

# The Role of English in a Multilingual Environment: The Case of the University of the Philippines Baguio

Jasmin G. Bayquen  
University of the Philippines Baguio

The University of the Philippines (UP) Baguio, located in the heart of the highlands, is the burgeoning hub of indigenous studies in the north. The students and teachers are multilingual and multicultural as many are from the north while a considerable number come from other parts of the country. This diversity in regional origins means a lively mix in the languages spoken by the students. Each place has a lingua franca but a lot of these students speak other Philippine Languages as their mother tongue. This diversity is interesting in relation to the UP System's bilingual policy when it comes to teaching.

This paper presents the two main ways that English is used in the classroom by students and teachers especially in technical subjects. While there are monolingual and bilingual speakers in the classroom, there are those who code mix and code switch between English and Filipino.

This study helps in understanding what students find more comfortable as a medium of instruction in the classroom. It also shows if the first languages of learners affect their preferred medium of instruction.

A random sampling was used to select the teachers and students who were given survey questionnaires which were answered by 75% of the College of Arts and Communication and 50% of the CAC students. All participants voluntarily joined the research. Teachers were asked what language they used in their particular subjects in terms of quizzes, recitations, exams, reports, essays, and other activities. They were also asked if they have tried a monolingual approach on subjects they teach bilingually at present. Also, students were asked what language they used in asking questions, contributing to discussions, and others.

Findings show that 75% of the faculty utilize English as their medium of instruction while some code-switch and code-mix because the students ask questions in Filipino even if the subject is taught in English.