects on Filipinos than their Taglish counterparts. As much as Taglish has become a popular means of communication among Filipinos, it does not have that same impact or *dating* to the Filipino as Tagalog. The Filipino language is after all the soul of the Filipino nation and its words are closer to our hearts than Taglish. When it comes to usage, Taglish may be as frequently used as Filipino but when it comes to verbal and cultural impact to the Filipino listener, Tagalog has the better edge.

So, why is it that despite the greater power Tagalog holds, it has become reduced to merely a language of the street? Why do we, as a nation, elevate English over Tagalog when the former is alien to our hearts and the latter is in the very blood that flows in our veins? Even if Filipino is the heart and soul of our country, we, as a people have come to embrace Taglish as one with our language. Taglish has seeped into our system as the emergent popular language alternative to Filipino. The ideology it upholds is that the speaker is more empowered by Taglish than by Filipino. In order to substantially explain this, we now turn to Michel Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge.*

III. An Overview of Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge*

Foucault's perspective of history is beyond the conventional view of history where events are viewed as following a logical sequence which is given further explanations. For Foucault, the succession of such historical events must not be seen merely as a series of unrelated events but as a series of events reflecting certain sets of ideas, logic and standards of knowledge which reflect each historical epoch. His point of interest is how these certain sets of knowledge become the ruling body in a certain epoch only to be changed by another set of knowledge. Thus, in Foucault's philosophy, bodies of knowledge play an important, perhaps a *powerful* role in history. His study of the history of such knowledge is what he calls *archaeology.*

A. The *Archive*

Foucault makes use of archaeology so that in his analysis of history, he is unearthing layer by layer of what he calls as *archives,* which are characteristic of every historical epoch consists. Foucault describes the archive as:

> …the first law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events… it is that which differentiates discourses in their multiple existence and specifies them in their own duration… it is the general system of the formation and transformation of statements.[2]

An archive is a system or set of *discourses* in which each discourse counts as a legitimate body of knowledge during that historical period. Foucault simply puts it as "a set of discourses actually pronounced."[3] The very object of archaeology is the discourse itself:

> Archaeology tries to define not the thoughts, representations, images, themes, preoccupations that are concealed or revealed in discourses; but those discourses themselves, those discourses as practices obeying certain rules.[4]

B. The *Episteme*

For Foucault, every historical epoch is constituted of various numbers of discourses. But, with these various discourses, there must be a set of conditions, or in other words, a system of control which governs in the establishment of knowledge. This system of control is called an *episteme.* Paul Oliver would describe this as "the sum total of intellectual rules which controlled the process of establishing valid knowledge."[5] In other words, they are the governing conditions which influenced how the people sorted out what are valid and what are not in a particular epoch. Foucault describes how epistemes changed during the classical period, Renaissance, and the modern period. These epistemes influenced the way people thought during each of these historical epochs.

These epistemes are likewise characteristic of a certain system of thought or *archive* that has been established in time. These systems of thought were not created deliberately. In other words, there was no event wherein groups of people gathered to establish what is valid and what is not. Systems of thought are rather established gradually and unintentionally through different human activities. In time these ways of acting, working and thinking became acceptable for the majority and in time, served to be the very system which characterizes their historical period. In other words, these systems of thought were practices done successively until such a time that it became a normal practice. When it is established as a norm, it becomes the governing rule which dictates what must be acceptable and what is not.

In time, the present epistemes may gradually or abruptly change and be replaced by new epistemes which influence the mode of thought of the new historical epoch. Such change may be a result of an individual or a group of people who challenge the existing episteme. In time, their influence grows great until such a time that the episteme they have challenged during their lifetime gets replaced by a new episteme

C. The concept of *Discourse*

Each historical period has its own archive of discourses. Foucault defines discourses as "verbal signs"[6]. These verbal signs or statements are unique for any system of science. In professional medicine for example, doctors have their own medical jargon in which only those who are knowledgeable in medicine can understand. In other words, only those who are knowledgeable of such a system of knowledge can engage in such a discourse. Discourses likewise change depending on the person one is engaging with in the discourse. Verbal signs and symbols used vary whether you are talking with a colleague or a friend or an expert in a certain field. Discourse is not strictly limited to highfaluting jargon. Casual conversations with friends and family for example, are considered as discourses. Such discourses reflect the individual's culture, and system of understanding. Thus, discourse reflects a system of knowledge and ideas found in the person engaging in it.

Discourse can likewise be put to *discursive practice*. Thomas Flynn describes *practice* as "a pre-conceptual anonymous, socially sanctioned body of rules that govern ones manner of perceiving, judging, imagining and acting."[7] Simply put, practice is the governing body which governs our manner of judging and acting, depending on the discourse we are engaging. Practice has two natures: the first is its *judicative nature* in which a certain practice establishes norms and becomes the judge which applies such norms. Through this nature, it is able to set its own set of rules that need to be abided. Its *veridicative nature* on the other hand dictates whether a discourse is true, legitimate and valid, or plainly false, unacceptable and invalid. It is the *epistemes* of each historical epoch which establish the rules for the practice's veridicative function. Thus in a given historical epoch, knowledge's legitimacy is judged according to the rules established by the epistemes.

A discourse has within it its own system of ideas and knowledge. It has its own system of logic and its own system of judging and reflecting what is valid and what is not. It is within this discourse that the body of language is expressed, and so consequently, the discourse one is engaging in reflects a certain mutual ideology found among individuals engaging in it. The mode of discourse is closely associated then with what the type of knowledge that is considered valid and the possibility of generating new knowledge within the parameters of such discourse.

> "Disciplines constitute a system of control in the production of discourse, fixing its limits through action of an identity taking the form of permanent reactivation of the rules."[8]

Thus, within a discourse is not only a system of bodies of legitimized knowledge (such that have been accepted by the majority engaging in that discourse) but also an underlying ideology rooted in the cultural identity of the individual engaging in it. The discourse reflects the culture, the norms and ideas of the individual engaging in it. As Paul Oliver puts it:

> In the sense that discourse is a reflection of the different forms of culture, customs and, indeed, knowledge, then discourse is typical of a

particular historical period… Discourse also helps create history… History will thus evolve in parallel with the predominant discourse[9]

Different modes of discourses reflect the historical period of the time. Foucault tackles such relationships of discourses with the historical epochs in his study of *genealogy*. Since a historical epoch consists of an archive with its own set of discourses, it follows that such sets of discourses are legitimized during a specific period of time. The existing epistemes of the epoch play an important role in the legitimization of such discourses so that some discourses (carrying with them certain elements and ideas) are accepted by many, whereas others are not. Whether a system is accepted as valid and legitimate or otherwise all depends on whether certain conditions (the epistemes) established by the existing archive, permit it.

D. Power within the Discourse

Not everyone can engage in one particular discourse however. The common man cannot engage in a philosophical discourse if he himself is uneducated in the field. A layperson cannot easily understand a doctor's medical jargon since he is not adept to such a course. This element of exclusivity within certain discourses allows for the person engaging in that discourse to exert his power over those unable to engage in it.

In turn, the ability to engage in such a discourse allows one to judge what is valid and invalid pertaining to the discourse he is engaging in. This is very much like the governing archive in every historical epoch which sets the conditions for what is logically sound during an epoch and what is downright unacceptable. To have the knowledge needed to engage in certain discourses allows one to legitimize certain knowledge or even generate knew knowledge

which shall be legitimized by others. Thus, discourse gives one the power to sway ideologies, to challenge epistemes, and to influence the majority (whether those in the majority are capable of engaging in that discourse or not).

To be able to engage in certain discourses then implies that one person must learn the knowledge and the ideologies behind the discourse. A person must, for example, be educated in various fields if he wishes to engage in a discourse with someone who is educated. The very saying "knowledge is power" comes to life in the concept of discourse. In a way, along with this exclusive element in the discourse is inevitably an alienating element in which the uneducated are removed from the picture for being able to engage in such discourse. The uneducated would have less power and are at the mercy of the educated because they are unable to engage in the same discourse as the educated. Their lack of education prevents them from elevating the level of their discourse to match those of the educated.

IV. *Power/Knowledge*

A. The Dynamics of Power

Foucault's concept of power can be broken to its most basic element, which is influence. "He saw power as an aspect of an inter-relationship or interaction between human beings".[10] In this case, one person can exercise his influence over another person, whether it is a friend, family member, co-worker, etc. However, any exercise of influence cannot always be accepted. It is characteristic of humans after all to want to exercise their own independence, and so the exercise of power over another can be tricky. In this way, a sovereign will "try to develop an intellectual justification for the exercise of that power"[11]. As Joseph Rouse elaborates, Foucault

indicates aspects in the conception of sovereignty two points:

> First, sovereignty is a standpoint above or outside particular conflicts that resolves their competing claims into a unified and coherent system. Second, the dividing question in terms of which these claims are resolved is that of legitimacy (often framed in terms of law or rights): Which powers can be rightfully exercised, which actions are lawful, which regimes are legitimate? Together, these two points present the sovereign as the protector of peace in the war of all against all and the embodiment of justice in the settling of competing claims.[12]

In the process, it is observable that power is everywhere. It is located in complex social networks, in which there is a constant battle of influences. Likewise, there is always this constant resistance of power that those in power must then develop and legitimate laws that would justify their rule over the majority. Sovereignty becomes the embodiment of what is legitimate and what must be followed. Similar to this monarchial sovereignty is what Rouse calls "Epistemic sovereignty" which "constitutes knowledge as the unified (or consistently unifiable) network of truths that can be extracted from the circulation of conflicting statements. They are legitimated as truths by the precepts of rational method, the epistemic surrogate for law."[13]

In this way, the emergent network of truths becomes legitimized by the majority and is regarded as the governing truths. This network becomes the body which controls and exerts power. Such is the case that it has the capability of dictating what must be followed and what is set aside.

Power, for Foucault, is not as simple as having a sovereign rule over a people. He insists that "power is not something that is acquired,

seized, or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away".[14] "Power is not possessed by a dominant agent, nor located in that agent's relations to those dominated, but is instead distributed throughout complex social networks."[15] He further explains that Power is exerted through *power relations,* which emerge from "the support which force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunction and contradictions which isolate them from one another".[16] In this case, *power relations* are formed by alliances in which power finds support and acceptance, and thus influence is exerted from one person to another. On the other hand, those who refuse to succumb to such influence are removed from such relation. Power, in addition, presupposes knowledge. Knowledge needs power in order to have a significant impact on the individual. Just as power is in conflict with other power, so is knowledge through *epistemic practices* in conflict with other *epistemic practices.* In the same manner, epistemic practices rise because of these relations of power.

> "Knowledge is established not only in relation to a field of statements, but also to objects, instruments, practices, research programs, skills, social networks, and institutions. Some elements of such an epistemic field reinforce and strengthen one another and are taken up, extended, and reproduced in other contexts." [17]

In summary, power is dispersed across complicated social networks marked by an on-going struggle. From this struggle, power comes to rise through power relations which in time form a single coherent body of knowledge. In the process, those who wield such power are able to legitimize facts and generate laws in justification of their authority.

> "Foucault suggests a different image in which conflict and struggle are always present and

inescapable. To make truth-claims is to try to strengthen some epistemic alignments and to challenge, undermine, or evade others." [18]

This constant conflict of epistemic practices in time creates an epistemic growth. For instance, what may be abided and dignified before may be considered trivial nowadays. Power works wonders behind knowledge for knowledge exert its legitimate authority. In order for knowledge to be abided, the power working behind it goes through a series of power relations in which it grows until such a time that it is powerful enough to dictate what must be legitimate and what must be set aside. In retrospect, these dynamics of power are behind the shifts of *epistemes* with every historical epoch.

V. Synthesis: Reflections on Foucault as applied to the Taglish as a cultural phenomenon in the Philippines

As observed previously, that when it comes to impact on the Filipino listener, Tagalog undeniably has a greater force exerted as compared to Taglish. The impact of our very own language to us can be rooted in our culture. As Filipinos we have grown accepting values, norms, saying and even superstitions that are genuinely Filipino. This Filipino mode of thinking reflects an *episteme* anchored on the Filipino identity, so that the typical Filipino would grow to discern what is genuinely Filipino based on his cultural up-bringing. Such a system of knowledge and belief is expressed in our very own Filipino language. This explains why when it comes to impact; phrases uttered in Tagalog have a greater effect on the Filipino as compared to Taglish. For instance, as mentioned previously, the terms *po* and *opo,* reflect a system of thought that is undeniably Filipino. And since such words are expressions of an endemic Filipino mindset, other languages, in an attempt to translate, cannot fully grasp the essence of these words. Other

languages are discourses that have a system of knowledge of their own and hence cannot grasp the Filipino mindset. So that replacing *opo* with yes cannot fully grasp the essence that *opo* has. Our language reflects the episteme that is genuinely Filipino so that translations or modifications of Tagalog saying cannot fully express them with the same impact that Tagalog has on the Filipino listener. This is observable not only in day-to-day language but also in Filipino sayings and even street language which are integral aspects of our culture. Within that culture is a governing system of thought, logic, and understanding that is uniquely our own.

On the other hand, the emergence of English and the modification of Tagalog phrases with English words uphold an entirely different episteme. Naturally, they are expressed in a different form of discourse. English as mentioned earlier is the language spoken by professionals and prestigious people, whether they be businessmen or government officials. In addition, English is the medium of communication used in academic institutions. This renders that in order to be able to speak English, you must be educated. English becomes the determining factor of who is educated or not. Likewise, a proficiency in the use of the language (the range of one's vocabulary, the skill in playing with words, etc.) reflects the level of educational attainment. For instance, a college graduate has a greater expertise in the English language than the grade school drop-out. When one is proficient in English, then he has no trouble engaging in Taglish as well. Because of colonial-mentality, Taglish and English are elevated and empowered at the expense of Tagalog. In the process, Taglish as a discourse becomes a norm which everyone else has to abide. Being a language of an educated, this implies that Taglish becomes a more superior discourse as compared to Tagalog, having the power to

establish itself as a normative discourse which exercises control over other discourses. Taglish is esteemed while Tagalog is taken for granted.

1. Taglish Becoming a Normative Discourse

As mentioned earlier, to be able to engage in certain discourses is to be able to exercise power. Francis Bacon's historic statement that "Knowledge is power" comes to life in the concept of discourse as mentioned. Having knowledge in a given field allows the person to dictate what is valid and what is not in a given field and so he is able to practice such power over those who are not knowledgeable.

Given our educational system wherein English is a policy, it is no doubt that English, and Taglish, for that matter, becomes the language of the learned. And so those capable of engaging in Taglish conversations are esteemed to be more learned than those who cannot. This notion is anchored on the system of thought that English and Taglish as the language of the learned is superior to Tagalog. Taglish creates an ideology that those engaging in it are more superior to those who do not. Taglish becomes an alienating discourse, very much like medical, mathematical, or political jargons (which by the way are expressed in English as well) are alienating discourses. Such an alienating element empowers the person engaging in that discourse so that he is able to exert that power over those who don't. Vis-a-vis the Taglish speaking community is esteemed more superior compared to non-Taglish speakers.

There is no denying that Taglish is on its way to becoming a norm which distinguishes the educated from the uneducated. Taglish becomes the standard of the educated, of the elite and the powerful so that it becomes normative. Consequently, in order to elevate oneself, one must then engage in Taglish as well. Those who

are in power, whether it be the state, professionals or mere celebrities, involuntarily impose upon others the ideology that English and Taglish is superior as compared to Tagalog. Such ideology has been legitimized so that it cannot be questioned by that majority, particularly the masses, so that they associate Taglish with education, higher social status, and class. Such mindset only serves to make them view themselves as lesser compared to the Taglish speaking community. This can be observable in interviews and even in the classroom situation in particular, wherein those engaging in English and Taglish are esteemed for their proficiency, at the expense of Tagalog. Institutions with an "English campaign" for example deliberately set English as a standard for learning at the expense of Tagalog.

It becomes a normative discourse, a standard which draws everyone helplessly to follow so that it has the ability to exercise its control over those who do not speak the language. In other words, its subjugating power ends in complete domination and sets itself as the ultimate arbiter on who is "in" and who is "out". Further, since the standards of superiority is so legitimated by speakers of Taglish who come from the elite members of society, the natural pull, that is drawing the greater majority into it is more of an unconscious reaction that ultimately ends in the triumph of Taglish over Tagalog as the language of the Filipino. In its downfall, so does the intricacies of a Filipino culture that makes us what we are goes down the drain.

2. Taglish as a *Panopticon*

In *Discipline and Punish,* Foucault talks about the *Panopticon* in the prison setup. It is a form of surveillance system in which the prisoner has the impression that he is being watched all the time and is forced to comply with normative

behavior. Thus, it is an effective way to exercise power and control over those prisoners.

> "Hierarchized, continuous and functional surveillance . . . was organized as a multiple, automatic, and anonymous power. . . . This enables the disciplinary power to be both absolutely indiscreet, since it is everywhere and always alert, since by its very principle it leaves no zone of shade and constantly supervises the very individuals who are entrusted with the task of supervising; and absolutely "discreet," for it functions permanently and largely in silence."[19]

This *Panopticon* can be likened to the *Eye of Sauron* in *Lord of the Rings*[20], where the eye has a view of everything. In a similar way, such a form of control occurs in the daily setup. In a community where Taglish has become the normative discourse, non-speakers feel a sense of discomfort for not being able to abide to such norm. The *Panopticon* becomes the arbiter which distinguishes the Taglish speaker from the non-Taglish speaker. Because of this distinguishing element, there is a significant gap created between the Taglish-speaker and the non-Taglish speaker. The Taglish speakers have the tendency to be esteemed as superior whereas non-Taglish speakers are given less notice. As mentioned, when Taglish becomes the normative discourse, the ideology of superiority it upholds is legitimized. Thus those who engage in such discourse are able to exert their power over those who don't. This creates a subtle sense of inferiority in the non-Taglish speaker. This truth claim comes to play so that it undermines the person who does not engage in Taglish.

Consequently, the non-Taglish speaker is then pressured to comply with these norms in order to feel a sense of belongingness. When Taglish becomes the norm, non-speakers are marginalized and undermined. Such marginalization is a subtle way of exercising control. This fear of social marginalization serves as the *Panopticon* which constantly supervises the majority with great subtlety. An individual does not even realize that he is already abiding to it for social acceptance. In order to cope up with such a norm, he involuntarily feels the need to engage in the normative discourse (Taglish) and complies. In this sense, the *Panopticon* succeeds in *normalizing* the non-conformist.

3. Discourse is Power

All social relations are constituted by a web of knowledge claims that clash against each other. Each claim for truth is entangled with the demands of legitimacy. This legitimacy is absolutely dependent on the eternal dictum *A lie multiplied a thousand times is better than a truth that has never been heard before*. This means that all knowledge reigns superior against the other if and only if it lives constantly in discourse that affirms and confirms it. In other words, the politics of knowledge simply means that a knowledge that has not been heard dies naturally, devoured by a discourse that dominates the others.

Taglish is a discourse. Taglish is not just the use of an English word blended ingeniously with Tagalog. It has a mindset, a value system, a way of looking at reality, a system of symbols that mesmerize speakers and, like a virus, it sweeps through every social vein that sustain the Filipino life-world.

As mentioned earlier, when one is able to engage in a certain discourse, he has the ability to judge for himself what is valid or invalid pertaining to the discourse he is engaging in. To have the knowledge needed to engage in a discourse renders him powerful. The community engaging in such discourse has the power to dictate what the norm is, what is valid,

and what must be discriminated or set aside. Thus, discourse empowers those who engage in it, to sway the majority, even if that majority does not engage in the same discourse. This discourse upon being legitimized as a norm then becomes the standard which has the ability to exercise power and control over others.

When Taglish becomes the normative discourse, it becomes a discourse of power. Taglish and the ideas it upholds are elevated in the pedestal, wherein it exercises its power over the majority, so that those who fail to abide to it, those who do not speak it feel marginalized from the Taglish speaking community. The primacy of Taglish as a discourse means that the narratives beyond Taglish are excluded and considered substandard. That means to say that in order to keep up, one is to engage and communicate in Taglish. As a legitimized norm, it advocates uniformity. This means that everybody has to speak it lest he be discriminated.

4. Reality is constituted by relations of Power.

In the discussion of power aforementioned, we can liken the rise of Taglish as constituted by power relations. The rise of power is involved in the legitimization of certain ideals. Those in Taglish rise to power through relations. Such include our educational system, our colonial mentality, and the medium of communication in white-collared jobs (which are esteemed superior to blue-collared jobs). This makes it easier for the Taglish speaking community to rise. Our educational system which endorses English gives the impression that those who speak English or, in any way able to use it, are the learned. Such is the case that Filipinos have then embraced the authority of English as the language of education, a superior language. Embracing English with open arms easily allows

the Taglish speaking community to rise to power. In their growth, they are able to set the standards for what has *class*, what must be esteemed. People of high-class become trend setters in their own way so that deliberately or not, they legitimatize Taglish as a socio-cultural norm. The predominance of the discourse of Taglish results in the predominance of that certain knowledge it upholds: that those who speak it are superior to those who do not.

An additional insight is that there is a relation of power between Taglish and Tagalog as discourses, along with English. Firstly, when power is at constant war, it seeks alliances and relations to grow and become the *Panopticon*, the "coherent and unified system" which everyone will accept. English is a foreign language that was incorporated in our educational system from the time the Americans came. Throughout time, it has been embraced as the language of higher learning. However, its authority cannot be easily accepted since it is after all a *foreign* language. Tagalog remains the very acceptable discourse everyone has access to. Hence, a power relation must be forged in order to aid its rise. By the very act of mixing English and Tagalog, a relation of power is formed. Taglish becomes socially acceptable even to the lower class as well as the higher class. Thus the ideology it upholds seeps into the psyche of those who esteem it. This ideology has spread into the psyche so that every Filipino associates Taglish with the higher social class which they esteem. Taglish becomes the weapon of control and subjugation.

VI. Conclusion

In the beginning of this paper, three arguments were presented that needed to be answered. We go back to these three arguments summarize in brief the findings of this paper in the light of Foucault:

1. Taglish does indeed uphold an ideology of superiority. Filipinos have associated Taglish with education and class throughout time. Those who engage in Taglish have risen so that they became the authoritative body which dictates Taglish as the normative discourse. Being a normative discourse, it excludes and undermines those who are unable to engage in such discourse, further deepening the mindset of superiority by exclusion. In a way, this pressures the individual to engage in such a discourse if he wishes to be socially accepted. This can be observable in interviews and even in the classroom situation in particular wherein those engaging in English and Taglish are esteemed for their proficiency, at the expense of Tagalog. In such a way, Tagalog is pushed to the sideline as an undermined language.

2. In the rise of Taglish, some Tagalog words have been forgotten. People esteeming Taglish at the expense of Tagalog generate a truth that the language handed down by our elders was set aside. The Filipino culture, whose soul is in the Filipino language, was left for granted. This phenomenon unleashes a culture that discards the old ways, and forgets tradition. In the process, our cultural heritage and identity is distorted by the ideology that Taglish as a socio-cultural phenomenon upholds.

3. The esteem and social acceptance of Taglish is rooted in our colonial mentality. This ideology further roots to the mindset that the language of our colonizers is more superior as compared to our own language. That is no wonder considering our educational system's medium of communication is predominantly English. By incorporating English in our language, we became empowered and esteemed as well. In the process, Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano, and other native languages were underestimated and viewed as inferior since the ideology we have now esteems English as the language of the learned. Sadly, vernacular is being set aside.

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[1] In this paper, Tagalog and Filipino are used interchangeably though Filipino is sometimes used to refer to the person

[2] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language.* trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith. (New York: Vintage Books, 1982), 129

[3] Michel Foucault, *Foucault Live,* as cited by Thomas Flynn, "Foucault's Mapping of History", *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 30

[4] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language,* 138

[5] Paul Oliver, *Foucault: The Key Ideas, (*London, Hodder Education, 2010), 21

[6] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things,* as cited by Paul Oliver, *Foucault: The Key Ideas.* London: Hodder Education, 2010, 27

[7] Thomas Flynn, "Foucault's Mapping of History", *Cambridge Companion to Foucault,* ed. Gary Gutting. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990, 46

[8] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language,* 224

[9] Paul Oliver, *Foucault : The Key Ideas,* 30

[10] Paul, Oliver, 44

[11] Ibid, 45

[12] Joseph Rouse, "Power/ Knowledge", *Cambridge Companion to Foucault,* 103

[13] Ibid, 106

[14] Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality,* as cited by Joseph Rouse, "Power Knowledge", *Cambridge Companion to Foucault*

[15] Joseph Rouse, 109

[16] Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality,* 92

[17] Joseph Rouse, 113

[18] Ibid, 115

[19] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* as cited by Joseph Rouse, "Power/Knowledge", *Cambridge Companion to Foucault,* 98

[20] J.R.R. Tolkien, *Lord of the Rings series.* (London: Harpercollins Publishers, 1991)

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