Multilingual Media Exposure and Translation Competence of Students: Their Implications to Pedagogical Practices

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to determine the extent of multilingual media exposure and the translation competence of future teachers, the BSED students taking a translation subject required for English and Filipino majors. Generally, the study used the descriptive-correlational method. Descriptive statistics were mean and standard deviation while the inferential statistics was Pearson's r set at 0.05 significance level. Results revealed that as a whole and when classified as to major, the respondents' multilingual media exposure was of "High Extent" for both English and Filipino and of "Moderate Extent" for the Local Dialect. For translation competence as a whole and when classified as to major, the respondents had the "High Translation Competence" for the three media: English, Filipino and the Local Dialect. Media exposure was positively correlated to translation competence. Therefore, exposure to multilingual media has a positive impact on translation competence because as the extent of exposure goes higher so does the level of translation competence.

Introduction

Background of the Study

Multilingual competence acquired through exposure to the multilingual mass media is important in teaching. With the emphasis on multilingualism in education as expressed in DepED Order No. 16, s. 2012 entitled "Guidelines on the Implementation of the Mother Tongue-Based- Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE)", future teachers should be adept not just in one language, but also in other languages that their students might be at home with. In the Philippines, the teachers should be competent in the mother tongue of the students: one of the eight major dialects in the country; the national language: Filipino; and the universal language: English. Being multilingual is imperative in having translation competence involving language competence which means having knowledge of the grammatical systems, terminologies, syntactic and morphological conventions of both source and target language; textual competence which is emerging from and is intertwined with the linguistic competence representing an ability to define textual features; subject competence which is having familiarity with what the particular text is about and which is covering both knowledge about the world and specialist knowledge; cultural competence which means knowing deeply a contextual culture; transfer competence which is encompassing the strategies and procedures that allow translating the text from L1 to L2 and performing translation quickly and efficiently. Effective teaching demands that teachers should be multilingual. To teach well is to explain in different languages the students are familiar with. Chatel (2014) in her article,"7 Benefits of Being Bilingual or Speaking More Than One Language" cited a 2004 study which found that those who could speak two or more languages had higher levels of cognitive brain function, and were more adept at solving problems, planning, and other "mentally demanding tasks." The fact that bilingual people are often forced to shift between languages is like an overall workout for the brain; making them quicker, better at multi-tasking, and, yes, smarter. Being multilingual could be a channel to be multi-literate and multi-cultural which can facilitate comprehension and self-expression : the two major bedrocks in teaching. The study was anchored on the Schema Theory of Learning advocated by Anderson (1977). The results of the study could be the baseline data on teaching translation or employing translation in a literature classes.

Conceptual Framework of the Study
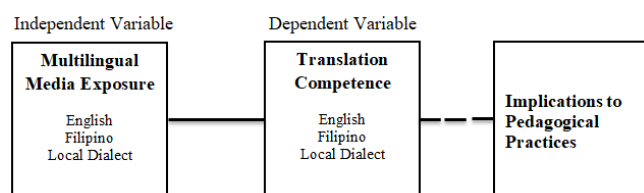
Figure 1: **Schematic Diagram of the Study**

Figure 1 presents the paradigm of the study. The independent variable is the respondents' multilingual media exposure while the dependent variable is their translation competence. The researchers believed that there is a relationship between the identified independent variable and their competence in translation.

Statement of the Problem

The study was conducted to find out the relationship between multilingual media exposure of the third year BSED English and fourth year BSED Filipino students of ISAT U Miagao Campus in the first semester of Academic Year 2016-2017.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the distribution of the respondents as to L1 and L2 at home?
2. What is the extent of multilingual media exposure of the respondents when taken as a whole and when classified as to major?
3. What is the type of medium they are most exposed to as a whole and when classified as to major?
4. What is the translation competence of the respondents as a whole and when classified as to major?
5. Is there a significant relationship between multilingual media exposure and translation competence?

Research Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between multilingual media exposure and translation competence?

Literature Reviews

Aside from the formal learning in schools, proficiency in a language can also be acquired by way of exposure to mass media using the language. According to a study carried out by Sonia Livingstone (2001) as cited by MacLeod and Larsson (2011), "the media today operate as pervasive, yet often imperceptible, elements in the everyday cultures of children and young people". In the same study, she suggested that media can and does have a positive effect on students who study English as a second language, due to the fact that several media genres are primarily in English.

According to Dimitrova and Jonasson (1999) cited by Saffarian, Ghonsooly and Akbari (2015), translation ability is "a basic ability to understand, express, and reexpress the "same" or an "equivalent" meaning in more than one language, within the constraints given by the individual's competence in the respective languages". According to Angelelli (as cited in Ghonsooly, 2011), translation competence consists of three basic components: (1) understanding of the source language text (indicating a good comprehension of the source text by the rendered text); (2) translation techniques (conveying the full meaning of the original text and observing the target language flow and style which confirms translator's ability); and (3) writing in the target language (observing the criterion of coherence and proper grammar such as punctuation, spelling, syntax, usage and style). Moreover, the most recent model of communicative translation competence is suggested by Angelelli (as cited in Ghonsooly, 2011). Her model encompasses four sub-competences: (1) Linguistic Competence, (2) textual competence, (3) pragmatic competence, and (4) strategic competence. Besides, each of these competences is divided into subcomponents. Among these competences the sociolinguistic competence that is one of the sub-components of pragmatic competence takes several sub-competences which include the capability to choose words properly, knowledge of cultural references, knowledge of register, and knowledge of discourse.

Method

The study used descriptive-correlational survey method. The target respondents were the students taking a translation class as a required subject in their field of specialization. The total population of the respondents was sixty one (61), but only 52 or 85.25 % completed the translation tasks; so, they were finally considered as the respondents of

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the study in reference to convenient sampling. The table below presents their distribution.

Table 1: *Profile of the Respondents*

Major	N	%	n	%
English	34	55.74	30	57.69
Filipino	27	44.26	22	42.31
Total	61	100	52	100

The statistical tools used were mean and standard deviation for descriptive statistics and Pearson's *r* set at 0. 05 level of significance for inferential statistics.

Two research instruments were used in the study. The first one was a researcher made survey instrument on multilingual media exposure of the respondents. It had fifteen items with five items for each medium: English, Filipino and Local Dialect. It surveyed on extent of exposure to print and sound media within a week.

Scale of Means	Description
4.21-5.00	Very High Extent
3.41-4.20	High Extent
2.61-3.40	Moderate Extent
1.81-2.60	Low Extent
1.0-1.80	Very Low Extent

Another instrument was the Translation Matrix for the translation tasks. Translation was limited to sentence and paragraph levels. Subjects or topics considered in formulating the sentences and in choosing paragraphs were familiar to the respondents. On the sentence level, five sentences on a particular source language were translated to two target languages. For example, five sentences in English were translated to Filipino and to the Local Dialect. Another five sentences in the Local Dialect were translated to English and to Filipino. Lastly, five sentences in Filipino were translated to English and to the Local Dialect. On the paragraph level, the researchers chose one paragraph in English which was translated by the respondents to the Local Dialect and Filipino; another paragraph in the Local Dialect had to be translated to English and Filipino; and lastly, a paragraph in Filipino had to be translated to English and to the Local Dialect. Each target

language translation output, having four sets, was given forty points.

| Scale of Scores	Description
33-40	Very High Translation Competence
25-32	High Translation Competence
17-24	Average Translation Competence
9-16	Low Translation Competence
1-8	Very Low Translation competence

Research Procedure

The researcher prepared the questionnaire on Multilingual Media Exposure and the Matrix of Translation Tasks. After the validation of the questionnaire, they were administered to the target respondents. The conduct of the translation tasks was done in three sessions of one hour each at 12:00-1:00 p.m. After which, collating and interpreting the Multilingual Media Exposure results were done. Then, scoring the translation outputs and interpreting the scores were done.

Results and Discussion

L1 and L2 at Home

Language spoken at home, to some extent, would contribute to the multilingual competence of the students that would redound to their translation competence. According to Malakoff and Hakuta (1991), metalinguistic awareness and bilingual proficiency are separate but related linguistic skills: for a given metalinguistic level, there can be a range of bilingual proficiencies, and for a given bilingual repertoire there can be a range in metalinguistic awareness. Translation proficiency might be thought of as the product of an interplay between metalinguistic maturity and bilingual proficiency.
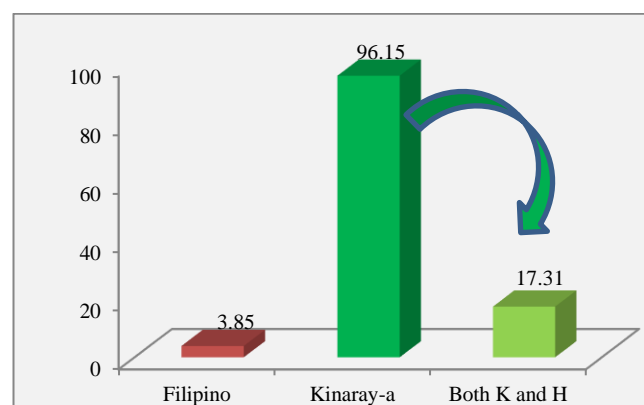
***Figure 1:* Distribution of respondents as to L1 at home**

Figure 1 shows the distribution of respondents as to L1 at home. Most respondents spoke Kinaray-a at home, the dialect spoken in most parts of the first Congressional District of Iloilo, the locale of Iloilo Science and Technology University Miagao Campus. Those who spoke the local dialect comprised 96.15% with 17.31% switching from Kinaray-a to Hiligaynon, the dialect spoken in the city of Iloilo, the province where the University is situated. Only 3. 85% spoke Filipino as the L1.
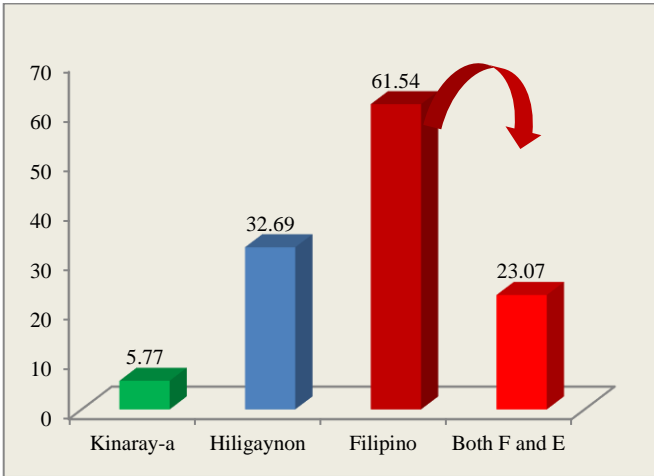
***Figure 2.:* Distribution of respondents as to L2 at home**

Figure 2 presents the respondents' distribution as to L2 spoken at their home. The highest number (61.54%) had Filipino as L2 with 23.07 % switching from Filipino to English and 32.69% spoke Hiligaynon as their L2. The respondents were exposed to varied languages as their L2.
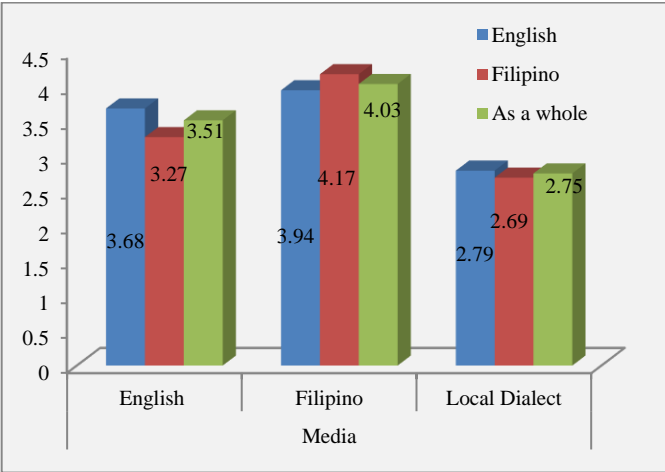
Extent of Multilingual Media Exposure

Table 2: *Respondents' Extent of Multilingual Media Exposure*

Categories	Mass Media Exposure								
	English	SD	D	Filipino	SD	D	Local Dialect	SD	D
English Major	3.68	.49	HE	3.94	.60	HE	2.79	.53	ME
Filipino Major	3.27	.49	ME	4.17	.56	HE	2.69	.72	ME
As a whole	3.51	.53	HE	4.03	.59	HE	2.75	.61	ME

Legend: **D-**Description; **HE-**High Extent; **ME-**Moderate Extent

It was revealed that the respondents had "High Extent" of exposure to both English and Filipino mass media while they had "Moderate Extent" of exposure to the mass media in the Local Dialect. It was good to note that students majoring in

English had a higher mean score in their exposure to English mass media than that of the students majoring in Filipino. On the other hand, the students majoring in Filipino had a higher mean score in their exposure to Filipino mass media than that of the students majoring in English. It simply implies that their major subject spells out their interest. The "Moderate Extent" of exposure to the mass media in the Local Dialect might be explained in the fact that majority of the respondents speak the language in their homes; so, they would not anymore bother to frequently listen to or read the media. Besides, they were schooling and most of the radio dramas, TV shows or news in the dialect were aired on school hours. So, there chance would be just on evenings and weekends.

***Figure 3:* Mass Media Most Exposed to**

Figure 3 presents the distribution of mean scores on exposure to multilingual media. It was revealed that the respondents were most exposed to the mass media in Filipino, followed by those in English and they were least exposed to mass media in the Local Dialect.

Translation Competence of the Students

Table 3: *Respondents' Translation Competence*

Categories	Translation Competence								
	English	SD	D	Filipino	SD	D	Local Dialect	SD	D
English Major	27.90	4.16	HTC	27.30	4.27	HTC	32.67	2.26	HTC
Filipino Major	25.91	2.75	HTC	29.45	3.99	HTC	30.41	2.53	HTC
As a whole	27.06	3.73	HTC	28.21	4.25	HTC	31.71	2.61	HTC

Legend: D-Description **HTC-**High Translation Competence

Table 3 presents the mean scores on translation competence. Generally, the scores revealed "High Translation Competence" of the respondents. It is noteworthy that as a whole, the highest score was in the Local Dialect, followed by the score in Filipino and the least score was in English. Malakoff and Hakuta (1991), cited in their book the benefit of being multilingual. They mentioned that studies of *balanced bilinguals* (bilinguals who have roughly equivalent abilities in the two languages) have suggested that bilingualism has a positive effect on cognitive development, especially under certain conditions of additive bilingualism where both languages are supported academically and emotionally by both the community and the society at large.   The respondents could very well express the ideas in the language closest to their heart, their L1, then in the national language and least in the international language.   Spontaneity was readily seen while expressing ideas in their native tongue; while there might be some awkwardness in expressing concepts in the national language or the universal language. Specifically, students majoring in English had a higher score in English translation than that of the students majoring in Filipino. On the other hand, students majoring in Filipino had a higher score in Filipino translation than that of the students majoring in English. It would imply that, somehow, their study of a language as a major subject had an impact on their translation competence. Academically, their frequent exposure to their major subject facilitated their comprehension of the source texts in that language and aided them to have fluency of expression in the target texts along their field of specialization. Also, students majoring in English had a higher score in the Local dialect translation than that of the students majoring in Filipino.
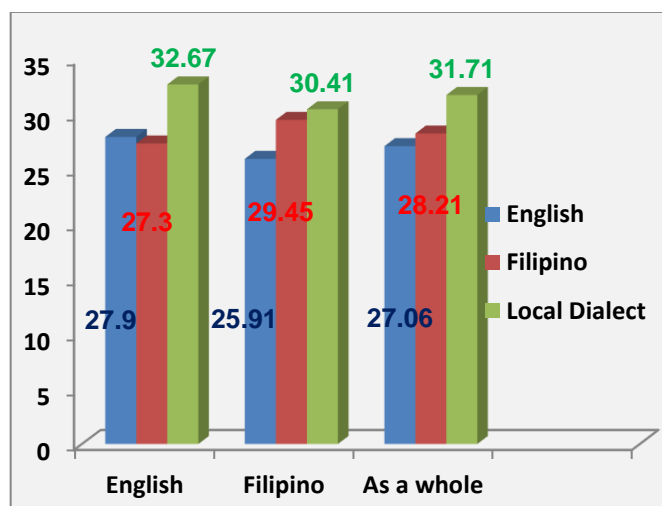

Figure 4.: **Mean Sores in Translation**

Relationship Between Multilingual Media Exposure and Translation Competence

To determine if a relationship exists between the scores in media exposure and translation, a correlation test was done. The data are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: *Correlation between Multilingual Media Exposure and Translation Competence*

Variables	Correlation Value		D	p-value	Remarks
	r	r²			
English MEx					
English TC	0.132	0.0174	LPC	0.351	NS
		(1.74%)			
Filipino MEx	0.153	0.0234	LPC	0.279	NS
Filipino TC		(2.34%)	LPC	0.360	NS
Local Dialect MEx	0.130	0.0169	LPC	0.360	NS
Local Dialect TC		(1.69%)			

Legend: MEx= Media Exposure; **TC**=Translation Competence; **D**=Description; **LPC**= Low Positive Correlation

It can be inferred from Table 4 that scores in multilingual media exposure had a low positive correlation to scores in translation, but not significant. Exposure to Filipino mass media had 2. 34% contribution to translation competence in Filipino ; exposure to English mass media had 1.74 % contribution to translation competence in English; and exposure to the mass media in the Local Dialect had 1.69% contribution to translation competence in the Local Dialect.

Conclusions and Implications to Pedagogical Practice

1. The respondents' extent of exposure to multilingual media still needs enhancement. The language and literature teachers may

integrate in their classes reading, speaking, listening, writing and viewing activities involving multilingual media. To be multiliterate, students need to be multilingual.

2. Translation competence in the three media still needs enhancement. Language teachers may engage students on translation activities, specifically in language and literature classes for this might facilitate comprehension of the literary materials taken up in the classroom.

3. A positive correlation exists between multilingual media exposure and translation competence. It implies that as the extent of media exposure goes higher, so does the translation competence. Further, it implies that, in the classroom, language teachers may expose students to multilingual mass media so they can easily translate concepts to other languages; thereby making their learning effective.

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