AJELS can be found on EBSCOhost databases
https://doi.org/10.59960/2.a2

Language of "order": English in the linguistic landscape of two major train stations in the Philippines

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Published: December 2014

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Abstract

This paper examines the linguistic landscape of two main train stations in Metro Manila, Philippines. Using Ben-Rafael et al.'s (2006) notion of top-down and bottom-up signs and Scollon and Scollon's (2003) concept of place semiotics, the paper seeks to determine the languages used, the ways these languages are used, and the possible explanations to the ways these languages are used in the 76 signs found in the two stations. The paper shows that English and Filipino languages are mainly used in the signs; however, between the two languages, English dominates as there are overwhelmingly more signs in English only than in Filipino only. In signs where both languages (English-Filipino) are used, English is found to be more preferred than Filipino. The preferential use of English is indicated by writing the English versions either in the center, on top, or on the left of the English-Filipino signs, having more English words than Filipino ones; and emphasizing English words either by highlighting, underlining, circling, or capitalizing in English-Filipino Codemixing signs. Given that the analyzed signs are found in the train stations, the paper concludes that English is used to exact two forms of "order": one that makes readers "follow order" such as proper behaviors in train stations, and another that encourages readers to "make order" like buying of food in commercial establishments in the areas. The effectiveness of English in purporting these "orders" among Filipinos may be explained by the positive attitude of Filipinos toward Americans. The use of English has not only been associated with the "progressive" American ideals of "enlightenment," "democracy," and "self-governance" (Lorente, 2007, p. 90) but also with anything that is "good" for the Filipino people. Thus, the dominant use of English in the signs in the train stations supposes that passengers will obey these signs or "orders" as doing so is beneficial not only for the self but also for all.

Keywords: Linguistic landscape of the Philippines, language of order, English in the Philippines

1. Introduction

English has unprecedentedly spread and steadily become entrenched in different parts of the world. In his comprehensive review of the studies on linguistic landscape (LL) (cf. Backhaus, 2005; Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, Hasan Amara, & Trumper-Hecht, 2006; Cenoz & Gorter, 2006; Huebner, 2006), Lado (2011) highlights this phenomenon and concludes that a common finding in these studies is the "strong presence of English on both top-down and bottom-up signs, as a clear indicator of the rapid spread of English worldwide as the language of global communication" (p. 138). Lado's conclusion corroborates Smith's (1992) contention that: "In the recorded history there has never been a language to match the present global spread and the use of English" (p. 75). Although there were efforts in the past to stop the use of English in public spaces such as the "Toubon-Law that required the use of French in official government publications, advertisements, and other contexts in France, and the "Bill 101" or the Charter of the French Language in Quebec (Cenoz & Gorter, 2008), English has persisted as evidenced by the linguistic landscapes of these areas and others that earlier resisted the use of English, such as Japan, China, Germany, and Russia, to name a few.

However, in the above studies and other research by Lock (2003), Curtin (2009), Lanza and Woldemariam (2009), Rosendal (2009), Stroud and Mpendukana (2009), Lin (2010), Papen (2012), and Taylor-Leech (2012), the use of English in linguistic landscapes, in either informational, symbolic, or both functions (Landry & Bourhis, 1997), may be robust; but the dominant local languages in the focused areas in these studies also show "active competition" with English, or at the very least, indicate "co-existence," exemplifying a linguistic landscape which Landry and Bourhis (1997) describe as "bilingual" (p. 26).

The Philippines, although known as a multilingual country with 170 languages (Ethnologue as cited in Quijano & Eustaquio, 2009), has generally embraced a bilingual policy, where Filipino and English are the official languages of the government, education, media, and commerce. Additionally, these two languages have been given positive ascriptions: Filipino, although widely perceived as Tagalog, is considered as a language of unity and a symbol of national identity (Martin, 2012), while English is not only recognized by Filipinos as a global language but is also deeply rooted in their past as the language of colonial America. It should not be surprising, therefore, if the Philippines would exhibit a "bilingual" linguistic landscape like the countries examined in the studies above.

This paper, then, attempts to ascertain whether an "active competition" between English and Filipino is also evident in the linguistic landscape of the country. To this end, top-down and bottom-up signs found in two major train stations – Recto-LRT Station and Taft-MRT Station – in Metro Manila, the capital of the Philippines, have been examined. In particular, the paper seeks to determine what languages are used, how they are used, and why they are used the way they are used in the linguistic landscape of these two stations. The paper first discusses the position of English in the country's language policies and the historical and social conditions as well as the ideological stances shaping language policy-making in the country. Then, using the notions of top-down and bottom-up signs and place semiotics, the paper analyzes the signs in the two train stations and consequently highlights the relevance of using such notions in understanding the position of English in the country.

English and language policies in the Philippines

To understand the position of English in the Philippines, the paper examines the language policies of the country and the historical and social conditions as well as the ideological stances shaping these policies. However, this paper recognizes that although the analysis of the policies can help expose the position of English in the country, such an analysis alone does not seem to adequately and concretely establish the position of English without looking into the actual use of the language such as in the linguistic landscape of the two train stations. In a way, this paper considers the policies as a contributory factor to whatever position English has in the Philippine society today.

English was introduced as part of the institutionalization of the public school system in the Philippines by the United States in 1901. It was used as the language of instruction throughout the American colonial period (Martin, 2012), a practice that has pervaded up to the present, albeit with some variations. Since then, English has generally been the more preferred language than Tagalog or any other local languages as the language of the government, media, and education (Pascasio, 2005).

Between 1902 and 1970, despite attempts to institute a local language, primarily Tagalog, as the language of instruction and official language, and to explore the use of vernacular languages in teaching, English continued to persist and dominate the education sector. Among the notable initiatives were the Butuan Experiment in 1903 and the Iloilo Experiment in 1946, which both investigated and found evidence of the effectiveness of use of vernacular languages in elementary teaching. Similar experiments were undertaken in 1931, advocated by some *pensionados* (Filipino scholars who went to universities in the United States) and Vice-Governor General George Butte (Bauzon, 2003); in 1950, the Vernacular Teaching Policy was proposed and initiated by the Fulbright scholar Clifford Prator (Gonzalez, 1998 as cited in Martin, 2012). While these experiments provided results in favor of the use of vernacular language in teaching, English remained as the language of instruction.

Additionally, policies crafted and implemented during the Commonwealth Period (1935-1946) (e.g., Executive Order No. 134 in 1939, which identified Tagalog as the national language, the symbol of the Filipino people) and those instituted during Japanese occupation (e.g., Executive Order No. 10 in 1943, which identified Tagalog as the language of instruction) also served to rupture the growing hegemony of English in Philippine education. With these policies, Filipinos saw the growth of Tagalog, renamed Pilipino to symbolize national unity (Martin, 2012), as the language of instruction in elementary education. The popularity of Pilipino rose as the media and the Church, through the Catholic Education Association of the Philippines (CEAP), recognized its use and relevance (Bauzon, 2003). Nevertheless, while the above policies accorded Filipino more emphasis and recognition, English had remained an important language in the country. In fact, except during the Japanese Period (1942-1945) where English seemed to have been side-lined, English had continuously been given importance, either as a subject from elementary to college levels or as a language of instruction from upper elementary to college levels. Thus, the status of English as an important language persisted.

Efforts to give Filipino importance "equal" to English continued, as evidenced by the institutionalization of the Bilingual Education Program (BEP) in 1974. In BEP, English was the language of instruction in English, science, and mathematics subjects, and Filipino in all other subjects. However, even with this policy, Filipino could not be considered as sharing equal status with English because, compared to the latter, it was not widely used in other formal settings (e.g., government, media, and business). In fact, even with the existence of BEP, Filipinos who speak languages other than Tagalog like the Cebuanos, for example, continued to use Cebuano in less formal settings, and intriguingly, English in more formal settings. To these Filipinos, where their local language fails, English, not Filipino, suffices. Lorente's (2007) position is correct in this particular sense – that the grip of English in the country is ideological, as it is taken as a "neutral" and "beneficial" language (p. 88). Apparently, such ideological stance ignored the bilingual policy, contributing to the perpetuation of English as a dominant language in the country.

Recently, the Mother-Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) has been implemented as a component of a broader basic education law – the K to 12 Program. The MTB-MLE seems to be another effort to curb the influence of English in the country. In this policy, the use of other local languages, specifically the eight major languages – Bikol, Cebuano, Hiligaynon, Ilokano or Iloko, Kapampangan, Pangasinan or Pangasinense, Tagalog, and Warayor Samarnon – with each at least a million speakers, and eleven other languages – Tausug, Maguindanaoan, Maranao, (or *Meranao* as cited in Nolasco, 2008), Chabacano, (DepEd, 2012) Ybanag, Ivatan, Sambal, Aklanon, Kinaray-a, Yakan, and Surigaonon (DepEd, 2013) are emphasized. While the MTB-MLE serves to promote local languages in education to make learning more equitable and to make language use more democratic, it is constantly challenged by ideologies that favor the use of English over the local languages. For example, the use of vernaculars as languages of instruction is viewed as detrimental to the employability of Filipinos in the English-dominated world. This view has pervaded the country, explaining why English has continuously influenced the education sector despite efforts to subdue it by instituting other local languages as media of instruction.

In the abovementioned policies, with the exception of the MTB-MLE, the Filipinos are in a dilemma either to embrace English to survive in the English-dominant, globalized world or to use a local language (or some local languages) to maintain a national identity. While "[t]he relationships between language policies and globalization can have different slants… language policies may accommodate, resist, or ignore globalization" (Hamid, 2009, p. 57). In many cases, Asian countries tend to accommodate English or take what Rappa and Wee (2006 as cited in Hamid, 2009) call "a balancing act" (p. 18). Such an approach, however, does not seem to be more of a choice, rather more of an "acceptance" of the power of English. As Hamid (2009) explains, "although globalization is seen as detrimental to national culture and identity (imperialistic), these nations cannot stay away from it. By the same token, they cannot ignore English, which, despite its hegemony, is necessary" (p. 58).

Like other Asian countries, the Philippines has taken the same "act" which, instead of "resisting" or "ignoring" English, accommodated English as a language of instruction, along with Filipino, the national language. This can be observed in almost all language policies.

The most notable of which are the BEP in 1974 and a similar policy in 1987, following the promulgation of the 1987 Constitution where Filipino, along with English, was identified as official languages. The same can be said of the Executive Order 210 in 2003 and the subsequent Department Order No. 36, which sought to strengthen English as language of instruction, and Project Turn in 2007, which emphasized English as key in math and science (Martin, 2012). While the MTB-MLE was supported by some lawmakers by creating House Bill 3719 (Gunigundo Bill or "Multilingual Bill"), it was opposed by some other lawmakers by proposing House Bill 5619 (Gullas et al. Bill or "English Only" Bill). The latter was proposed in 2008, at the time when MTB-MLE was being conceptualized, and it sought to strengthen and enhance the use of English as the language of instruction from preschool to college, with the belief that it gives Filipinos the edge in the global market. Clearly, English has been entrenched in the Philippine society; the influence of which deepens as Filipinos continue to venerate it as the key to succeed in the globalized world.

As a whole, the historical and social conditions, as well as the ideological stances of Filipinos, favor English over the local languages. This provides a general background against which the use of English in the linguistic landscape of the two major train stations under study, and very likely, of the entire country, might be deeply understood and framed. English has been so deeply ingrained in the consciousness of the Filipinos that they seem to find it, knowingly or unknowingly, more important than Filipino or any other local languages. As Hau and Tinio (2003) contend, English "was entrenched more effectively in state policies as well as in the *public imagination*" (p. 89, emphasis added). Moreover, English is considered as the language of power and "the marker of and the gatekeeper to an educated and privileged class" (Lorente, 2007, p. 91); hence, to undermine its use could deprive an individual of the power to protect his or her rights and enjoy equal privileges. English is also taken as the language of economic success and "a valuable symbolic and material capital" (Lorente, 2007, p. 91); thus, to delimit its use indicates an individual's disadvantage to be employed in the globalized world, where English is a prerequisite for employment. With these prevailing contexts, it is not a surprise, therefore, if English dominates the linguistic landscape of the country.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

Given the central position of English in the language policies of the country, this paper asks: To what extent does English dominate (if it does) the linguistic landscape of the two train stations under study? To answer this question and to determine the extent of use of English alongside other languages in the linguistic landscape of the two train stations, this paper employs the notion of top-down signs and bottom-up signs as distinguished by Ben-Rafael et al. (2006), following Landry and Bourhis's (1997) government-private signs dichotomy, in categorizing the signs found in the two stations. This study also employs some key elements of Scollon and Scollon's (2003) notion of place semiotics in further examining the signs in the chosen areas.

1.1.1 Top-Down and Bottom-Up Signs

Ben-Rafael et al. (2006) describe top-down signs as the "LL elements used and exhibited by institutional agencies which in one way or another act under the control of local or central policies" (p. 10) while bottom-up signs are "those utilised by individual, associative or corporative actors who enjoy autonomy of action within legal limits" (p. 10). They explain that the main difference between these two categories lies in the fact that "the former are expected to reflect a general commitment to the dominant culture while the latter are designed much more freely according to individual strategies" (p. 10). In other words, the preferential use of a language in top-down signs indicates a consideration of the dominant group's culture such as language policies and ideologies.

The use of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' as broad categories of signs has also been explored in studies that followed after Ben-Rafael et al.'s (2006). Among them are by Cenoz and Gorter (2006), Blackwood (2009), and Taylor-Leech (2012). While they use varying terminologies to distinguish top-down from bottom-up signs, they nonetheless refer to an essentially similar understanding of the concepts – top-down as government and bottom-up as commercial. In Cenoz and Gorter's (2006) study, top-down signs refer to the official signs placed by the government or related institution while bottom-up signs refer to the nonofficial signs put by commercial enterprises or by private organizations or persons. It can be inferred here that bottom-up signs are nongovernmental signs, either with or without commercial value. Here, the top-down/bottom-up dichotomy is attributed to official/nonofficial, where the former relates to top-down while the latter to bottom-up. It is important to mention here that because commercial establishments may have a number of signs, Cenoz and Gorter (2006) consider each establishment, regardless of the number of signs displayed therein, as one sign. As the present paper also recognizes the complexity in categorizing commercial signs, it follows Cenoz and Gorter's system of categorizing the bottom-up signs that considers each establishment as one sign.

Moreover, although Taylor-Leech's (2012) study explicitly refers to Ben-Rafael et al.'s (2006) distinction between top-down and bottom-up, it more specifically relates to Cenoz and Gorter's delineation of top-down and bottom-up signs, that is, the former as the official and the latter as the nonofficial. Blackwood's (2009) study, on the other hand, uses the top-down and bottom-up categorization following Ben-Rafael et al.'s (2006) definition. Blackwood elaborates that top-down signs are "those issued by national and public bureaucracies – public institutions, signs on public sites, public announcement and street names" (p. 8) while 'bottom-up' signs are "those which were issued by individual social actors – shop owners and companies – like the names of shops, signs on businesses and personal announcements" (p. 8). Here, the top-down/bottom-up dichotomy is linked to the public and the individual, where the former relates to top-down while the latter to bottom-up.

While the top-down/bottom-up dichotomy has been abnegated for "oversimplifying" the issue of authorship (cf. Huebner, 2006; Kallen, 2009, Malinowski, 2009 as cited in Bruyel-Olmedo & Juan-Garau, 2009, p. 388) or for being "untenable" in the era when the private sector has to abide by the government policies on sign making (Leeman & Modan, 2009),

it helps provide nuances to the analysis of the LL of a given area, as it does for the present study. As Ben-Rafael (2006 as cited in Lado, 2011) argues that "in any case, investigating the differences between top-down and bottom-up signs is still a good way to help reveal whether the norms behind the LL items reflect conflicting trends between public and private sectors" (p. 136).

Since the distinctions between top-down and bottom-up signs provided by the aforementioned studies are very much related, all those distinctions are considered in the present paper. Thus, in this paper, top-down signs are official, government, or public signs while bottom-up signs are nonofficial, commercial, or private (individual or institution) signs. Essentially, this paper uses the notion of top-down and bottom-up signs to determine whether the languages used and the ways they are used in government and commercial signs in the two train stations indicate conflicting, or otherwise, trends between the public and the private domains. By doing so, the paper provides a substantial analysis of the signs in the two train stations.

1.1.2 Place Semiotics

Where meaning-making of visual images and accompanying texts are a concern, Scollon and Scollon's (2003) concept of "place semiotics" is helpful and Ogasawara's (2005) review of the concept is elucidating. Scollon and Scollon, drawing insights from Edward Hall (1959, 1969) and Erving Goffman's (1959, 1963, 1971, 1974) earlier work in linguistic anthropology and Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen's (1966, 2001) visual semiotic framework, argue that visual images form their meaning based on their position or location in the world. In their framework, place semiotics is constituted by the following key elements: *code preference*, *inscription*, and *emplacement*. Code preference deals with "how signs represent the geopolitical world through the *choice* of languages, their graphic representation, and their *arrangement* if more than one language is contained on a sign" (Backhaus, 2007, p. 37, emphasis added). Accordingly, a code preference in images (or in this case, signs) may be exhibited through either of the following: center-margin, top-bottom, left-right, and earlier-later, or other semiotic conventions (Ogasawara, 2005). In other words, the preferential use of a language in a bilingual or multilingual sign can be determined by the position of the said language in the sign. In this paper, this concept helps identify the more preferred language in the "hybrid" signs, which use more than one language, found in the two train stations.

However, Scollon and Scollon (2003) caution that a code may signify something but not necessarily index a particular group. For instance, a code symbolizing foreign tastes does not index an English-speaking community (Ogasawara, 2005). Hence, they suggest that to determine whether a code-preference is based on a geopolitical or sociocultural indexing (i.e., identification to a particular geographic area and its consequent political, social, and cultural contexts), researchers must look for evidence outside the signs themselves. Scollon and Scollon, for example, focus on Chinese-English bilingual signs and posit that multiple codes may be present within a single sign or image. They argue that "although placement is usually the most important indicator of code preference, local laws may dictate that one

language must be placed in the more salient (preferred) position on the sign" (Ogasawara, 2005, p. 3). Hence, the preferential use of English, as indicated by the placement, in the Chinese-English bilingual signs does not indicate the existence, more so the dominance, of an English-speaking group in the area; instead, it signifies a result of a particular force. It is possible that text or code placements may reflect carryover from colonial days, from the international or global sphere, or from other forces at work (Ogasawara, 2005). Given the colonial past of the Philippines with the United States, the possibility of code placements in the signs in the two train stations as a result of the colonial influences is also considered in this paper. Such colonial past can serve as evidence outside of the signs if any indexing is to be established from the analysis of the signs in the two train stations.

Additionally, Scollon and Scollon (2003) explain that code preference may be shown in the inscription or the "physical materiality" of language (Ogasawara, 2005, p. 4). This includes the fonts, the materials, and other physical changes including layering. Using China as an example, Scollon and Scollon posit that traditional characters are associated either with the most ancient or the most modern values, whereas simplified writing indicates conservative, socialist values (Ogasawara, 2005). In short, aside from the position of the texts, the fonts, the materials, and other components of the signs can be analyzed as contributory elements to the preferential use of a language or languages.

Moreover, as the position of signs is of particular concern in Scollon and Scollon's (2003) framework, it also examines the emplacement of signs, or where a sign or image is physically placed. Scollon and Scollon explain that signs could be *decontextualized* (they always appear in the same form no matter what the context is, such as brand names like McDonald's), *transgressive* (they are displayed in the 'wrong' place), and *situated* (their meaning is specifically drawn from a particular location).

Several studies in LL have explored and validated the significance of emplacement in understanding the position of English in the linguistic landscape of a given area. For instance, Lin (2010) uses the concept of decontextualized signs as one of the lenses to analyze the signs in Beijing and the role of English in these signs. Lin reports that there are signs in Beijing written in English only (e.g., Levi's copper jeans advertisements) which appear in the same form in English-speaking countries such as the United States. Lin argues that while these signs are faced with "bland indifference" (p. 79) from locals who cannot read English, they nonetheless create "an 'authentic', transnational space" (p. 80). Lin further explains that "transnational imageries and symbols in their 'unblended,' 'original' forms are deployed in junction [*in combination*] with English texts, to convey associations of higher value, better quality and internationally recognized prestige" (p. 80, italics added). Lin further contends that the absence of Chinese characters in these signs indexes "deeper ideological implications" (p. 80). The English monolingual signs seem to have created an exclusive space; that is, entry into such a space requires knowledge of the international linguistic repertoire (i.e., English), conformity to the value attribution system, and purchasing power (Lin, 2010). Consequently, Lin concludes that "monolingual signs of this type are intensively ideological in their purposeful invocation of associations with class, wealth and inequality" (p. 80). In this particular analysis, the decontextualized signs allow Lin to ascertain the role of English

not only as a marker of internationalization in Beijing but also as an index of a space that constitutes hierarchical and capitalist ideologies.

Similarly, Bruyèl-Olmedo and Juan-Garau (2009) use Scollon and Scollon's (2003) concept of code preference to analyze the relationship of English with other languages present in the resort of S'Arenal in Mallorca, Spain. In their study, the signs found in the resort were categorized into monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual signs. Bruyèl-Olmedo and Juan-Garau report that of the different languages, mostly European, English ranked first in the monolingual signs and ranked second to Spanish in the bilingual and multilingual signs. It is important to note that these signs were found in Spain, where Spanish is widely spoken, not to mention it being also an international language, and in a tourist destination, where German tourists are dominant in terms of number. Bruyèl-Olmedo and Juan-Garau also observe the significant presence of English in the area and conclude that, "in this multilingual context, English boasts privileged status as the world's accepted lingua franca …. It is a language for international communication, not as much for identification, with widespread presence in the LL…" (p. 409). Here, the notion of code preference helps Bruyèl-Olmedo and Juan-Garau determine the relative dominance of English in the linguistic landscape of a multilingual resort in Spain.

In this present paper, Lin's (2010) and Bruyèl-Olmedo and Juan-Garau's (2009) works provide exemplification and elucidation of the use of Scollon and Scollon's place semiotics framework in understanding the position of English in the country. Needless to say, similar attempts at using Scollon and Scollon's framework are also explored in this paper. It makes use of the three elements (code-preference, inscription, and emplacement) of place semiotics and analyzes the English-Filipino signs in relation to the three elements in ways mentioned above. It should be mentioned, however, that while the use of such a framework has proven to be beneficial in understanding multilingual contexts, it has not been explored in understanding the linguistic landscape of the Philippines. It is in this sense that the present paper finds its use significant.

2. Method

2.1 Study Locale

Among the busiest train stations in the Philippines are Recto-LRT Station and Taft-MRT Station. Recto-LRT Station is one of the stations of the Manila Light Rail Transit System Line 2 (LRT-2), which is located along Claro M. Recto Avenue, Santa Cruz, Manila. It is named after the said avenue. This station is the gateway to popular landmarks, from shopping centers (Divisoria, Tutuban, Isetann Shopping Center, etc.), hotels (Pearl Manila Hotel, Golden City Hotel, etc.), hospitals (Fabella Memorial Hospital), schools (Far Eastern University, University of the East, etc.) to Manila City Jail and the famed Quiapo Church. Moreover, it is a major transportation hub, where buses, jeepneys, and cycle rickshaws stop at a transportation terminal that lies on Claro M. Recto Avenue. It is the transfer point for

commuters riding the Yellow Line to either Baclaran or Roosevelt via a crossway to Doroteo Jose LRT Station ("Recto," 2013). Given Recto-LRT Station's strategic location, many Filipino commuters in Manila, mostly from lower to middle classes, and tourists access this station.

Taft-MRT Station, on the other hand, is one of the stations of Metro Rail Transit Corporation. It is located at the corner of Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA), one of Metro Manila's main thoroughfares, and Taft Avenue (also known as *Pasay Rotonda* or *Edsa-Taft*). The station is named after Taft Avenue. The avenue is named after former U.S. President and U.S. Chief Justice William Howard Taft, who served as Governor-General of the Philippines from 1901 to 1903. Its convenient location has helped create many businesses in the area, from hotels and motels to restaurants and shops, with many of them a short walk from the station. It is also the ideal stop for those continuing to Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) and Bay City, including SM Mall of Asia. Many provincial bus lines serving Northern Luzon and Southern Luzon have bus terminals near the station. Buses and jeepneys from this station ply for various points in Metro Manila – Pasay, Muntinlupa (Sucat and Alabang), Parañaque (Bicutan), Las Piñas, Manila, Caloocan, and Makati – and the southern provinces of Cavite, Batangas, and Laguna ("Taft Avenue," 2013). Accordingly, an estimated 540,000 commuters take the MRT ("MRT," 2014), and many of them access the Taft MRT Station daily.

This suggests that, every day, both train stations are accessed by thousands of Filipino commuters, who, in turn, are exposed to the linguistic landscape of these areas. Although many of these commuters are from other parts of the country and are speakers of other local languages, they can comprehend, in varying degrees, Filipino and English. This is so because, as discussed earlier, aside from being taught as subjects in schools, these two languages are also used as languages of instruction. Additionally, as the regular commuters can be said to represent the socioeconomic profile of the majority of Filipinos, that is, from low to middle classes (Mega Manila Public Transport Study, 2007 as cited in Landingin, 2011), the linguistic landscape is purported to 'speak' to these particular groups, thereby, helping index either these groups' or the sign creators' beliefs and ideologies about the languages in the landscape.

Moreover, it is important to mention that while both belong to train systems under the supervision of the Department of Communications and Transportations (DOTC), they are operated separately by different agencies – Recto-LRT Station by Light Rail Transit Authority, a public (government) transport operator, while Taft-MRT Station by Metro Rail Transit Corporation, a private consortium. This particular difference must be highlighted since services offered by public and private sectors in the Philippines are often contrasted, and the latter is generally believed to offer better services than the former. In the analysis of the linguistic landscape of the two train stations, the present paper is mindful of this perceived disparity in service delivery between the public and the private sectors. The paper is also keen on the possible polarity (or otherwise) between the two sectors concerning language use in signs posted in the two train stations.

2.2 Data-Gathering Procedure

This study collected a total of 71 signs, 35 from Recto-LRT Station and 36 from Taft-MRT Station. The following are the criteria for choosing the signs for analysis: (1) the sign is posted on a location within the station where the commuters can see; (2) the sign is generally intended for the commuters, and not the people manning the stations such as the tellers, janitors, security personnel, and the like; and (3) if the same sign is posted in several locations in the stations, the sign is only counted as one. The signs are then categorized into top-down signs and bottom-up signs following the distinctions given by Ben-Rafael et al. (2006) and the versions by Cenoz and Gorter (2006), Blackwood (2009), and Taylor-Leech (2012). In addition, it also follows Cenoz and Gorter's (2006) system of categorizing commercial establishments, where each establishment is taken as one unit of analysis (or as one sign) regardless of the number of signs posted in each establishment.

After categorizing the signs as to top-down and bottom-up, they are classified into the languages used: *Filipino Only, English Only, English-Filipino, English-Filipino Codemixing, English-Other Languages* (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, etc.). The difference between English-Filipino signs and English-Filipino Codemixing signs is in the structural or syntactic formation. The former are those that do not combine English and Filipino words within a structure while the latter are those that have English and Filipino words within a structure. This distinction is inspired by Huebner's (2008) study on the mixing of English and Thai in the LL in Thailand.

3. Results and Discussion

The succeeding section presents the results of the categorization process (top-down and bottom-up signs and languages used) and further analyses and discussions anchored on the concept of Scollon and Scollon's (2003) place semiotics. It should be noted, however, that an analysis and discussion follows immediately after a particular result is highlighted. Table 1 shows the languages used in the top-down and bottom-up signs in Recto-LRT Station while Table 2 shows those in Taft-MRT Station.

Table 1
Languages used in signs in Recto-LRT Station

Category	Top-Down	Bottom-Up	Total
Filipino Only	1	-	1
English Only	14	1	15
English-Filipino	7	2	9
English-Filipino Codemixing	2	4	6
English-Other Languages	-	4	4
Total	24	11	35

Table 2
Languages used in signs in Taft-MRT Station

Category	Top-Down	Bottom-Up	Total
Filipino Only	-	-	-
English Only	16	1	17
English-Filipino	12	2	14
English-Filipino Codemixing	1	1	2
English-Other Languages	1	2	3
Total	30	6	36

Both tables indicate that the two train stations have more top-down signs, with roughly 69% for Recto-LRT Station and 83% for Taft-MRT Station, than bottom-up signs. This suggests that the train stations are spaces controlled by the government; consequently, the linguistic landscape of these stations is very likely to reflect ideologies more of the government sector than of the private sector. The very minimal presence of bottom-up signs may be due to the fact that within the stations, there is not much space for commercial establishments. The bottom-up signs are basically limited to small stalls that sell food and refreshments for commuters. In fact, aside from the signs that accompany these food stalls, no other form of private (or personal) signs is observed.

It should be noted that more than 50% of the top-down signs found in both stations are written in English Only, and the rest are in English-Filipino and English-Filipino Codemixing. It is intriguing to note that among the top-down signs, only one is written in Filipino Only. This indicates that the government prefers to use English, either in full or in combination with Filipino than in Filipino alone. This particular result corroborates Pascasio's (2005) observation that English is the preferred language in government, especially in formal

Image 1

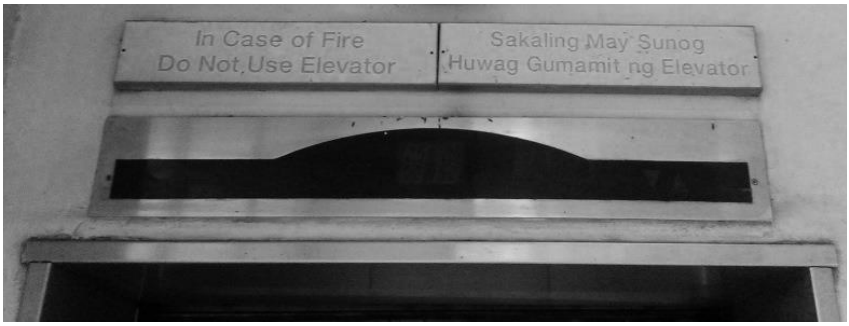

Image 2

Image 3

settings. Since the train stations are not formal settings per se, two possible ideologies of the government can be inferred from the preceding result. One, the government prefers to use English not only in formal settings but also in informal ones. Another, the government considers the train stations, or at least the messages of the signs, as formal, so English is preferred.

However, if the number of top-down English-Filipino and English-Filipino Codemixing signs are to be valuated, which is relatively significant (38% and 43%, respectively), it can also be said that the government gives, if not tries to give, importance to Filipino as well. As such valuation of Filipino is not expressed by having more signs written in Filipino only but by combining it with English, it can be surmised that this may be a result of the bilingual policy in the country, in which these two languages are privileged. As Ben-Rafael et al. (2006) argue, top-down signs (such as the ones analyzed here) "are expected to reflect a general commitment to the dominant culture" (p. 10), which includes language policies. As Filipino, aside from English, is given emphasis on top-down signs, the dominant culture that these said signs seem to reflect is that of Tagalog-speaking community, from which Filipino is largely derived.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that there are more signs in English Only than in hybrid forms (English-Filipino and English-Filipino Codemixing), so English is indicated as a preferred language. In fact, even in the hybrid ones, there are indications that English is more preferred than Filipino. In determining this preferential attitude toward English, Scollon and Scollon's (2003) notion of code-preference, which states that the preferred language is positioned either in the center, on top, or on the left of a sign, proves helpful. English is emphasized by positioning the English words either on top or on the left of the Filipino ones (see Images 1 and 2). In fact, even in English-Filipino signs dominantly written in Filipino words, the important words are usually in English (see Image 3). Hence, in all these signs, English is clearly the more preferred language than Filipino.

Moreover, it should also be noted that most of the top-down signs contained directives and reminders of proper behaviors (see Images 1 and 2) to be observed at the two train stations. These signs are written either in English and Filipino (e.g., *"No Smoking"/"Bawal Manigarilyo," "No Spitting"/"Bawal Dumura," "Do Not Leave Your Children Unattended"/"Ingatan ang mga Bata," "Please Do Not Stop the Train Doors from Closing"/"Huwag Po Nating Pigilan ang Pintuan ng Tren sa Pagsara," "Please Do Not Step on the Yellow Platform Edge"/"Iwasan Po Nating Tumapak sa Dilaw na Tiles"); or* in English only *(e.g., "Please give priority to disabled and pregnant passengers in using the elevator," "Please give priority in buying tickets: *Person with disabilities [PWD], *Senior citizens").* As these signs indicate a preferential attitude toward English (i.e., English versions are positioned on top of the Filipino ones; English, not Filipino, is used in signs that use only one language), they index the veneration of English as a powerful language, more powerful than Filipino, in making Filipinos "follow order" – instilling and marshalling civilized behaviors in the country. Seemingly, operators of the two major train stations in the country believe that Filipino train commuters are likely to observe the expected behaviors in the train stations when instructed and reminded using English in top-down signs.

Essentially, in arguing for the preferential use of English, the paper anchors the analysis on code preference, one of the three key elements of Scollon and Scollon's (2003) place semiotics. Further analysis using the other elements of place semiotics – inscription and emplacement – reveals the preferential attitude toward English. In terms of inscription, English is more vividly observed as a preferred language in English-Filipino Codemixing signs (both top-down and bottom-up) than in English-Filipino signs. In English-Filipino Codemixing signs, English words are highlighted using different font colors and circles (see Image 4), and larger font sizes, quotation marks, and underline (see Image 3). In English-Filipino signs, especially in top-down ones, such ways of highlighting English words are not clearly observed since the same font style and size, and effective color contrast are used. Nonetheless, the concept of inscription is still helpful in ascertaining the importance given to English in English-Filipino top-down signs by examining the materials used in these signs. Most of these signs are printed on polyvinyl chloride foamboard (e.g., the signs shown in Image 1). Such a material is primarily used in indoor signs such as the ones found in the two train stations because it allows digital imaging and resists dents and cracks ("Sign Materials," 2014). In other words, these English-Filipino top-down signs, which in the earlier analysis using code preference indicate the preferential use of English, are intended to be displayed for a very long time as the material used is durable. Hence, the analysis of the signs using the concept of inscription furthers the contention that English is more preferred than Filipino and that such a preference, along with its accompanying ideologies, is intended to be maintained for quite some time.

Furthermore, in terms of emplacement of signs, or where a sign or image is physically placed, this paper focuses on the top-down signs as *situated* signs. This focus is premised on the observation that many of the identified signs hardly exhibit the conditions to be analyzed from the perspective of decontextualized signs and transgressive signs. In fact, a number of these top-down signs (both in English Only and English-Filipino) are written in relatively small font sizes and in narrow spaces (between words and lines) (see Image 5) and posted in above eye-level position (see Image 6). These conditions affect the readability of the signs, as one MRT commuter commented on an online forum: "…yung mga SIGNAGE nyo, ang liliit, nababalewala kasi di makita at mabasa, minsan hindi nasa strategic locations, lalo na dyan sa Pasay Taft Station" (your signage are very small, which are ignored because they are not visible and readable, and sometimes are not in strategic locations, especially in Pasay Taft Station) ("konsernsitisin," January 9, 2013, translation added). Thus, by analyzing the materiality and the position of the signs in these areas, the present paper argues that these top-down signs index the symbolic, instead of the informational, function of English in the country.

Apparently, the informational function of English in this case may only be seen as one that provides information about the diglossic nature of a bilingual or multilingual context (Landry & Bourhis, 1997) such as the Philippines. As Landry and Bourhis (1997) elucidate: "In a diglossic situation, where two or more languages coexist in a stable state with varying status based on their functions in certain domains …the high-status language used for formal functions is more likely to be found on public signs than is the language used for lower-status functions such as in the home and local community" (p. 26). Here, the linguistic

Image 4

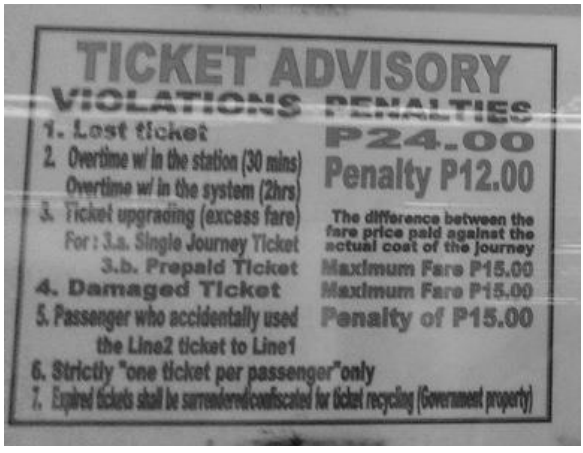

Image 5

Image 6

landscape can serve as the "indicator of the power and status relationship that exists between the various language groups present within a given administrative or geographical region" (Landry & Bourhis, 1997, p. 26). In the case of the Philippines, which has developed a "stable disglossia" (Ricento, 2000, p. 198) with English as the "major language of higher education and socioeconomic and political opportunities while local languages were restricted to other functions" (Mahboob & Cruz, 2013, p. 3), the prominent use of English in the public domains, such as the train stations, reinforces its position as a high-status language in the country, one that dominates other languages in the country including Filipino, the national language.

Moreover, while there are only a few bottom-up signs, it is important to note that English is also shown as a preferred language in these signs – an indication that the government and private sectors are in agreement in so far as English is concerned. Not only is there an absence of Filipino Only sign but there are also indications in bottom-up signs (both in English-Filipino and English-Filipino Codemixing) that English is more preferred than Filipino. In fact, these hybrid bottom-up signs (including combinations with other languages such as Chinese and Spanish) are observed only in the names of the store and not in the many other details such as prices, quantities, ingredients, and the like. Apparently, the use of Filipino is only to give a name to a product, probably to give the product a sense of authenticity being produced by a Filipino, but not to communicate with clients the product details such as ingredients.

As English also dominates the bottom-up signs, it functions as a language of "order," though in a different sense but equally powerful. Its use in commercial signs, whose purpose is primarily to market products, seems more effective in enticing consumers to buy or to make "order." English makes products appear not only legitimate but also safe and with quality. Similarly, English here takes more than an informational function but a symbolic one, validating Cenoz and Gorter's (2008) contention that "the use of English in commercial signs could be interpreted as informational mainly aimed at foreign visitors but it is obvious that its increasing presence has a strong *symbolic* function for a non-English speaking local population" (p. 269, emphasis added). Although there are many Filipinos who can understand English, not too many of them, especially from among the daily commuters of the trains, use English in their day-to-day activities. The use of English in the linguistic landscape of the two stations does not necessarily index an English-speaking community, as Scollon and Scollon (2003) similarly observed in the linguistic landscape of China, and Lanza and Woldemariam (2009) in the case of Ethiopia. Its use is reminiscent of Piller's (2003) contention that "English is often used in commercial signs for its *connotational* values such as international orientation, future orientation, success, sophistication or fun orientation" (p. 269, emphasis added). In short, the use of English in bottom-up signs hardly indicates Filipinos' linguistic identity as English speakers, but it shows their proclivity for Western ideals of luxury and sophistication associated with the said language.

Hence, the use and dominance of English in top-down and bottom-up signs in the two train stations creates two forms of order: one that makes readers "follow order" such as proper behaviors in train stations, and another that encourages readers to "make order" like buying of food in commercial establishments in the areas. The effectiveness of English

in purporting these "orders" among Filipinos may be explained by "the positive attitude of Filipinos toward Americans" (Gonzalez, 1980, p. 27) or by "the lack of suspicion of the West [i.e., *the United States*]" (Milne, 1963, p. 87, words in italics added). Seemingly, the use of English has not only been associated with the "progressive" American ideals of "enlightenment," "democracy," and "self-governance" (Lorente, 2007, p. 90) but also with anything that is "good" for the Filipino people. Thus, the dominant use of English in the signs in the train stations supposes that the commuters will obey these signs or "orders" as doing so is beneficial not only for the self but also for all.

Clearly, English dominates the linguistic landscape of the two train stations. This fact does not only undermine the bilingual policy of the country but also indexes the Filipinos' valorization of English. Despite the effort to develop the popularity of Filipino through language planning and policies (Bauzon, 2003; Gonzalez, 1998), the public and the private sectors have continued to valorize English, as evidenced by the signs in the two stations. This valorization very well relates to what Lorente (2007) considers as the "structural and historical continuities in the Philippines' peripheral location in the world system … [and] the grip of English on the structural, historical and social formations of the country" (p. 87). Lorente further elucidates that the privileging of English over Filipino and other local languages in the Philippines suggests that the grip of English is "ideological as well as material" (p. 87). On the one hand, it is ideological because it is "anchored on the widespread and widely accepted but *decontextualized belief that English is neutral and beneficial*" (Lorente, 2007, p. 88, emphasis provided); on the other hand, it is material because the "discursive formations around English permeate and configure economic, social and political provisions and processes that distribute and regulate access to valuable resources and that have an impact on the everyday lives of Filipinos" (Lorente, 2007, p. 88). In other words, English is believed to be not only neutral and beneficial but also indispensable in acquiring access to resources necessary for Filipinos' daily living.

4. Conclusion

With English dominating the linguistic landscape of these two stations, and very likely in many parts of the Philippines, evidently, there is no "active competition" between English and Filipino in the linguistic landscape of the country. Hence, instead of being bilingual, it seems rather apt to call the linguistic landscape as essentially "unilingual" (Landry & Bourhis, 1997, p. 26). The situation is not only a mockery of the multilingual reality but also an aberration of the country's bilingual policy. Here, even Dal Negro's (2009) contention that a bilingual sign "can be seen as an aspect of an explicit language policy aimed at giving status to two codes [English and Filipino in the case of the present study], not necessarily representing the entire of the real local linguistic repertoire but its language policy" (p. 206) falls short because English continues to dominate even in the bilingual signs. And the recent implementation of the multilingual policy can neither be expected to make significant change in the linguistic landscape of the country.

This situation is, by and large, shaped by the historical and social landscape of the Philippines, in which English has been deeply entrenched. With the enduring indoctrination of the value of English during the American Period and of the continuing valuation of English in the era of globalization, Filipinos value English today more than ever. The reason for such valuation is best captured in Constantino's (1966) words:

> The first and perhaps the master stroke in the plan to use education as an instrument of colonial policy was the decision to use English as the medium of instruction… This was the beginning of their education. At the same time, it was the beginning of their miseducation, for they learned no longer as Filipinos but as colonials. (p. 181)

It is hoped, however, that the "miseducation" of Filipinos can be resolved. And as the problem is largely ideological, a colonization of the mind, it can be addressed through a form of "decolonization" of the mind, using the same instrument that created the problem – education. In more specific terms, education can help address the problem by changing the perspective of Filipinos from a monolithic to a "pluralistic" outlook, emphasizing that one can have the chance to succeed and the power to enjoy life's privileges by "knowing" not only English but also other languages. As can be inferred, the approach is not to stop English, which seems improbable, but to include other languages in one's repertoire of languages. This can be buttressed by inclusive language planning and policies that engender a balanced and equitable use of the languages in the country.

Using top-down and bottom-up analytical lenses in the study of the signs and, more importantly, framing these signs within Scollon and Scollon's (2003) "place semiotics," this paper has shown that the dominance of English in the linguistic landscape of the two train stations could not be construed as something "normal" and "necessary," devoid of any ideological underpinnings. If any, this paper can be argued to have contributed to the existing literature on the dominance of English in the Philippines through a nuanced understanding of the position of the language in the country using conceptual lenses of linguistic landscape studies.

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