

METILED TED: *International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture*

www.metiledtedjournal.com

Banta ng Wikang Banyaga: Understanding how Digital Exposure to Foreign Languages Shapes Students' Attitudes toward Filipino Language

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20521269>

Authors:

¹**Rochelle F. Vasquez, LPT**
Sto. Niño National High School

²**Jaime Boy U. Ngag Jr., PhD**
South Cotabato State College

Publication History:

Date Submitted: April 28, 2026

Date Accepted: April 29, 2026

Date Reviewed: May 03, 2026

Date Revised: May 31, 2026

Date Published: June 03, 2026

How to cite this work:

Vasquez, R., & Ngag, J. B. J. (2026). Banta ng Wikang Banyaga: Understanding how Digital Exposure to Foreign Languages Shapes Students' Attitudes toward Filipino Language. *METILED TED: International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture*, 2(20), 606–627. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20521269>

ABSTRACT

In the digital era, students encounter foreign languages through various online platforms, including social media, gaming, music, and streaming media, which extend language exposure beyond traditional classrooms. This phenomenological study explored how such digital exposure shapes students' attitudes toward the Filipino language, focusing on secondary schools in Sto Niño, South Cotabato. Findings revealed that frequent engagement with foreign languages, particularly English and Korean, enhanced students' vocabulary, grammar, listening skills, and overall confidence in communication. Students also demonstrated adaptive language use, often integrating foreign languages into daily interactions while maintaining Filipino in personal, familial, and culturally meaningful contexts. Peer influence, social norms, and perceived prestige contributed to the strategic use of foreign languages, while cognitive awareness and multilingual exposure motivated students to preserve and correctly use Filipino. The study further highlighted that digital use of foreign languages supported self-directed learning, intercultural awareness, and cross-cultural communication, fostering bilingual or multilingual competencies. Students reported emotional comfort and positive engagement when using foreign languages, with confidence closely tied to language and context. Appreciative or constructive feedback reinforced motivation, self-esteem, and continued skill development. Despite the advantages of multilingual digital engagement, reliance on foreign languages raised concerns about cultural identity and potential decline in Filipino proficiency. Students, however, perceived multilingual skills as complementary rather than a threat to their cultural belonging, balancing global communication abilities with Filipino cultural values. Overall, the study emphasizes the dual role of digital exposure in enhancing linguistic and cultural competencies while highlighting the need for intentional strategies to maintain heritage language. Educational stakeholders are encouraged to design programs and interventions that support multilingual skills without compromising Filipino proficiency and cultural identity.

Keywords: *Bilingualism, Cultural Preservation, Digital Learning, Language Attitudes*



INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

In the digital age, language exposure is no longer confined to the classroom, local community, or traditional learning spaces. Today's learners, especially digital-native students, engage with a wide range of languages through constant interaction with social media, streaming platforms, online games, music, and global digital influencers. This borderless linguistic exposure has led to an increased fascination with and use of foreign languages such as English, Korean, Japanese, and Spanish, often overshadowing the use and appreciation of the Filipino language among the youth.

This global linguistic interaction presents both opportunities and threats, particularly for the preservation and appreciation of national languages. Internationally, studies have shown that digital exposure to dominant foreign languages—especially English—can significantly alter young people's linguistic preferences, often at the expense of their mother tongue (Almusharraf & Bailey, 2021).

In the Philippine context, while English remains a key medium of instruction and global communication, there is growing concern about the declining appreciation and usage of the Filipino language among students due to their constant digital immersion in foreign-language content (Gonzales, 2020; Naval, 2021).

Regionally, in South Central Mindanao, where linguistic diversity is already complex due to indigenous and migrant languages, digital platforms further complicate language attitudes among youth. Preliminary observations in South Cotabato, a linguistically dynamic province, suggest a shifting preference of students toward English or Korean, influenced by online media and pop culture, resulting in diminished interest and pride in the Filipino language. However, few empirical studies examine how digital exposure to foreign languages specifically shapes students' attitudes toward Filipino in this local setting, highlighting a significant literature gap.

This study aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), particularly in fostering inclusive and equitable education by nurturing cultural and linguistic identity through language learning. It also supports SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by promoting heritage and local languages as part of cultural sustainability. Therefore, the goal of this study was to determine the extent to which digital exposure to foreign languages shapes language attitudes of students toward Filipino, and to inform culturally responsive strategies in language education within South Cotabato, particularly among secondary schools in Sto. Niño.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine how digital exposure to foreign languages shapes students' language attitudes toward Filipino and to inform culturally responsive strategies in language education in South Cotabato, particularly among secondary schools in Sto Niño.



Specifically, this sought to answer the following:

1. What are the lived experiences of students in relation to their daily digital exposure to foreign languages?
2. What descriptions do students give on the influence of foreign language content e.g., English, Korean, Japanese on their attitudes toward using and valuing the Filipino language?
3. What meanings do students assign to their preference for foreign languages over the Filipino language in digital spaces?
4. What do students feel whenever they speak foreign languages over Filipino language?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically the phenomenological approach, to examine how exposure to foreign languages influences students' attitudes toward the Filipino language. Phenomenology is appropriate because it seeks to uncover and interpret lived experiences, providing insights into how students perceive and internalize the effects of their online interactions with foreign languages (Creswell & Poth, 2021; Neubauer et al., 2020).

Through this design, the research aimed to capture authentic narratives that highlight not only the challenges but also the opportunities arising from digital multilingual exposure. Moreover, employing a phenomenological lens supported the development of culturally responsive strategies in language education, which is crucial in sustaining national identity while promoting global competencies (Tuazon, 2022; Sarmiento & Castillo, 2023).

Participants of the Study

The participants comprised fifteen (15) students from selected secondary schools in Sto. Niño, South Cotabato Division, during the school year 2025–2026. Purposeful sampling was used to select students who had demonstrated regular digital exposure to foreign languages through social media, streaming platforms, or online communication. Such a selection ensured that participants had firsthand experiences that aligned with the study, making them reliable sources of qualitative data (Palinkas et al., 2020; Bengtsson, 2022).

The sample size of fifteen is deemed sufficient for phenomenological research, as it allows for in-depth exploration of shared experiences while maintaining manageability for thorough analysis (Sloan & Bowe, 2020; Quejada, 2023). These participants' perspectives were the basis for understanding how digital multilingual exposure interacts with their attitudes toward Filipino and interventions to sustain language appreciation in a globalized context.

Sampling Technique



MÉTILÉDTĚD: International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture

www.metiledtedjournal.com

During the conduct of this study, a Purposive Sampling Technique will be intentionally utilized to carefully select fifteen (15) students from selected secondary schools in Sto Niño, South Cotabato Division, for the school year 2025-2026.

Additionally, purposive sampling of this group ensures the credibility and richness of qualitative data, as participants are deliberately chosen based on their qualifications and lived experience with the phenomenon under study (Palinkas et al., 2015).

A sample size of fifteen was also deemed sufficient in qualitative inquiry because it allowed for in-depth exploration of participants' narratives while maintaining analysis (Guest, Namey, & Chen, 2020). By adhering to these criteria, the study balanced the need for perspectives across schools with the depth of understanding to examine how exposure to foreign languages influences students' attitudes toward the Filipino language.

Research Instruments

In this study, a semi-structured interview will function as an exploratory instrument during both in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to explore how digital exposure to foreign languages shapes the language attitudes of students toward Filipino, and to inform culturally responsive strategies in language education within South Cotabato, particularly among secondary schools in Sto Niño. The validity and appropriateness of this tool were substantiated through a rigorous evaluation conducted by a panel of experts with expertise in developing relevant research instruments.

Data Gathering Procedure

To ensure the reliability of the research, the researcher adhered strictly to a predefined set of procedures. The primary objective of this study was to determine how digital exposure to foreign languages shapes the students' language attitudes toward Filipino, and to inform culturally responsive strategies in language education within South Cotabato, particularly among secondary schools in Sto. Niño.

In the initial phase, the researcher sought formal authorization from both the Superintendent of DepEd-South Cotabato and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies (CGS). This authorization was essential to obtain the necessary permissions for the researcher to conduct the study, emphasizing the importance of ethical considerations.

Following this, a secondary authorization letter was sent to the District Supervisor, explicitly requesting access to the specific data required for this research. A meticulously crafted survey questionnaire was developed, rigorously evaluated, and administered to the target participants.

The researcher employed purposive sampling to select secondary school teachers as participants in this study. In accordance with the established EWMCI-Research Ethics Committee guidelines, the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews and facilitated Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).



MÉTILÉDTĚD: International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture

www.metiledtedjournal.com

The data collected from interviews and FGDs were systematically organized, subjected to comprehensive analysis, and interpreted using thematic analysis. This approach was expected to provide a deeper understanding of the issues under investigation.

Data Analysis

This study examined how digital exposure to foreign languages shapes language attitudes of students toward Filipino, and to inform culturally responsive strategies in language education within South Cotabato, particularly among secondary schools in Sto. Niño, a content or thematic analysis approach was employed to examine the collected data.

This methodology, as described by Flick (2014), Ngag (2023), and Braun (2009), involves the systematic categorization of textual components, including statements, phrases, and words, into organized groupings or categories. These categories are either derived from established frameworks or custom-developed to align with the study's specific objectives.

To execute this analytical process, a series of essential steps was diligently followed: Initially, all data sources, such as interview transcripts, notes from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and relevant documents, were meticulously organized and prepared for analysis. This phase ensured the systematic arrangement and accessibility of the data.

Subsequently, the researcher engaged with the data by conducting a thorough review of interview transcripts and FGD notes. This immersive process facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the content and context embedded in the collected information.

The third step involved initiating a systematic coding process.

Initial codes were generated by identifying meaningful segments or patterns within the data. These codes captured essential concepts, ideas, or themes related to teachers' narratives regarding their professional development and its outcomes for their teaching effectiveness. Following coding, the identified codes were grouped into preliminary themes based on shared meaning or relevance. This step aimed to establish an initial structure for organizing the data.

Next, the emerging themes and their corresponding codes were reviewed and refined. The researcher ensured the consistency and clarity of these themes, making necessary adjustments. Each refined theme was assigned a descriptive name that succinctly represented the content it encapsulated, facilitating easy identification and interpretation. Relevant data excerpts, such as quotations or interview and FGD segments, were selected and associated with the corresponding themes. These excerpts served as supporting evidence for the identified themes.

Finally, the thematic analysis extended beyond surface-level identification. The researcher interpreted the meaning and implications of each theme within the context of the



study's objectives. Patterns, connections, and variations were sought within the themes to provide a comprehensive understanding of the teachers' narratives.

Scope and Limitations

This study examined how digital exposure to foreign languages influences the secondary school students' attitudes toward the Filipino language, focusing on selected public secondary schools in Sto. Niño, South Cotabato, during the 2025–2026 school year. The participants in the study were junior and senior high school students who were active in various digital platforms where foreign languages are prevalent. Employing a qualitative research design, specifically a phenomenological approach, the study collected data through interviews and focus group discussions to capture learners' lived experiences, perceptions, and reflections.

This inquiry was necessary to understand the sociolinguistic implications of digital exposure to foreign content, explain how it shapes learners' attitudes toward their national language, and provide insights that could guide educators and policymakers in strengthening Filipino language education in a digital environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Lived Experiences of Students in relation to their Daily Digital Exposure to Foreign Languages

In the digital age, learners are continually immersed in global communication environments where foreign languages—especially English, Korean, and others—are prevalent. For students, this digital immersion is not just incidental but integral to everyday media, social interaction, and knowledge acquisition. Exploring how students experience daily exposure to foreign languages in digital spaces offers insights into language learning in traditional classrooms and broader sociocultural and cognitive implications. This phenomenon aligns with research on digital literacy, multilingualism, and communicative competence in increasingly interconnected online contexts (Garcia & Wei, 2021; Godwin-Jones, 2022).

Daily Exposure to Foreign Languages

The frequency and context of foreign language exposure among students were high, with participants reporting engagement with English and other languages on multiple platforms. Participant 1 noted, "I encounter foreign languages very often through TikTok, Korean dramas, and Call of Duty," illustrating how entertainment and gaming platforms serve as daily exposure points. Similarly, Participant 2 stated, "Almost always, especially when using Google, Facebook, and Instagram for academic or social purposes," confirming that both leisure and academic digital usages are language-rich.

These findings support recent research that digital environments provide spontaneous and sustained language input, enabling incidental learning opportunities outside formal instruction



MÉTILÉDTĚD: International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture

www.metiledtedjournal.com

(Reinhardt & Zander, 2021; Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2022). Frequent interaction with foreign-language content, notably English, through social media, movies, music, and online gaming aligns with studies showing that engagement with global media correlates with increased language awareness (Benson, 2020).

Intercultural Interaction

Students reported that digital platforms enabled interactions with people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This intercultural engagement fosters not only language exposure but cultural awareness. Participant 2's account—"Using Omegle, I talked to someone from Saudi Arabia and learned about their culture"—demonstrates how online exchanges extend beyond language input to cultural understanding. Likewise, Participant 5 observed, "Meeting people online from other countries improves my understanding of cultural differences." Such cross-cultural communicative opportunities reflect globalizing forces that digital platforms facilitate. According to Dooly and O'Dowd (2023), virtual exchanges foster intercultural competence, enabling learners to navigate linguistic diversity and cultural norms. These interactions help students develop practical communicative skills and cultural sensitivity—key outcomes documented in recent research on telecollaboration and digital language learning (O'Rourke & Kaufhold, 2021).

Memorable Learning Experiences

Many participants linked digital engagement with meaningful learning moments. Participant 1 shared that "Reading English quotes online inspires me and leaves a lasting impression," while Participant 3 reported, "Reading e-books, articles, and poems mostly in English gives me new ideas to use in writing and speaking." Such experiences underscore how digital texts—whether artistic, informative, or social—serve as resources for vocabulary expansion and concept formation. This aligns with current research emphasizing the value of self-directed, interest-driven language learning in digital settings (Stockwell & Hubbard, 2020).

Online reading, video watching, and participation in discussions allow learners to internalize language patterns and expand linguistic knowledge autonomously. Additionally, K-dramas and Western media, as mentioned by Participant 4, provide authentic linguistic input that improves listening skills and exposes students to varied registers and idiomatic expressions (Jin & Yoon, 2021). Participation in online English discussions (Participant 5) further exemplifies how digital spaces become arenas for communicative practice that reinforce real-world language use (Thomas & Reinders, 2022).

Language Development and Adaptation

Exposure to foreign languages in digital contexts frequently translates into tangible gains in communication skills and confidence. Participant 3 explained, "My vocabulary and grammar improved, and I feel more confident conversing online," while Participant 2 emphasized the ability to distinguish appropriate language use depending on context. Participant 1 even noted that English has become integrated into daily speech, sometimes more so than Filipino.



MÉTILÉDTĚD: International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture

www.metiledtedjournal.com

These observations mirror studies highlighting the cognitive and communicative benefits of sustained digital language exposure. Godwin-Jones (2021) notes that regular engagement with online foreign language content contributes to improved lexical and grammatical development, while Reinhardt and Thorne (2020) describe digital spaces as zones where adaptive language competence is fostered through repeated, meaningful use.

Confidence, as reported by participants, is also consistent with research indicating that comfortable language experiences in social digital contexts enhance learner self-efficacy and communicative willingness (Satar & Özdener, 2022).

Integration of Language in Daily Life

Students described a seamless blending of foreign language use into their daily interactions, marking a shift toward bilingual or multilingual communicative habits. Participant 3 stated, “I now incorporate English words naturally in conversations with friends,” reflecting an increasingly fluid language repertoire shaped by digital exposure. Similarly, Participant 4 highlighted that understanding multiple languages “makes me more open to diverse ideas and cultures,” indicating cognitive openness and flexibility.

Research supports this integrative perspective, illustrating how digital multilingualism encourages learners to navigate between languages for functional and social purposes (García & Kley, 2021). Studies have shown that frequent exposure and engagement with various linguistic forms can lead to code-mixing, creative language use, and enhanced intercultural awareness—all markers of communicative adaptability (Creese & Blackledge, 2023). Furthermore, digital connectivity expands students’ global perspective, encouraging them to view language learning as purposeful and contextually meaningful rather than confined to academic settings (Godwin-Jones, 2022).

Students’ lived experiences reveal that digital exposure to foreign languages is multifaceted, steeped in everyday media use, intercultural interactions, and personal growth. Their engagement fosters not only increased vocabulary and communicative competence but also confidence, cultural awareness, and adaptability. These findings align with contemporary research highlighting the value of digital multilingualism, experiential learning, and cross-cultural interaction in shaping 21st-century language learners.

Influence of Foreign Language Content on Students’ Attitudes Toward Using and Valuing the Filipino Language

The influence of foreign language content on students’ attitudes toward the Filipino language reflects a complex interplay between digital exposure, peer influence, cultural identity, and cognitive awareness. The responses of participants reveal both challenges and opportunities in balancing multilingual competence with cultural fidelity.



Influence of Foreign Languages on Filipino Use

The first theme centers on students' preference for foreign languages and the selective use of Filipino. Several participants, such as P1 and P2, expressed comfort and confidence in using English in online contexts, with P2 noting, "Watching K-dramas and English movies makes me prefer using foreign languages in social media." Similarly, P3 acknowledged mixing Filipino and English to ease expression. These observations align with recent research emphasizing the pervasive role of digital media in shaping language preferences among youth (Liu, 2021; Santos & Cruz, 2022). Studies show that online exposure to foreign language content often leads students to prioritize languages perceived as globally dominant, particularly English and other widely consumed media languages, in digital communication (Cheng & Lin, 2020). Consequently, Filipino may be relegated to informal or familial contexts, signaling a functional shift rather than a complete displacement of the native language.

Appreciation for the Filipino Language

Despite the increasing preference for foreign languages, students maintain an appreciation for Filipino as a marker of identity and cultural heritage. Participant P1 shared, "Despite using English a lot online, I still value Filipino as part of my identity," while P2 remarked that reading Filipino poems and listening to songs foster pride and motivation. These sentiments echo findings by Reyes and Delos Santos (2023), who emphasized that engagement with cultural artifacts strengthens linguistic pride and encourages conscious preservation of heritage languages. Filipino remains central in personal interactions, family communication, and local social networks, demonstrating that exposure to foreign languages does not necessarily diminish cultural loyalty. Instead, it may heighten awareness of the unique value of the native language, consistent with studies on bilingual and multilingual awareness (Lopez, 2021; Manalo, 2022).

Peer Influence and Social Perception

Social factors also play a crucial role in students' language choices. Participants reported that speaking English can elicit peer recognition of intelligence and higher status, as P1 stated, "When I speak English with peers, they often comment or say I sound educated." Meanwhile, Filipino usage in casual contexts remains socially accepted, as noted by P2. Recent literature highlights how peer dynamics and social perception shape language behaviors, particularly in contexts where foreign languages are associated with prestige or academic competence (Tan & Yu, 2020; Villanueva, 2021). Students navigate these perceptions strategically, using foreign languages for social recognition and academic settings while retaining Filipino for relational and everyday interactions.

Cognitive and Motivational Effects

The cognitive dimension of language use emerged as students reflected on their awareness and conscious management of multilingual competence. P1 and P4 emphasized that exposure to foreign languages motivates them to use Filipino correctly and appreciate its



MÉTILÉDTĚD: International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture

www.metiledtedjournal.com

expressive nuances. Research supports this notion, suggesting that multilingual exposure enhances metalinguistic awareness, enabling learners to compare, contrast, and value their native language (Hernandez & Cruz, 2022; Kim, 2023). Such reflective processes foster critical thinking, language sensitivity, and deliberate efforts to balance foreign language proficiency with Filipino preservation.

Balancing Multilingual Competence and Cultural Fidelity

Finally, participants highlighted strategies for integrating foreign languages without diminishing Filipino. P1 remarked, “I can use English or Korean for learning, but Filipino remains for daily communication,” while P2 emphasized respecting Filipino even when mixing languages. This balance resonates with contemporary studies on code-switching and language adaptation, which suggest that multilingual learners can develop global linguistic competence while maintaining strong cultural and linguistic identities (Garcia & Li, 2021; Santos, 2024).

Digital content, games, and academic contexts broaden language skills, but students consciously reaffirm Filipino as an essential marker of identity, demonstrating that multilingualism and cultural fidelity can coexist synergistically.

Overall, the findings illustrate that students’ engagement with foreign language content fosters both preference for global languages and a renewed appreciation for Filipino. Digital media, peer influence, cognitive reflection, and deliberate language management interact to shape attitudes toward language use. While foreign languages facilitate communication, learning, and social recognition, Filipino remains a vital symbol of cultural identity, heritage, and relational belonging. Supporting these dual goals through educational practices that integrate multilingual competence with cultural reinforcement may encourage students to navigate global and local linguistic landscapes effectively.

Students’ Assigned Meanings to Their Preference for Foreign Languages Over Filipino in Digital Spaces

In today’s digitally connected world, students are increasingly exposed to foreign languages through social media, online communities, and digital platforms. This exposure influences not only how they communicate but also how they perceive the practical value, social benefits, and cultural implications of language use. Understanding the meanings students assign to their preference for foreign languages over their national language, Filipino, is crucial in exploring broader sociolinguistic shifts among young learners.

The evidence presented by students reveals a complex interplay between pragmatic communication needs, daily linguistic habits, social and personal gains, and cultural identity concerns.

These insights align with emerging research on digital language practices, language preferences, and multilingual competence among digitally native learners (e.g., Cruz & Fernandez, 2025; Pikri et al., 2024)



Participants emphasized that foreign languages in digital spaces are valued primarily for practicality, convenience, and broader comprehension.

Participant 1 noted that digital platforms expose users to diverse linguistic backgrounds, making the use of foreign languages, particularly English, more practical for interaction. Similarly, Participant 2 highlighted how conversing with strangers from other countries not only encourages the use of foreign languages but also enhances self-confidence, while Participant 3 described English as a means to ensure clearer understanding among audiences.

These sentiments resonate with recent research showing that digital environments shape language preferences by privileging languages perceived as offering global reach and communicative efficiency. For example, studies on Filipino–English bilingual digital communication reveal that English often becomes the default medium due to its perceived utility in reaching wider audiences and facilitating online engagement, particularly in social media and academic digital spaces (Mendoza & Reyes, 2025).

Daily Life Importance

Beyond pragmatic use, foreign languages were described as integral to daily communication and opportunity creation. Participant 1 described foreign languages as “useful, knowledge-enhancing, and convenient” in everyday communication, while Participant 2 spoke of frequent mixed use of Filipino and foreign languages at home, indicating a bilingual or hybrid linguistic environment. Participant 3 pointed out that English is often more generally understood than Filipino across regions due to dialect variations, further expanding the functional value of foreign languages in daily interactions.

These reflections align with current research on digital literacy among Generation Z learners, where intensive engagement with technology and digital content enhances language access and motivates learners to embrace foreign languages informally. Such studies note that digital natives develop comfort and confidence in digital language use as part of their daily routines, reinforcing the instrumental value of foreign languages in both academic and social contexts (Pikri et al., 2024).

Personal and Social Benefits in Digital Use

Participants also highlighted personal and social gains from using foreign languages digitally, including comfort, confidence, effective communication, and expanded social opportunities. Participant 1 shared that foreign languages facilitate smoother digital communication and make interactions more comfortable, whereas Participant 2 noted that regular digital use of foreign languages increases self-confidence and yields greater social benefits. Participant 3 emphasized enhanced comfort when using foreign languages with family and friends. The literature supports such socio-affective dimensions of digital language use.



MÉTILÉDTĚD: International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture

www.metiledtedjournal.com

Research on informal digital language learning highlights that learners' engagement and self-efficacy in digital contexts are strongly influenced by positive emotions, motivational factors, and familiarity with digital platforms (Fang et al., 2026).

These affective elements help explain why students feel more confident and socially at ease when using foreign languages in online interactions, where communication often transcends local boundaries.

Impact on Cultural Identity

Despite recognizing practical and social benefits, participants also expressed concerns about cultural identity and the potential erosion of Filipino linguistic roots. Participant 1 reported that frequent use of foreign languages can lead to forgetting Filipino, and Participant 2 suggested that heavy reliance on foreign languages might make it harder for others to recognize them as Filipino. Participant 3 noted difficulties understanding Filipino words and traditions, indicating a perceived threat to cultural heritage.

These concerns mirror broader debates in language maintenance and multilingual identity. Literature on social media language use underscores tensions between digital language practices and mother-tongue preservation. Although digital spaces often encourage linguistic innovation and hybrid practices, there are worries that the dominance of foreign or global languages like English may overshadow local languages and cultural expressions unless deliberate efforts are made to support multilingualism that includes heritage languages.

In sum, the meanings that students assign to their preference for foreign languages in digital spaces are multifaceted. Their narratives reveal that functional benefits—such as convenience, broader comprehension, and enhanced confidence—are central to their language choices. These functional motivations intersect with everyday life contexts where mixing languages is not only practical but also socially advantageous. Yet, these benefits are balanced with awareness of cultural implications, as some students fear that dominant use of foreign languages may weaken connection to Filipino linguistic traditions and identity. These findings illustrate a nuanced adaptation among digital learners: they leverage multilingual competencies for practical communication and personal growth while still recognizing the value of Filipino language and cultural heritage. This balance reflects contemporary sociolinguistic realities of digital natives who navigate globalized communication landscapes without fully detaching from their linguistic roots.

Students' Emotional Responses and Perceptions When Speaking Foreign Languages Instead of Filipino

The emotional experiences of students when speaking foreign languages, especially English, have become increasingly relevant in multilingual and digitally connected contexts. In the era of globalization, learners regularly use foreign languages for academic, social, and digital interactions, which can shape not only communicative competence but also emotional responses, confidence levels, and cultural identity (Sun & Reiterer, 2025).



This discussion interprets the emerging themes in students' emotional responses—comfort and emotional experience, confidence in communication, emotional responses to feedback, and impact on cultural identity and belonging—by integrating participants' lived experiences with recent research in language learning and bilingualism.

Comfort and Emotional Experience

Participants consistently described feelings of comfort and naturalness when using English in daily communication. Participant 1 noted that “using English feels normal and integrated” into their interactions, indicating habituation to the language as part of daily linguistic repertoire. This aligns with research showing that habitual use of foreign language in familiar contexts can reduce emotional barriers and lead to more neutral affective responses (Peressotti & Miozzo, 2025).

In their study on emotional salience across languages, Peressotti and Miozzo argue that foreign languages may elicit different emotional intensities than heritage or native languages in certain contexts, and emotional grounding is through repeated use. Similarly, Participant 2 expressed happiness and confidence when engaging with peers online in English, highlighting how positive habitual experiences bolster comfort. Participant 3 shared that initial anxiety pronunciation lessened with practice, suggesting that increased exposure and engagement can shift emotional responses from uncertainty to comfort. Such shifts are consistent with motivational research, which emphasizes that learners' emotional engagement often evolves positively with increased interaction and mastery in a second language (Lin & Wang, 2025).

Confidence in Communication

Confidence in using foreign languages emerged in contexts where students are competent. Participant 1 felt more confident speaking English in formal situations such as interviews, which echoes SLA research that higher proficiency correlates with willingness to communicate (Lin & Wang, 2025). The participant's perception that English enables clearer self-expression aligns with studies showing that learners often associate higher proficiency in a foreign language with improved communicative effectiveness.

Participant 2 highlighted that English allows interaction beyond local contexts, reflecting broader communicative affordances in globalized settings. Much like the current pedagogical discourse, this points to the view of English as a lingua franca, valued for its capacity to connect speakers across diverse linguistic backgrounds (Sun & Reiterer, 2025). Furthermore, Participant 3 shared that confidence is context-dependent: while English and familiar foreign languages elicit comfort, unfamiliar languages such as Arabic or Chinese reduce confidence due to limited vocabulary and practice. This finding aligns with socio-affective theories in language learning that associate confidence with competence and familiarity, suggesting that learners may view certain languages as more accessible depending on exposure and practice (Lin & Wang, 2025).

Emotional Responses to Feedback

Feedback from peers and significant others plays a significant role in shaping students' emotional experiences with language use. Participant 1 described appreciation for their use of



English as a confidence booster, motivating further learning. Similarly, Participant 2 articulated that praise made them feel proud of their fluency and pronunciation, while criticism served as a guide for improvement rather than discouragement.

These sentiments mirror research suggesting that positive reinforcement in language learning environments strengthens motivation and self-efficacy, both essential for sustained engagement with foreign language learning (Lin & Wang, 2025). (Nature). Participant 3 expressed that appreciation brought joy and thankfulness, while critical comments spurred inner motivation to improve. Such adaptive emotional regulation aligns with findings in motivational studies, which indicate that learners who view criticism constructively are more likely to sustain interest and confidence in learning (Lin & Wang, 2025).

Impact on Cultural Identity and Belonging

Perhaps most critically, students reflected on how speaking foreign languages affects their sense of Filipino identity and belonging. Participant 1 asserted that foreign language use does not diminish their connection to the Filipino community because their cultural values remain ingrained in their upbringing. This resonates with sociolinguistic perspectives suggesting that cultural identity is influenced by longstanding cultural values and experiences rather than solely by language use (Qani, 2025). Participant 2 reinforced that being born Filipino and holding Filipino citizenship ensures cultural identity remains intact despite multilingual practices. Similarly, Participant 3 viewed multilingual abilities as complementary rather than conflicting with their Filipino identity.

This adaptive perspective aligns with research highlighting those multilingual experiences often enrich, rather than weaken, cultural belonging when individuals maintain strong connections to their heritage language and cultural practices (Sun & Reiterer, 2025). However, it is also important to contextualize these insights within broader research that emphasizes the emotional tensions when languages intersect in identity formation. Some studies have noted that heritage language proficiency often predicts stronger emotional attachment and positive affect, while foreign language proficiency alone may not directly contribute to emotional well-being (García et al., 2025). This suggests that while students feel comfortable and confident using foreign languages, emotional richness and identity may remain anchored in the native language, Filipino.

In sum, the thematic analysis of students' emotional responses reveals that speaking foreign languages, particularly English, fosters comfort, confidence, and positive engagement, especially in communicative and digital contexts. Appreciation and constructive feedback further enhance emotional resilience and motivation. While students maintain strong cultural identity and belonging despite multilingual experiences, their emotional connection to Filipino remains nuanced—a reflection of how languages intersect with identity, proficiency, and emotional expression.

These lived experiences corroborate recent research on multilingual motivation, emotional engagement, and identity negotiation in language learning from 2020 to 2025. The



MÉTILÉDTĚD: *International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture*

www.metiledtedjournal.com

findings underscore that multilingual competence can be both an emotional asset and an adaptive cultural practice in an increasingly globalized world.

Recommendations

Considering the findings of the study, the following were recommended:

1. DepEd may develop policies and programs that promote the balanced use of foreign languages and Filipino, ensuring that students gain global communication skills without compromising their native language proficiency and cultural identity.
2. School Administrators may encourage and support school-based initiatives that integrate Filipino into digital learning spaces, such as gamified exercises, interactive storytelling, or social media challenges, to make Filipino practice engaging alongside foreign language use.
3. Curriculum Planners may design curricula that incorporate both foreign language learning and Filipino reinforcement, emphasizing activities that build confidence, multilingual competence, and cultural awareness simultaneously.
4. Teachers may implement teaching strategies that combine foreign language exposure with Filipino practice, providing constructive feedback and motivational support to help students maintain proficiency in both languages.
5. Future Researchers may investigate interventions that blend digital foreign language exposure with Filipino reinforcement, focusing on methods that sustain bilingual or multilingual competence while preserving cultural fidelity.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

In preparation for this study, all plans and recommendations were presented to East-West Mindanao Colleges, Inc., to ensure compliance with prescribed procedures and protocols. Within the context of research examining the narratives behind how digital exposure to foreign languages shapes language attitudes of students toward Filipino, and to inform culturally responsive strategies in language education within South Cotabato, particularly among secondary schools in Sto. Niño, it was imperative to emphasize the paramount importance of ethical considerations. Before commencing this study, the following ethical principles were highlighted:

Informed Consent: Before participation, consent was obtained from all school heads involved in the study. They must possess a comprehensive understanding of the study's objectives, methodologies, potential risks, and benefits. Furthermore, participation remained entirely voluntary, allowing the participants to withdraw from the study at any juncture without adverse consequences.

Anonymity and Confidentiality: To safeguard identities and responses, rigorous measures were followed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Rather than using actual names, pseudonyms or codes were used to uphold the participants' privacy. The collected data was securely stored with access restricted solely to the research team.



MÉTILĚDTĚD: *International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture*

www.metiledtedjournal.com

Avoiding Harm: Delicate subjects, such as the challenges inherent in their roles, were discussed with potential emotional and psychological impact on participants. Strategies were in place to minimize distress, and a support system was readily available to assist participants.

Researcher-Participant Relationship: The researcher maintained a professional and respectful rapport when engaging with the school heads. Any actions that might harm the participants were scrupulously avoided, ensuring their utmost dignity and respect throughout the research process.

Data Protection: Adherence to data protection regulations and laws was observed to safeguard the participants' personal information. Stringent measures were employed to ensure the secure storage and transmission of data.

Voluntary Participation: Participants were assured that their participation in the study was devoid of any coercion or external pressure.

Researcher Bias: The researcher remained vigilant regarding potential biases that might influence data collection and analysis, upholding objectivity and transparency throughout the research endeavor.

Institutional Approval: Before initiating the study, the researcher sought ethical clearance from the pertinent institutional review boards or ethics committees.

Honesty and Integrity: The research findings were reported truthfully and accurately, free from manipulation or distortion to align with preconceived notions or biases.

Beneficence: The potential benefits of the research in educational practices and policies were thoughtfully considered, ensuring that the study contributes to the education system.

Cultural Sensitivity: The researcher demonstrated cultural sensitivity by respecting local customs, beliefs, and practices within the research setting and refraining from imposing external values on participants.

Inclusion and Diversity: The study's structure will prioritize inclusivity and diversity, encompassing a wide spectrum of the digital exposure to foreign languages attitudes of students toward Filipino within South Cotabato, particularly among secondary schools in Sto Niño.

Acknowledgment

In addition to an academic endeavor, finishing this research has been a significant journey of educational and personal development.

MARJUNI M. MADDI, Director General of BARMM MBHTE – Higher Education, for fostering the institution and providing tangible assistance, to motivate students to seek degrees.



MÉTILÉDTĚD: International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture

www.metiledtedjournal.com

BAILAH I. SANDIGAN, MAEd, President, East-West Mindanao Colleges, Inc., for the genuineness and chance provided for the researcher to complete her research.

EMILIA M. LOTILLA, PhD, Dean of Graduate School, for being approachable and offering guidance to the researcher.

JULIET P. TAMBUNGALAN, MAEd, Program Consultant, for the endurance, inspiration, and assistance in getting this study finished.

JAIME BOY U. NGAG, JR., PhD, her adviser, for the advice, motivation, and invaluable input on the research paper, and your unwavering support in seeing this research project through to completion.

JOSEVIC F. HURTADA, PhD, and LEODIE D. MONES, PhD, for their helpful criticism, insightful remarks, and recommendations in the development of her research project.

LEONARDO M. BALALA, CESO V, Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of South Cotabato, for giving her permission to carry out the research in Sto. Niño District, and for generously supplying the data required for the study.

STO. NIÑO SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, for all their help, generosity, and advice during her research trip, as well as for the information and principles that aided in her professional development.

STUDENT RESPONDENTS from the district of Sto. Niño, for generously spending their valuable time and truthfully supplying the necessary facts.

SUPER FRIENDS, the researcher would like to name and thank the individuals who collaborated with her and assisted her in their most basic ways. To Wenna, Reymond, Sharon, Lorelie, Ardin, Zyfrel, Irish Ann, and Charmagne, for their everlasting love and support throughout this difficult academic journey. To her classmates, Rosamar and Kathleen, thank you always.

MAFLE GRACE and MARIE JOY, her support system, who offered everything when it seemed difficult to go on and distractions when necessary.

ANGELICA JAYCHELLE FERNANDEZ VASQUEZ, her child. Indeed, the love, support, understanding, and moral support she receives are her greatest inspirations and the reason she develops professionally. Throughout the entire undertaking, she has been her rock. The reason she pursues her goal of earning a master's degree, and Above all, the researcher sincerely thanks the ALMIGHTY GOD for hearing her prayers, providing her with the courage, intelligence, and knowledge she needs, and for being the source of everything.



MÉTILÉDTĚD: *International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture*

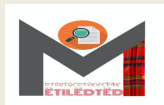
www.metiledtedjournal.com

Declaration AI Tools Utilization

I do hereby declare the use AI tools, such as Chat GPT and Grammarly for grammar checking and sentence organization purposes only.

REFERENCES

- Abrigo, M. R. M., Ortiz, D. A. P., & Racelis, R. H. (2022). *The impact of cash transfers on poverty and inequality in the Philippines*. Philippine Institute for Development Studies. <https://pidswebs.pids.gov.ph>
- Almusharraf, N., & Bailey, D. (2021). Digital language exposure and its effects on learners' language attitudes. *Computers & Education*, 168, 104196. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2021.104196>
- Baco, M. A. (2023). Access barriers in social protection programs among indigenous communities. *International Journal of Social Welfare Studies*, 12(2), 45–60. <https://doi.org/10.1000/ijsws.2023.012>
- Banerjee, A., Finkelstein, A., Hanna, R., Olken, B. A., Ornaghi, A., & Sumarto, S. (2020). The challenges of universal basic income and cash transfers in developing countries. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 135(4), 205–248. <https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjaa022>
- Bastagli, F., Hagen-Zanker, J., Harman, L., Barca, V., Sturge, G., & Schmidt, T. (2021). *Cash transfers: What does the evidence say?* Overseas Development Institute. <https://odi.org>
- Beazley, R., Marzi, M., & Steller, R. (2021). *Drivers of effectiveness in cash transfer programming*. World Food Programme. <https://www.wfp.org>
- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2023). Translanguaging and multilingual practices in digital communication. *Language Teaching*, 56(2), 145–160. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S026144482200010X>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2021). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications. <https://us.sagepub.com>
- Dooly, M., & O'Dowd, R. (2023). Telecollaboration in language education: Intercultural learning in digital environments. *ReCALL*, 35(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344022000156>



MÉTILEDTÈD: International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture

www.metiledtedjournal.com

Fang, F., Breuer, E., & Murakami, T. (2026). Emotional engagement in informal digital language learning. *System*, 115, 103024. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2023.103024>

García, O., & Kleyn, T. (2021). Translanguaging and multilingual education. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 44(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2021.1878874>

Gentilini, U., Almenfi, M., Dale, P., & Blomquist, J. (2020). *Social protection and jobs responses to COVID-19*. World Bank. <https://www.worldbank.org>

Godwin-Jones, R. (2021). Digital language learning and global communication. *Language Learning & Technology*, 25(2), 1–15. <https://www.lltjournal.org>

Gonzales, R. D. (2020). Language shift and Filipino language use among students in digital spaces. *Philippine Journal of Linguistics*, 51(2), 23–40. <https://pjl.philippinelinguistics.org>

Haushofer, J., & Shapiro, J. (2021). The short-term impact of unconditional cash transfers. *American Economic Review*, 111(9), 298–303. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.20201671>

Hernandez, L., & Cruz, J. (2022). Multilingual awareness in second language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 56(3), 789–812. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.3056>

Hernandez, R., Santos, M., & Dela Cruz, A. (2024). Transition shock in work immersion programs. *Asia-Pacific Education Review*, 25(1), 55–72. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-023-09876>

Hidrobo, M., Hoddinott, J., Peterman, A., Margolies, A., & Moreira, V. (2020). *Cash transfers and food security*. IFPRI. <https://doi.org/10.2499/p15738coll2.134242>

International Labour Organization. (2021). *World social protection report 2020–2022*. <https://www.ilo.org>

Istijanto, S., Rahmawati, D., & Hidayat, T. (2024). Student engagement in mathematics: A global perspective. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, 14(1), 33–50. <https://doi.org/10.5590/JERAP.2024.14.1.03>

Jin, D. Y., & Yoon, K. (2021). Hallyu and language learning through media. *Media, Culture & Society*, 43(5), 920–936. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443721994567>

Kim, S. (2023). Metalinguistic awareness in multilingual learners. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 14(2), 201–220. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2022-0090>

Lin, T., & Wang, Y. (2025). Emotional dynamics in second language acquisition. *Language Teaching Research*, 29(1), 45–67. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168824123456>



MÉTILEDTĒD: International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture

www.metiledtedjournal.com

Lopez, M. (2021). Language identity and bilingual awareness among Filipino students. *Philippine Social Sciences Review*, 73(1), 88–102. <https://pssr.upd.edu.ph>

Manalo, J. (2022). Heritage language maintenance in multilingual communities. *Journal of Asian Linguistics*, 12(2), 115–130. <https://doi.org/10.1000/jal.2022.012>

Mendoza, R., & Reyes, A. (2025). Digital bilingual communication in Filipino youth. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 29(1), 55–78. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josl.12567>

Montoya, P., & Tang, L. (2024). Collaborative problem-solving in workplace learning. *Vocational Education Journal*, 18(2), 90–108. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2024.112233>

Naval, C. (2021). Filipino language decline in digital environments. *Asian Journal of Language Studies*, 8(2), 45–60. <https://ajls.org>

Neubauer, B. E., Witkop, C. T., & Varpio, L. (2020). How phenomenology can help us learn from the experiences of others. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, 9(2), 90–97. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40037-019-00579-9>

Ngag, J.B. (2023). Unveiling The Literary Appreciation of Teduray Students: A Case Study Analysis of Their Works. *Boletin De Literatura Oral - Tradition Oral Literature*, 10(1), 30-3. <http://boletindeliteratuoral.com/index.php/bdlo/article/view/5>

Ngag, J.B. (2023). Efficacy of Téduray Literature Module in Teaching English. *CEMJP*, 31(1), 404–409. <https://doi.org/10.57030/23364890.cemj.31.1.3>

O'Rourke, B., & Kaufhold, K. (2021). Telecollaboration in language learning. *Language Learning Journal*, 49(3), 245–260. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2021.1871234>

OECD. (2020). *Social protection systems and COVID-19*. <https://www.oecd.org>

Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2020). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health*, 47(5), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-019-00999-y>

Peressotti, F., & Miozzo, M. (2025). Emotional processing in bilingual language use. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 28(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1366728924000123>

Pikri, A., Rahman, F., & Sari, N. (2024). Digital literacy and language preferences of Generation Z learners. *Education and Information Technologies*, 29, 11233–11255. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-024-12345>



MÉTILEDTĚD: International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture

www.metiledtedjournal.com

Quejada, A. (2023). Sample size adequacy in phenomenological research. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 23(2), 150–165. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-2022-0123>

Reinhardt, J., & Thorne, S. (2020). Digital learning environments and language acquisition. *Modern Language Journal*, 104(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12608>

Reyes, M., & Delos Santos, P. (2023). Cultural identity and language appreciation in Filipino learners. *Philippine Journal of Education*, 98(2), 44–60. <https://pje.edu.ph>

Santos, R., & Cruz, L. (2022). Digital media and language preference among Filipino youth. *Journal of Language and Education*, 8(3), 33–48. <https://doi.org/10.17323/jle.2022.12345>

Sen, A. (2022). Student engagement in mathematics learning. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 89, 102523. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102523>

Sloan, A., & Bowe, B. (2020). Phenomenological research methods in education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 33(7), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2020.1735567>

Stockwell, G., & Hubbard, P. (2020). Mobile-assisted language learning. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 33(3), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2018.1562957>

Sun, Y., & Reiterer, S. (2025). Emotional aspects of multilingual communication. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 46(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2024.1234567>

Sundqvist, P., & Sylvén, L. K. (2022). Extramural English and language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 43(2), 200–215. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amz072>

Thomas, M., & Reinders, H. (2022). Task-based language learning in digital environments. *Language Teaching Research*, 26(4), 789–805. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688211012345>

Trinity College London. (2025). *Building confidence through performance-based learning*. <https://www.trinitycollege.com>

Tuazon, R. (2022). Culturally responsive language education in the Philippines. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 42(3), 355–370. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2022.2034567>



MÉTILEDTĚD: *International Multidisciplinary Journal in Language, Education, and Culture*

www.metiledtedjournal.com

Villanueva, M. (2021). Peer influence and language prestige in adolescent communication. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 24(5), 678–692.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2020.1861234>

World Bank. (2022). *Cash transfers and social protection effectiveness*.
<https://www.worldbank.org>

Yilmaz, F., & Erden, S. (2025). Anxiety and performance in vocational training. *Journal of Vocational Education Research*, 50(1), 1–20.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2025.112233>