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Preservation Habits towards Sustainable Use of the Filipino Language

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ABSTRACT

As English becomes more prevalent in education, media, and social interactions, the use of Filipino is gradually diminishing, especially among younger generations, who are more exposed to English in these domains. This shift often leads to the erosion of linguistic diversity, which many view as a threat to the cultural fabric and heritage of the nation. This paper explored the preservation habits of Filipino adults in ensuring the sustainable use of the Filipino language. Filipino adults (n = 24) were purposively sampled to be interviewed about preservation habits that enabled the preservation of the language. Participants identified positive preservation habits, including practices such as setting aside specific times for speaking Filipino and engaging with Filipino media like movies, music, and radio. These behaviors were essential in maintaining language use in daily life, with participants emphasizing the role of positive reinforcement and supportive environments in encouraging continued language engagement. Cultural practices and family traditions were also essential, with Filipino language being prioritized during meals, bedtime, and family gatherings, thus encouraging a sense of connection between language and cultural identity. Participants shared how their parents actively instill the importance of speaking Filipino both as a cultural preservation mechanism and a means of honoring their ancestors. This modeling behavior created a connection between language and cultural identity, encouraging children to value Filipino as an integral part of their heritage. Nevertheless, there is an opportunity to integrate intentional language preservation habits,

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family traditions, and supportive environments in sustaining the use of the Filipino language across generations.

Keywords: Culture; Language Preservation; Language Maintenance; Parental Support; Preservation Habits

1. Introduction

Preserving and promoting linguistic diversity is essential for safeguarding our cultural heritage^[1]. Languages are integral to history and culture, and when a language becomes extinct, its associated history and culture are lost as well. Therefore, no language—regardless of its size—should be overlooked or neglected. Despite the undeniable value of linguistic diversity for future generations, it is often neglected and, in many instances, marginalized^[2]. It is important to actively participate in the current dialogue surrounding the protection of languages and the rejuvenation of cultural identities, especially amid the influences of globalization and shifting societal and cultural trends.

In countries where one language is adopted as the dominant language by the government, other languages frequently become marginalized. This results in linguistic diversity being viewed not as an asset, but as a problem^[3]. This paper, therefore, emphasizes the importance of preserving local languages, particularly in the context of a multiethnic, multilingual, and multicultural nations^[2, 3], like the Philippines, where such languages can contribute significantly to national development.

The dominance of English in key social domains such as politics, education, health, and business, to the detriment of local, minority, and marginalized languages, has long been a concern for sociolinguists and language advocates. In previous studies, the linguistic landscapes of cities and municipalities in the Philippines are dominated by monolingual English signs, a legacy of the country's colonial history with the language^[4–6]. English was deeply entrenched in the early education system and remains the primary medium of instruction despite reforms that incorporated local languages into primary school curricula^[7–9]. In addition, English is commonly used in business transactions, legal proceedings, and the formulation of national policies^[10, 11]. As such, it remains the dominant language across virtually all sectors of Philippine society, given its origins as a colonial language.

The shift in focus from language maintenance to active revitalization emerged as a direct response to the endanger-

ment and extinction of languages, which have been largely influenced by the effects of empire, industrialization, and globalization^[12]. Language death occurs when a community is the last to use its language^[13], and can take place either gradually, as when a language is replaced by another (e.g., Gaelic being replaced by English in parts of Scotland)^[14], or suddenly, with rapid extinction without an intervening period of bilingualism^[15].

Magno et al. conducted a qualitative study about teaching Filipino language to students with English-dominant backgrounds^[16]. Their findings revealed that interactive methods, particularly language games and role-playing, bridged the gap between existing knowledge and new language concepts, facilitating creative and collaborative application of language skills. The adoption of these strategies led to noticeable shifts in student behavior, with students demonstrating enhanced engagement, increased effort in seeking clarification, and greater persistence in reading Filipino texts. Building on these findings, the current study expanded the focus to examine the role of Filipino language habits in reinforcing language use. The integration of such habitual practices is believed to enhance long-term language preservation and develop cultural identity among citizens.

The critical juncture for a language occurs when the youngest generation, the children, no longer learn or use it^[17]. Each language and community must be assessed individually, as a large language, such as Quechua with millions of speakers, could still be endangered if the external pressures are substantial, whereas a smaller language, like Icelandic, could be safeguarded as long as the community remains functional and the environment stable^[15]. Consequently, building preservation habits can be an effective mechanism in mitigating the impact of language shift.

There has been a notable increase in the prevalence of mainstream Philippine English in the country, supported by academic institutions, teachers, and parents. This widespread use reflects the growing institutional and social endorsement of English as a dominant language in education, communication, and daily life. With focus on the everyday practices and behaviors of adults, the study seeks to identify the factors

that support the continued use of Filipino in various social settings. Understanding these habits is crucial for developing strategies that can strengthen language preservation efforts, especially as younger generations increasingly favor English.

2. Literature Review

Philippine linguistic landscape studies have extensively explored the interplay of language politics, identities, and ideologies, with a particular focus on the dominance of English in public signage and the marginalization of local and minority languages. For instance, De Los Reyes observed that English was not only the most prevalent language but also the preferred medium of authority in signage in Light Rail Transit (LRT) and Metro Rail Transit (MRT)—two major train stations in Metro Manila^[18]. This preference was attributed to Filipinos' historical colonial ties with the United States and their inclination toward Western ideals of sophistication associated with the English language^[5, 18].

Similar patterns of English dominance—and the consequent marginalization of local languages—have been documented in various studies. Villareal et al. examined the language landscape of Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, and Metro Davao and found that monolingual English signs dominated these cities^[19], despite the widespread use of Tagalog in Manila and Cebuano in both Cebu and Davao. The study attributed this dominance to English's role as an international language and global lingua franca, particularly in contexts such as advertisements, store names, and public signage related to rules and regulations. The official language status of English, along with its economic and international significance, further solidified its prevalence in the linguistic landscapes of these megacities^[19, 20].

Furthermore, Filipino teachers voiced concerns that the exclusion of Filipino as a subject in schools could result in a language shift, with students increasingly associating English with success and global competitiveness, while relegating Filipino to informal and marginalized contexts. Ringor, Tiana and Reyes warned that this exclusion risked accelerating language attrition^[21], where students would lose proficiency in Filipino, particularly in formal settings, diminishing its societal relevance. Addressing these challenges required the implementation of strategies to promote Filipino across academic contexts, balance English proficiency with Filipino

language preservation, and provide professional development for educators^[22].

The preservation of endangered languages is necessary for the protection of traditional knowledge, cultural identity, and human heritage for the forthcoming generations^[23, 24]. In addition, endangered languages improve global cultural and cognitive diversity, as each language encapsulates a distinctive worldview that has evolved over centuries^[25]. This paper observes the need for in-depth explorations about how habits could contribute to mitigating the impacts of language shift.

Gardner, Corbridge and McGowan define habit as a process where repeated behavioral performance in a specific context creates a context-response association that triggers an automatic impulse to act when exposed to contextual cues^[26]. Habits influence behavior, making it more accessible to practitioners unfamiliar with the underlying automatic processes^[27]. Fundamentally, habit formation requires consistent repetition of a response within a specific context to establish a context-response association^[28]. For instance, families who habitually speak in their native language at home create a strong context-response association, making the use of the language an automatic and ingrained behavior.

This paper believed that preserving a language necessitates strong habit formation among members of its speech community, driven by consistent context-response associations. Such habits could be reinforced by stimuli, including cultural pride, fear of language and identity loss, and the recognition of the language's intrinsic value in expressing shared heritage^[29–31]. Keat and Jia observed that motivation profoundly influences international students' development of intercultural identity^[30], with evidence suggesting that their motivation to learn Chinese and their sense of intercultural identity are both notably strong. This highlights the role of motivation not only in language learning but also in encouraging a deeper connection to cultural understanding and integration^[32, 33]. Language learning is attributed to the interaction of a number of factors like level of exposure to languages, opportunity to use languages, motivation, and attitudes towards languages^[34–36]. Such mechanism can also be applied to language preservation, as attitudes and exposure may inspire individuals to value and actively use their heritage language.

When individuals are motivated by a deep sense of

cultural pride or the desire to maintain their heritage, these motivations can fuel consistent language use, turning it into an automatic behavior that reinforces their identity and cultural connections^[37, 38]. Therefore, for the Filipino language to thrive and persist, having habitual use—supported by both cultural motivation and the context in which the language is practiced—is essential. This approach to language preservation highlights the importance of community-wide engagement, continuous cultural reinforcement, and the embedding of language into everyday practices as key strategies for maintaining a language across generations.

This paper addressed the need to understand the habits of Filipino adults in response to the declining preference for the use of the Filipino language among younger generations. This, in turn, can be integrated to language policies, pedagogical frameworks, and organizational efforts to sustain the use of Filipino language across generations.

3. Methods

3.1. Research Design

This paper explored the preservation habits of Filipino adults in preserving the Filipino language. Exploratory research can help in investigating specific concerns or illuminate underlying phenomena through a systematic and deliberate process of inquiry^[39, 40]. Social science exploration used structured methods to discern core patterns, which strengthen the evaluation and documentation of social and psychological constructs^[41–43]. They provide a preliminary understanding that served as a foundation for formulating hypotheses, which were later subjected to empirical testing in subsequent research endeavors^[44, 45]. While exploratory research was often critiqued for its perceived lack of scientific rigor^[40], contemporary researchers believed in its essential role in developing preliminary understanding of a phenomenon and supporting the systematic acquisition of critical data^[46]. Considering the growing preference for the English language in the Philippines^[47], it is essential to examine the habits of Filipino adults that contribute to sustaining the use of the Filipino language within a bilingual setting. This paper answered one critical question in language maintenance: how preservation habits could empower the preservation of Filipino language amidst the social pressure caused by globalization? Understanding these habits is significant for safe-

guarding linguistic diversity, preserving cultural heritage, and developing a balanced coexistence of languages in a rapidly globalizing world.

3.2. Participants and Sampling

Exploratory research traditionally employed a small sample size to facilitate an in-depth examination of significant variables and their interrelationships^[48, 49]. Such studies typically concentrated on a specific sample to achieve a comprehensive understanding of distinct phenomena^[50, 51]. The number of participants was often flexible, determined by their capacity to contribute meaningfully to the research objectives^[50, 52, 53]. Purposive sampling, a widely used non-probability sampling method in exploratory studies^[54], involved the intentional selection of participants based on their characteristics or relevance to the research topic^[55]. For this study, online purposive sampling was applied^[56], with data collected through open-ended questions disseminated via Google Forms to gather initial responses from participants. This approach enabled researchers to recruit individuals based on sampling criteria whose expertise or experiences provided information essential to the study^[57]. Five sampling criteria were applied to select participants: (1) being a Filipino adult aged 23 years or older, (2) fluency in the Filipino language, (3) awareness of the shift in language preference from Filipino to English, (4) engagement in personal habits that contribute to preserving the Filipino language, and (5) willingness to participate in a one-on-one interview. Based on this sampling criteria, 164 Filipino adults initially responded to the online screening, but only 24 participants met the requirements and were selected for the interviews.

3.3. Instrumentation

The reliability and credibility of qualitative findings are significantly influenced by the strategies employed for data collection^[58]. Interviews, as a primary method of data gathering, offered a dynamic and flexible approach to exploring the phenomena under investigation^[59]. The individual interviews were intentionally designed to remain adaptable, enabling participants to freely articulate their views, raise concerns, and influence the direction of the discussion when appropriate^[60, 61]. To ensure consistency and structure throughout the interview process, a semi-structured in-

interview guide was developed^[62]. This guide incorporated well-defined questions, thematic areas, and specific topics to ensure a systematic approach that addressed all critical aspects of the research and facilitated the collection of relevant data^[63]. The development of the interview guide adhered to the framework proposed by Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson, and Kangasniemi^[64], which included identifying prerequisites, integrating existing knowledge, drafting the initial guide,

conducting a pilot test, and refining the final instrument. The pilot testing of the interview questions was a vital step in ensuring clarity, relevance, and their capacity to elicit detailed and meaningful responses^[65]. Expert feedback was incorporated to enhance the validity and alignment with the research objectives^[66]. After examination, the final semi-structured interview guide is presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Interview Guide Questions.

Objectives	Interview Questions
To identify positive preservation habits and behaviors that contribute to the continued use and preservation of the Filipino language in daily life.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you share specific habits or daily routines you practice that help maintain the use of the Filipino language in your household or community? 2. What behaviors do you believe play a key role in encouraging the consistent use of Filipino, especially in informal or casual settings? 3. In your opinion, what are some of the most effective strategies for ensuring that Filipino remains a language of choice in your daily interactions?
To examine the role of cultural practices and family traditions for sustainable use of the Filipino language.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do family traditions or cultural practices encourage the younger generation to use Filipino? Can you provide examples of how your family incorporates Filipino in these practices? 2. Do you think cultural or family gatherings influence the way younger generations view and use the Filipino language? How so? 3. What role do you think parents and elders play in preserving the Filipino language through their cultural practices and traditions? Could you share specific examples from your family?

3.4. Data Collection

A series of semi-structured interviews was conducted to collect responses from the participants. The interviews functioned as a key method for uncovering participants' personal stories, offering a structured framework to analyze their behaviors and viewpoints^[58]. In qualitative research, interviews were particularly essential for gaining insights into the lived experiences of individuals^[67, 68]. Semi-structured interviews were highly regarded because of their flexibility and structure, allowing discussions to flow naturally while addressing critical research topics^[68]. The process was systematic to align objectives with thematic questions, ensuring

that the interviews were meaningful and informed by extensive preparatory assessment^[69, 70]. To develop a conducive and trustworthy environment, participants were encouraged to express open and reflective responses, particularly allowing them to express themselves through using their native language^[71]. Initial responses often provided surface-level insights^[72]; therefore, further probing or follow-up questions were asked to gain a deeper understanding of participants' beliefs, experiences, and perspectives^[73]. Participants were also allowed to use their native language during the interviews, a practice that enhanced comfort and minimized potential issues caused by language barriers. To ensure the accuracy and authenticity of the data collected, all interviews

were audio-recorded using mobile devices, preserving the participants' accounts with integrity.

3.5. Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was carried out to analyze the responses of the participants. Thematic analysis, a qualitative research method, identifies, organizes, and interprets patterns within the data, highlighting shared meanings and individual experiences^[74, 75]. Its flexibility made it especially suitable for this exploratory study, as it allowed themes to emerge organically from the data without being constrained by pre-defined theoretical frameworks^[76]. The analysis began with generating descriptive codes, which were subsequently developed into interpretive themes, revealing connections within the narratives^[57]. The study employed reflexive thematic analysis, a method that encouraged the researcher's active engagement with the data and promoted reflexivity to account for potential biases^[77]. This approach acknowledged the researcher's subjectivity as an essential part of the analysis, leveraging it to enrich the interpretation rather than viewing it as a limitation^[78, 79].

As illustrated in **Figure 1**, the analysis followed the iterative six-phase framework outlined by Braun and Clarke^[74]: (1) familiarization with the data, (2) generation of initial codes, (3) identification of themes, (4) review of themes, (5) definition and naming of themes, and (6) production of the final report. Each phase aimed to ensure a structured yet adaptable engagement with the data, providing a thorough representation of participants' experiences^[79]. An inductive approach was adopted in this study to minimize biases and ensure that the analysis was grounded in the data. Inductive thematic analysis involved deriving codes and themes directly from the data, allowing the researcher to move from specific observations to broader generalizations without imposing preconceived categories^[80]. This data-driven approach ensured that the findings accurately reflected the participants' perspectives and experiences, thus promoting the validity and reliability of the results^[81].

4. Results

Objective 1: To identify positive preservation habits and behaviors that contribute to the continued use and preservation of the Filipino language in daily life.

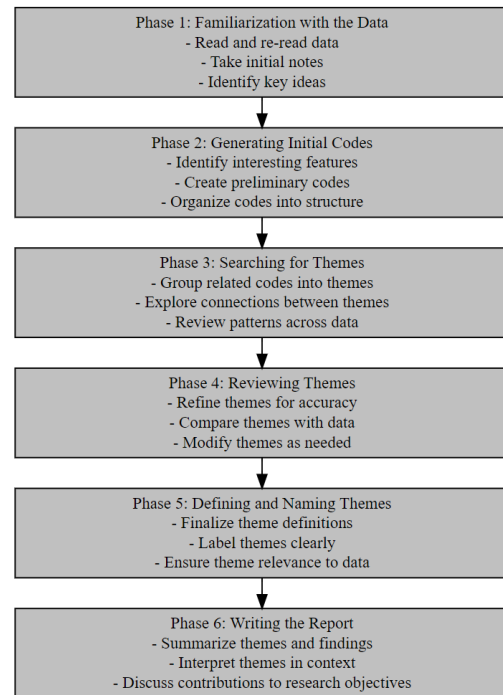


Figure 1. Workflow of Reflexive Thematic Analysis.

Preservation habits were intentional, yet unobtrusive practices that encourage consistent engagement with language use. Participants reported engaging in deliberate efforts to incorporate Filipino into daily interactions. They designated specific times, such as during meals or before bedtime, to speak only in Filipino. This structured approach helped maintain consistency in language use. They also frequently engaged with Filipino movies, television shows, music, and radio stations, incorporating these activities into their daily routines. Essentially, a supportive environment was identified as a critical factor in reinforcing the use of Filipino. Participants highlighted the importance of positive reinforcement, with efforts to praise family members and peers whenever they used Filipino, regardless of the level of proficiency. This created a nonjudgmental space where individuals felt encouraged to continue using the language.

Theme 1: Actual Use

Participants reported engaging in practices that incorporated the Filipino language into daily activities, creating opportunities for consistent use. They intentionally set aside specific times during the day, such as during meals or before bedtime, to speak exclusively in Filipino.

“We designate specific times of the day where we only speak in Filipino, like during meals or before bedtime.”

Storytelling, particularly recounting the day's events,

was encouraged in Filipino, regardless of whether the stories were brief or lighthearted. Efforts were also made to speak in Filipino during casual conversations, which helped in developing an environment where family members, including children, felt more comfortable using the language.

“We encourage storytelling about the day’s events in Filipino, even if it’s just a short story or a funny moment after work.”

“I make it a point to speak in Filipino even when it’s just casual conversation, so my kids and family feel comfortable doing the same.”

Lastly, everyday situations, such as shopping or cooking, were turned into enjoyable learning experiences, where participants made an effort to incorporate Filipino words, emphasizing the enjoyment of the process rather than just the act of learning.

“We turn everyday situations into a game like trying to use Filipino words while shopping or cooking so it’s not just about learning but enjoying the process.”

Theme 2: Language Consumption

Participants highlighted various strategies for incorporating Filipino language exposure into daily life as a means of reinforcing language use. One notable practice involved dedicating specific times, such as every Friday, to watch Filipino movies or TV shows. This was not only a bonding activity for the family but also an opportunity to learn new expressions and deepen their familiarity with the language.

“Every Friday is Filipino movie or TV night. It’s a fun way for the family to bond and learn expressions.”

Participants played Filipino music, including traditional songs like *kundiman* and *harana* or contemporary *OPM*, during household chores or relaxation periods. This provided an enjoyable and informal way to stay connected with the language.

“We play *kundiman*, *harana*, or even modern *OPM* songs while doing household chores or relaxing.”

Listening to Filipino radio stations or podcasts during car rides was another strategy mentioned, as it exposed children to different accents and vocabulary, broadening their linguistic range. Daily exposure to Filipino media, including radio, television, and literature, was noted as a method for keeping the language fresh in participants’ minds. Such consistent engagement made it easier for them to naturally incorporate Filipino into conversations. For some, listen-

ing to Filipino radio while commuting helped maintain a connection with the language, making it second nature.

“Listening to Filipino radio, watching Filipino shows, or reading Filipino books daily keeps the language fresh in our minds. The more exposure we have, the more naturally we incorporate it into conversations.”

“We listen to Filipino radio stations or podcasts during car rides to expose the kids to different accents and vocabulary.”

“I listen to Filipino radio stations while I drive, which helps me stay engaged with the language even during my commute. The more I hear it, the more it becomes second nature to speak it.”

In addition, the use of Filipino YouTube channels for educational content, such as cartoons and cooking videos, was also emphasized. Participants observed that their children were highly engaged with these materials, finding it easier to learn when the content was both enjoyable and in their native language.

“I use Filipino YouTube channels to teach my kids. They watch cartoons or cooking videos in Filipino, and they’re so engaged. It’s much easier for them to learn when it’s something they enjoy.”

Theme 3: Supportive Setting

Participants emphasized the importance of creating a supportive environment to reinforce the use of Filipino. They made a conscious effort to praise family members, particularly their children, whenever they spoke in Filipino, regardless of how minor the effort was. This positive reinforcement helped boost confidence and encouraged continued language use.

“I make sure to praise my kids or family members every time they use Filipino, no matter how small the effort.”

Similarly, participants highlighted that having a social circle where everyone spoke Filipino could help in maintaining the habit. The use of Filipino by friends and relatives made participants more inclined to speak the language themselves.

“Having a supportive environment, where everyone in my social circle speaks Filipino, helps reinforce the habit. When my friends and relatives also use Filipino, I’m more likely to continue using it myself.”

In instances where others attempted to speak Filipino, the focus was placed on recognizing their correct usage

rather than correcting errors. This approach promoted a non-judgmental atmosphere, which made individuals feel more comfortable using the language.

“Whenever someone tries speaking Filipino, I focus on what they did right instead of correcting mistakes.”

“This positive reinforcement helps them feel more comfortable using the language without fear of judgment.”

Objective 2: To examine the role of cultural practices and family traditions in sustainable use of the Filipino language.

In the examination of cultural practices and family traditions, it was observed that certain practices and behaviors significantly contributed to the ongoing use and preservation of the Filipino language within households. Participants shared that consistent use of Filipino at home helped in language retention. Regardless of the activity, whether during meals, before bedtime, or while performing household chores, speaking Filipino was prioritized. During special occasions such as birthdays or holidays, the use of Filipino was emphasized, creating an environment where language use was naturally integrated into social interactions. This practice helped ensure that children viewed Filipino not only as a language but as a cultural cornerstone. The modeling of Filipino by older generations and the subsequent reinforcement of its importance was a practice that significantly contributed to the sustainable use of the language.

Theme 1: Conditioning

Participants believed that speaking Filipino at home was a consistent practice, regardless of the situation. The importance of this consistency was emphasized, with Filipino being prioritized during meals, before bedtime, and while performing household chores.

“We speak Filipino at home no matter what. This consistency is key whether it’s during meals, before bed, or while doing chores, we prioritize using Filipino in all settings.”

Participants reported regularly watching Filipino news and TV shows every evening. Despite the simplicity of their activities, they were effective in keeping language skills sharp, providing opportunities to learn new words, and maintaining a connection to current events in the Philippines. This daily exposure to the language helped participants sustain their proficiency and engagement with Filipino language.

“We watch Filipino news and TV shows every evening, and even though the content is simple, it helps keep our lan-

guage skills sharp. It’s a great way to learn new words and stay connected to what’s happening in the Philippines.”

Theme 2: Motivation

Participants highlighted that family gatherings, particularly during special occasions such as birthdays and holidays, provided a conducive environment for the use of Filipino. At these gatherings, the entire family spoke Filipino, creating an atmosphere where children felt comfortable using the language.

“At family gatherings, especially during special occasions like birthdays or holidays, everyone speaks Filipino.”

It was noted that these social occasions became enjoyable experiences that encouraged positive associations with Filipino, making it easier for children to embrace the language.

“My kids feel comfortable using the language because it’s a part of the fun and bonding moments.”

The participants emphasized that their children viewed these events as opportunities for both language use and fun, which enhanced their motivation to speak Filipino. The focus was not solely on language acquisition, but on the enjoyment from these bonding moments, further encouraging the children to engage with the language.

“My kids love going to family gatherings because they know it’s an opportunity to speak Filipino while having fun.”

“It’s more about the positive, social experiences than just learning a language, which makes them more motivated to speak it.”

Theme 3: Modeling

The participants shared how their parents helped in instilling the value of speaking Filipino. They recounted how, when they were younger, their mother consistently emphasized the importance of speaking Filipino—not only as a means of preserving cultural identity but also as a way to honor their ancestors. She would recount stories of their ancestors’ efforts to protect the language, encouraging them to speak it with pride.

“When we were younger, my mother always told us how important it was to speak Filipino, not just for our culture but as a way of honoring our ancestors. She would share how they fought to preserve our language, and she encouraged us to speak it proudly.”

Similarly, their fathers made intentional efforts to ensure they understood the power of speaking Filipino, espe-

cially in a context where many external forces sought to suppress it. This instilled a profound sense of pride in their language.

Even when it was easier to default to English, their fathers were deliberate in speaking Filipino, viewing it as a way of showing respect for their culture and the efforts made by previous generations to preserve it.

“My father made sure we knew how powerful it was to speak the language, especially when so many others tried to suppress it. This instilled a deep pride in us for our language.”

“My father is very intentional about speaking to us in Filipino, even when it’s easy to slip into English. He says that speaking Filipino is a way of showing respect for our culture and our parents’ efforts to preserve it.”

In addition, participants made efforts to expose their children to Filipino by ensuring that the media they consumed—whether TV shows, YouTube content, or apps—was in Filipino. This consistent exposure was meant to encourage their children to use the language on their own terms. The approach was for modeling behavior, where children observed the older generation using Filipino, reinforcing the significance of the language and encouraging its continued use across generations.

“I make sure that the media my kids consume whether it’s TV shows, YouTube, or apps is in Filipino. This constant exposure encourages them to speak it in their own time.”

“It’s not something they force us to do, but rather, they model it through their actions.”

Consequently, modeling created a strong connection between language and culture, allowing my children to recognize the value of speaking Filipino. When they saw the older generations using the language, it reinforced its importance to the younger generation.

“This creates a strong connection between language and culture, and my children get to see the value of speaking Filipino.”

“When they see the older generations using the language, it reinforces its importance to younger ages.”

5. Discussion

There is a growing concern about the potential loss of the Filipino language, as many parents and students in-

creasingly prefer learning English over Filipino. Blasco and Elizalde noted that the prevalence of English in professional contexts strengthens power imbalances and creates obstacles for those whose language abilities do not align with the dominant norm^[47], providing more opportunities to English-speaking elites while marginalizing communities who face barriers to economic empowerment. Filipino parents decide to teach their children in the English language at home, because they believe it will provide them with better career opportunities in the future^[41, 54].

This paper explored the experiences of Filipino adults in preserving the Filipino language with emphasis on consistent language use, exposure and social modelling. The acquisition of languages depends on several factors, including the level of exposure to languages, opportunities to use them, and attitudes toward them^[82]. Hence, there is also a need to understand the dynamics of language use in the country to discern potential strategies necessary in preserving the Filipino language.

Language preservation is a deliberate and structured endeavor ensuring the survival of languages facing the threat of extinction^[83]. Apparently, maintaining the heritage language and culture is often achieved through close interactions with family and friends, formal language instruction within educational settings, and participation in religious or community gatherings^[84, 85]. Dweik and Qawar conducted a study on the language preferences and attitudes of Arab Canadians residing in Quebec^[86]. They observed that Arabic speakers predominantly utilized their native language in specific contexts, such as communicating with children at home, participating in prayers at mosques, and engaging with Arab media like radio broadcasts. Similarly, bilingualism in the Philippines is inevitable; however, efforts can be implemented to address and reduce the pervasive dominance of the English language in the country. For example, some Filipino adults observed the use of the Filipino language in informal settings, such as social interactions, online media, pop culture, and community events. They believed that these habits could strengthen not only linguistic proficiency but also develop a deeper sense of national identity and cultural appreciation.

In preserving the Filipino language, this study observed the potential of cultural and social dimensions to help strengthen the perceived value towards the language. Partic-

ularly, this study observed the role of home environment in shaping the perceptions of individuals about preserving the Filipino language. Early studies explain that the initial linguistic frameworks acquired by children are predominantly influenced by their home environment^[87]. Consequently, the extent of linguistic input within the household, along with parental decisions concerning multilingual development, significantly determines their proficiency in the languages they learn^[88]. This paper asserts that having a positive and consistent linguistic environment within households not only aids in preserving the language but also strengthens cultural identity.

There was a strong emphasis on the role of family and cultural communities in preserving the Filipino language, highlighting their significant influence in transmitting linguistic and cultural heritage across generations. Robiego et al. found out that the Manobo indigenous cultural community in Mindanao, Philippines, sustains and preserves their language by prioritizing the role of family and utilizing minority languages across various domains^[89]. Language preservation involves the ongoing use of language, which includes the number and distribution of its speakers, fluency in both children and adults, and the safeguarding of specific domains like education, religion, and particularly the values upheld within the home environment.

A similar context was observed in the preservation of the Filipino language, as most Filipino speakers interviewed emphasized the essence of practices maintained within social and home environments. For example, participants reported playing Filipino music, including traditional songs like *kundiman* and *harana*, or modern Original Pilipino Music (OPM), while doing household chores or during recreation activities. Listening to Filipino music in a casual, non-structured setting provided a natural and enjoyable method of language exposure.

Other participants emphasized that maintaining the language was not only about preserving linguistic heritage but also about developing connection to Filipino traditions, values, and history. One participant believed that speaking Filipino allowed younger generations to better appreciate Filipino customs, such as celebrating important holidays like *Bayanihan* and *Pasko*, where language has an integral role in communal activities and family bonding. Leeman explores the influence of language on identity formation, highlight-

ing the ethnic and cultural ties often linked to heritage languages^[90]. Indeed, one of the primary reasons individuals in the United States continue to use their heritage language is to preserve familial connections^[91, 92]. Likewise, Filipino adults noted that when children spoke Filipino, they were more likely to participate actively in cultural practices, understand the significance of these traditions, and feel a sense of responsibility to continue passing them on. As a result, when younger individuals observe older generations using the Filipino language, it motivates them to incorporate it into their own interactions.

It was clear that having positive home environment could encourage preservation of the Filipino language. Consequently, parents' decisions on whether to raise their children monolingually or multilingual could predict the likelihood of language preservation, as these choices directly impact the transmission of language across generations. These language choices and resulting patterns of maintenance or loss differ across language communities^[93, 94]. In this study, habits for preserving the Filipino language include integrating it into daily activities such as meals, bedtime routines, and casual conversations, creating a supportive environment with positive reinforcement, incorporating Filipino media into family life, and modeling its use across generations during family gatherings and in social settings. Exposing younger individuals to these habits, especially with the help of parents, could maintain the cultural identity, values, and traditions embedded in the language itself^[95].

Research could further investigate how parental practices, including language modeling, media exposure, and positive social reinforcement, influence language retention across generations. They could also examine the role of the broader community and institutional support in sustaining language preservation efforts, as well as the impact of these practices on cultural identity and intergenerational transmission.

6. Conclusions

This study addressed the limited understanding about the habits imposed by Filipino adults in preserving the Filipino language. The preservation and continued use of the Filipino language in daily life were strongly influenced by intentional and supportive practices within the home. Partici-

pants engaged in structured language use by setting aside specific times, such as during meals or bedtime, to speak exclusively in Filipino, thus encouraging consistent engagement. They also integrated Filipino media, such as movies, music, and radio, into their daily routines, enhancing language exposure and reinforcing its use. Positive reinforcement, where family members were praised for speaking Filipino, created a non-judgmental environment that encouraged continued language use. Cultural practices, including family gatherings, further promoted the language, with participants emphasizing the role of these occasions in making language use enjoyable. Lastly, the modeling of Filipino by older generations was crucial in instilling pride in the language and ensuring its continuity, as parents emphasized its importance as a cornerstone of both cultural heritage and personal identity. This supportive and consistent environment helped ensure the sustainable use and transmission of the Filipino language across generations.

There were limitations that needed to be considered in future studies. The small sample size may limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader population. The study focused on a specific group of participants, and as a result, the insights gained may not fully represent the experiences of all Filipino families. In addition, the study relied on self-reported data, which can introduce bias, as participants may have unintentionally overstated or understated their language practices. The methods used, though insightful, may not have captured the full complexity of language preservation across different socio-cultural contexts. The quality of data could have been further enhanced through a more diverse set of data collection tools, such as longitudinal observation or more extensive interviews. Finally, the potential for social desirability bias was present, as participants might have provided responses they felt were expected or socially acceptable, rather than reflecting their true language habits.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, R.T.A., P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A.; methodology, R.T.A., P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A.; validation, R.T.A., P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A.; formal analysis, R.T.A., P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A.; investigation, R.T.A., P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A.; resources, R.T.A.,

P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A.; data curation, R.T.A., P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A.; writing—original draft preparation, R.T.A., P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A.; writing—review and editing, R.T.A., P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A.; visualization, R.T.A., P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A.; supervision, R.T.A., P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A.; project administration, R.T.A., P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A.; funding acquisition, R.T.A., P.J.E.S., N.V.A.C., J.V.C. and S.-A.M.A. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

Ethical review and approval were waived for this study due to the non-invasive, survey-based nature of the research involving adult participants, with no collection of sensitive personal information or medical data.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement

The research data are not publicly available due to privacy and ethical restrictions protecting the confidentiality of participants' responses.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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