RESEARCH ARTICLE

Distractions and Obstructions in the Mainstreaming and Preserving of the Filipino Language

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ABSTRACT

Despite sustained efforts to promote the Filipino language, its mainstreaming and preservation remain challenged by globalization, technological shifts, and entrenched language ideologies. Existing studies have largely focused on policy frameworks and language attitudes, leaving limited attention to educators lived experiences as frontline agents of language transmission. Guided by Language Ideology Theory, this study examines the institutional, societal, and technological factors that obstruct the use of Filipino and explores the strategies educators employ to sustain it in academic and social contexts. Using an exploratory qualitative design, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 18 Filipino language teachers. Data were analyzed through reflexive thematic analysis to identify recurring ideological barriers and pedagogical responses. Findings reveal that the perceived prestige of English, inconsistent institutional policies, and the dominance of English in digital spaces constrain the functional and symbolic use of Filipino. At the same time, educators actively resist these constraints through culturally responsive pedagogy, integration of Filipino in digital platforms, and community-based language initiatives. This study contributes to language ideology scholarship by foregrounding educators' perspectives and demonstrating how dominant language hierarchies are negotiated in practice. The findings offer practical implications for language advocacy, curriculum development, and policy implementation aimed at strengthening the mainstreaming and preservation of Filipino in contemporary Philippine society.

Keywords: Distraction; Obstruction; Mainstreaming; language

1. Introduction

Language serves not only as a medium of communication but also as a reflection of cultural identity, social values, and national consciousness. In the Philippines, Filipino as the national language holds a central role in shaping collective identity and fostering social cohesion [1]. However, the mainstreaming and preservation of Filipino remain challenged by shifting linguistic behaviors, institutional practices, and global influences [2], as reflected in studies that highlight socio-cultural and educational barriers to language competence [3,4]. In many educational and social contexts, Filipino competes with English and other dominant languages, resulting in varied language preferences and inconsistent use across domains [5]. These conditions raise important questions about how Filipino is valued, practiced, and transmitted in contemporary society [6], especially when students' linguistic confidence is shaped by institutional resources and practices [7].

This study is anchored on Language Ideology Theory, which posits that beliefs, power structures, and social hierarchies significantly shape how languages are perceived, used, and prioritized [8]. From this perspective, the challenges experienced by educators and communities are not merely linguistic but also ideological, rooted in societal assumptions about the prestige of English, the functional roles of Filipino, and the influence of globalized communication [9]. Understanding these ideological underpinnings is crucial for uncovering why distractions and obstructions arise in the mainstreaming of the Filipino language [10], particularly in educational environments where instructional delivery, emotional connection, and teaching strategies influence language reception [11].

While previous research has examined language attitudes, policy frameworks, and historical developments, a key gap persists: limited studies document the lived experiences and insights of language teachers the very practitioners responsible for transmitting and upholding Filipino regarding the specific factors that obstruct its mainstreaming and preservation [12]. Likewise, there is insufficient research detailing the strategies and adaptive approaches educators use to sustain Filipino amid changing societal and technological landscapes [13], despite emerging work on learner behavior, academic preparation, and instructional challenges in changing learning modes [14].

While previous research has examined language attitudes, policy frameworks, and historical developments surrounding Filipino, limited attention has been given to how these forces are experienced and negotiated by language teachers in everyday educational practice. In particular, there is a lack of empirical studies documenting educators' firsthand accounts of the specific distractions and obstructions that hinder Filipino's mainstreaming, as well as the concrete strategies they employ to sustain its use amid sociocultural and technological change. Without centering educators' perspectives, existing literature risks overlooking how language ideologies operate on the ground and how they may be actively challenged within classrooms and communities.

Key concepts guiding the investigation include language mainstreaming, language preservation, linguistic ideologies, educational practices, institutional influences, and sociotechnical factors. The study considers how educators perceive and navigate these variables through their daily interactions, teaching practices, and engagements with students and communities, acknowledging that grammar competence, instructional strategies, and language delivery methods significantly affect language engagement [15-17]. Using an exploratory qualitative design, this research collects insights from 18 language teachers through one-on-one semi-structured interviews, analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. Through this approach, the study aims to surface patterns of ideological tension, identify actual barriers to Filipino language promotion, and highlight innovative or effective strategies used on the ground, including those reflected in contemporary educational settings that demand adaptability in teaching methods and motivational approaches [18].

The expected outcomes include a clearer understanding of the ideological, societal, technological, and institutional forces that shape Filipino language use, as well as a documentation of practical, context-driven strategies that educators employ to sustain its relevance. Ultimately, this research hopes to contribute to more informed language advocacy efforts, improved curricular and institutional policies, and a broader awareness of how Filipino can be preserved and strengthened in an increasingly globalized linguistic environment.

Accordingly, this study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What institutional, societal, and technological factors create distractions and obstructions to the mainstreaming and preservation of the Filipino language?

2. How do Filipino language educators respond to and navigate these challenges in their teaching and advocacy practices?

2. Literature review

2.1. Historical context

The historical evolution of Filipino is deeply embedded in the Philippines' sociopolitical development and national identity formation. Originally rooted in Tagalog and expanded through deliberate language planning, Filipino was envisioned as an inclusive national language integrating elements from various Philippine languages [19,20]. Constitutional mandates and educational reforms institutionalized its role as a unifying linguistic symbol [21]. While this historical trajectory highlights strong institutional intent to strengthen Filipino, the literature suggests that structural recognition alone has not guaranteed sustained functional use in academic and professional domains. The historical emphasis on unity sometimes overshadowed practical modernization needs, resulting in gaps between symbolic importance and real-world application. Moreover, the sociolinguistic development of Filipino reveals persistent tension between national identity and global linguistic pressures. Although Filipino symbolizes collective belonging, English continues to dominate sectors associated with prestige, economic mobility, and global engagement [22]. Scholars argue that historical language policies succeeded in institutional recognition but were less effective in reshaping societal language hierarchies. Consequently, Filipino's historical foundation remains strong symbolically but relatively vulnerable in technologically driven and internationally oriented contexts, demonstrating the limits of policy-driven linguistic development without parallel sociocultural reinforcement.

2.2. Ideological and policy barriers

Language ideology and policy inconsistencies remain significant barriers to Filipino's mainstreaming. English is widely perceived as a pathway to socioeconomic advancement, reinforcing hierarchical attitudes that privilege English in professional and academic spaces [23]. Such ideologies influence both institutional decision-making and individual language choices, creating environments where Filipino is relegated to informal or cultural functions. The literature critically suggests that these attitudes are not merely individual preferences but reflect broader systemic beliefs about modernization and global competitiveness. Policy frameworks such as Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education and bilingual education aim to promote linguistic diversity; however, implementation gaps limit their effectiveness [24]. Insufficient teacher training, lack of instructional resources, and inconsistent institutional enforcement weaken policy outcomes. Therefore, it demonstrates that policy presence alone does not ensure language promotion; institutional commitment and sustained support are essential. Furthermore, institutional cultures emphasizing internationalization and English-medium instruction contribute to Filipino's marginalization, highlighting a disconnect between national language policies and actual educational practices.

2.3. Sociocultural influences

Sociocultural dynamics significantly shape language preferences and practices. Rapid urbanization, exposure to global media, and youth engagement with international culture encourage the adoption of English and hybrid forms such as Taglish [25]. These linguistic behaviors reflect evolving identities rather than simple linguistic decline; however, scholars argue that they may weaken Filipino's perceived capability for academic and technical discourse [26]. The literature suggests that sociocultural change is not inherently negative but requires adaptive strategies to sustain Filipino's relevance in modern identity formation. Additionally, societal attitudes reinforce language hierarchies by associating English with sophistication and professional success. Media institutions and public discourse often prioritize English to maximize audience reach and perceived credibility [27]. This sociocultural positioning marginalizes Filipino despite its cultural significance. It reveal that societal prestige systems operate alongside institutional structures, shaping learners' motivation and

linguistic confidence. Without interventions that reshape public perception, Filipino risks remaining symbolically valued but functionally underutilized.

2.4. Technological pressures

The digital environment introduces both challenges and opportunities for Filipino. Online platforms, global media content, and digital tools frequently prioritize English, limiting Filipino's presence in technologically mediated communication [28]. The prevalence of English interfaces and algorithm-driven content visibility reduces opportunities for Filipino language use in emerging digital spaces. Scholars emphasize that technological globalization accelerates linguistic homogenization, thereby reinforcing English dominance in online learning and social interaction environments. However, technological shifts also highlight the adaptability of Filipino. While code-switching practices such as Taglish are widespread, concerns remain about potential impacts on linguistic standardization and formal language structures [29]. At the same time, digital initiatives such as localized applications and Filipino-language online content demonstrate that technology can serve as a platform for linguistic innovation and preservation. Technological pressures are not solely obstructive; rather, their impact depends on how educators and institutions strategically leverage digital tools to enhance Filipino's visibility and functional use.

2.5. Pedagogical responses

Pedagogical practices play a crucial role in sustaining Filipino amid structural and technological challenges. Educators employ culturally responsive teaching methods that connect language learning to students' lived experiences through storytelling, drama, debates, and creative expression [30]. Such approaches shift Filipino from a purely academic subject to a dynamic medium for identity formation and social engagement. Strategies demonstrate that pedagogical innovation can counter negative language ideologies by making Filipino relevant to contemporary youth culture. Beyond classroom instruction, advocacy programs and community-based initiatives further strengthen Filipino's presence. Language festivals, workshops, localized learning materials, and Filipino-language academic publications enhance both cultural and scholarly engagement. Scholars emphasize the need for continuous adaptation, including expanding technical vocabulary and promoting research in Filipino to maintain academic legitimacy [31]. These pedagogical responses illustrate that language preservation is not passive; it requires active, innovative engagement that aligns with evolving societal and technological contexts.

2.6. Advocacy & adaptive innovation in filipino language

Advocacy programs and institutional initiatives play a significant role in sustaining Filipino beyond the classroom by reinforcing its use in cultural, academic, and community spaces. Language festivals, reading and writing workshops, and community-based activities provide authentic environments where Filipino becomes a living medium of interaction rather than merely an academic requirement [32]. Additionally, the growth of Filipino-language research publications, academic texts, and scholarly journals strengthens the intellectual legitimacy of the language within higher education. These initiatives demonstrate that advocacy is most effective when it extends beyond symbolic celebration toward consistent engagement that integrates Filipino into daily communication, academic discourse, and institutional practice. At the same time, Abdurasul et al. [33] emphasize that long-term preservation depends on Filipino's capacity to adapt to evolving societal and technological contexts. Expanding technical and academic vocabulary, promoting scholarly work in Filipino, and embracing balanced forms of code-switching enable the language to remain relevant in modern academic, professional, and digital environments [34]. This adaptive perspective challenges static views of language preservation by recognizing linguistic evolution as necessary for survival. Furthermore, integrating Filipino

into contemporary discourse such as scientific communication, online platforms, and youth culture supports its continued functional use while maintaining cultural authenticity . [35]

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

This study employed an exploratory research design aimed at understanding the factors that distract or obstruct the mainstreaming and preservation of the Filipino language. The exploratory qualitative design was selected because the study seeks to capture nuanced, context-bound experiences of educators navigating language ideologies in practice. Given the limited empirical research foregrounding teachers' perspectives on Filipino language marginalization, this approach allows for in-depth exploration of meanings, interpretations, and adaptive strategies that cannot be captured through quantitative measures. The exploratory qualitative design was selected because the study seeks to capture nuanced, context-bound experiences of educators navigating language ideologies in practice. Given the limited empirical research foregrounding teachers' perspectives on Filipino language marginalization, this approach allows for in-depth exploration of meanings, interpretations, and adaptive strategies that cannot be captured through quantitative measures.

3.2. Population and sampling

The study focused on Filipino language teachers and educators who are actively engaged in language instruction, curriculum development, and advocacy for the promotion and preservation of the Filipino language. A total of eighteen (18) participants were selected using purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling strategy appropriate for qualitative research that seeks in-depth, experience-based insights rather than statistical generalization. Participants were chosen based on clearly defined inclusion criteria, including professional involvement in Filipino language teaching, experience in educational or community-based language initiatives, and direct engagement with issues related to language use and policy implementation.

Purposive sampling enabled the researcher to gather rich, contextually grounded perspectives from individuals who possess firsthand knowledge of the challenges and adaptive strategies associated with Filipino language mainstreaming. The selected participants represented diverse educational contexts and levels of experience, allowing for a broader range of insights into institutional practices, sociocultural influences, and technological pressures affecting language use. This sampling approach ensured that the data reflected nuanced professional experiences and facilitated the exploration of both shared patterns and varied perspectives across participants.

3.3. Instrument

Data were collected using a semi-structured interview guide carefully developed based on the research objectives and the theoretical framework of Language Ideology Theory. The instrument was designed to explore two central domains: (1) the institutional, societal, and technological factors that create distractions and obstructions to the mainstreaming and preservation of the Filipino language, and (2) the pedagogical strategies and advocacy practices employed by educators and language practitioners to sustain and promote its use in contemporary contexts.

The interview questions were open-ended and flexible to encourage participants to articulate detailed narratives, professional reflections, and contextualized examples drawn from their teaching and advocacy experiences. The semi-structured format allowed the researcher to maintain consistency across interviews while also adapting to emerging themes and probing deeper into relevant issues. This design ensured alignment between the data collection process and the research objectives, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of

both structural barriers and innovative responses within real-world educational environments. Table 1 presents the complete list of guide questions used in this study.

Table 1. Interview guide questions.

Objectives	Interview question
1. To explore the factors that cause distractions and obstructions in the efforts to mainstream and preserve the Filipino language.	1. What challenges or obstacles have you observed that affect the mainstreaming and preservation of the Filipino language? 2. Can you describe situations where the use of Filipino was limited or neglected In educational or social contexts? 3. How do societal, technological, or institutional factors influence the use and promotion of the Filipino language?
2. To examine strategies and approaches used by educators and language advocates to promote and sustain the use of the Filipino language.	1. What strategies have you found effective in encouraging the use of Filipino among students or the community? 2. Can you share examples of programs or Initiatives that successfully promoted the Filipino language? 3. How do you adapt your methods to ensure that Filipino remains relevant and widely used In different settings?

3.4. Data gathering procedure

Data were collected through individual, one-on-one semi-structured interviews conducted either face-to-face or via secure online platforms, depending on participant availability and logistical considerations. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 60 minutes, allowing sufficient time for participants to share detailed experiences and insights. With informed consent, all interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy in data capture and to facilitate precise transcription during analysis.

Prior to data collection, participants received a clear orientation regarding the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the ethical safeguards implemented to protect confidentiality and anonymity. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. During the interviews, the researcher employed active listening and reflexive questioning techniques, including follow-up and clarifying questions, to encourage deeper reflection and richer descriptions of experiences

3.5. Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis, an interpretive qualitative approach that emphasizes the researcher's active role in identifying patterns and constructing meaning from participants' narratives. The analysis began with the verbatim transcription of all interview recordings, followed by repeated readings of the transcripts to achieve data familiarization and immersion. Initial coding involved identifying meaningful segments related to ideological barriers, institutional practices, sociocultural influences, technological challenges, and pedagogical responses. Reflexive engagement throughout the analysis allowed for critical examination of interpretations, ensuring analytical depth and conceptual coherence. This process generated nuanced insights into both the structural factors that obstruct Filipino language promotion and the adaptive strategies educators employ to sustain its relevance in contemporary educational contexts.

3.6. Ethical considerations

Ethical principles were carefully observed throughout the entire research process to ensure the protection, dignity, and rights of all participants. Prior to data collection, participants were provided with a clear explanation of the study's objectives, procedures, and expected outcomes. Informed consent was obtained before conducting interviews, ensuring that participation was entirely voluntary. Participants were also informed of their right to decline answering any question and to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or negative consequences.

Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained to protect participants' identities and professional reputations. All audio recordings, transcripts, and research documents were stored securely and were accessible only to the researcher. Digital files were protected through password-secured storage, while any printed materials were kept in a locked and controlled environment to safeguard sensitive information.

Furthermore, the researcher ensured respectful and non-coercive engagement during interviews, creating a safe and supportive environment where participants could freely express their perspectives and experiences. Ethical responsibility was also upheld during data analysis and reporting by presenting findings accurately and honestly, ensuring that participants' narratives were represented with integrity and without misinterpretation. These measures ensured that the study adhered to accepted ethical standards for qualitative research within educational and sociolinguistic contexts.

4. Results

Research Objectives 1. To explore the factors that cause distractions and obstructions in the efforts to mainstream and preserve the Filipino language.

Question No. 1. What challenges or obstacles have you observed that affect the mainstreaming and preservation of the Filipino language?

1.1 *English Dominance in Schools and Work*

Eight (8) respondents expressed that they observe that English is strongly tied to career growth and social status. Students feel pressured to prioritize English because it is seen as essential for professional success and global opportunities. Parents also reinforce this mindset at home, often encouraging children to speak English because they believe it reflects higher intelligence or sophistication. As a result, Filipino is increasingly treated as secondary merely a subject to pass in school rather than a living language of prestige. Additionally, they mentioned that Students learn to associate English with intellectual and important topics, while Filipino becomes limited to grammar drills and literary memorization. They also note the growing stigma surrounding the Filipino language. In many areas English is viewed as the language of educated and socially mobile individuals, whereas Filipino is seen as casual, informal, or even less professional.

> "I observe that English is strongly tied to career growth and social status. Students feel pressured to prioritize English because it is seen as essential for professional success and global opportunities."

> " Students learn to associate English with intellectual and important topics, while Filipino becomes limited to grammar drills and literary memorization."

1.2 *Media and Pop Culture Influence*

Five (5) respondents shared that they observe that students now learn most of their language from social media and entertainment platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Netflix, and online games, a space where English content is heavily dominant. Because these platforms shape young people's humor, trends, and everyday expressions, students often absorb English vocabulary more than Filipino. Filipino content is present online, but it is usually mixed with English to appear more trendy and relatable. Additionally, they mentioned that students can speak Filipino but struggle to express complex emotions or ideas in rich Filipino terms because they rarely encounter them. This creates a linguistic environment where code-switching becomes natural and widespread. As a result, students begin aligning their identity with global and Western online

culture rather than with Filipino culture. As teachers they worry that pure Filipino language is starting to look outdated or less prestigious to the youth.

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> "Students can speak Filipino but struggle to express complex emotions or ideas in rich Filipino terms because they rarely encounter them."

1.3 Lack of Reinforcement at Home

Five (5) respondents expressed the growing shift in many homes where parents encourage children to speak English with siblings and family members, believing it gives them an advantage in education and future careers. This creates a situation where Filipino is no longer the language of daily interaction and emotional bonding; it becomes confined to the classroom as an academic subject rather than a natural language of life. Additionally, they shared that as children grow up using English as their instinctive mode of communication, their emotional experiences and personal expression become tied to English instead of Filipino. This leads to an emotional disconnect from their own native language. Children struggle to articulate feelings or complex cultural ideas in Filipino because they rarely practice expressing them outside school.

> "Growing shift in many homes where parents encourage children to speak English with siblings and family members, believing it gives them an advantage in education and future careers. "

> "As children grow up using English as their instinctive mode of communication, their emotional experiences and personal expression become tied to English instead of Filipino."

Question No. 2. Can you describe situations where the use of Filipino was limited or neglected in educational or social contexts?

2.1 English-Dominant Culture

Five (5) respondents expressed that there's a belief among school administrators that English immersion guarantees higher academic performance and better career prospects. Because of this, speaking Filipino outside the Filipino classroom is labeled as a language violation. They are required to report students caught speaking Filipino even if they are just casually chatting with friends. They feel like the Filipino language is treated as unprofessional, like something to be unlearned. Additionally, they mentioned that they try to explain that language is tied to identity, but the message they get is that Filipino language interferes with success. Over time, students internalize this. They start to feel embarrassed when they're more expressive in Filipino than in English. They've seen students who are articulate and creative in Filipino become quiet in English only environments. Their ideas are dismissed just because they can't express them perfectly in English. It's kind a heartbreaking.

> " There's a belief among school administrators that English immersion guarantees higher academic performance and better career prospects."

> "We try to explain that language is tied to identity, but the message we get is that Filipino language interferes with success."

2.2 Minimal effort in Filipino outputs

Five (5) respondents expressed that the Filipino language is treated like an easy subject. Students focus on STEM or English-heavy courses because that's where scholarships and job opportunities are. It is only seen as the subject you don't have to study for. Students assume everyone already knows how to speak Filipino, so why bother learning it academically? The Filipino language only becomes important during Buwan ng Wika. Additionally, they mentioned that during career talks, speakers highlight global companies always using English. The Filipino language is rarely mentioned in the narrative of success. They say the Filipino language is not required abroad, so it feels like a waste of time learning and using it. It becomes the language of the past, not the future

> " The Filipino language is treated like an easy subject. Students focus on STEM or English-heavy courses because that's where scholarships and job opportunities are."

> "During career talks, speakers highlight global companies using English. The Filipino language is rarely mentioned in the narrative of success."

2.3 Demonstrating a clinical procedure to students in a lab in a fast-paced and matter-of-fact tone

Eight (8) respondents mentioned that parents encourage kids to speak English at home believing it ensures success abroad. When they assign Filipino essays, parents complain that it's unnecessary and outdated. Parents often tell them straight to their face that they see English as the only language worth investing in. Additionally, they mentioned that some parents rewrite or translate their child's homework into English before submission, saying it looks more professional. Even during parent-teacher conferences, some parents apologize for their children's poor English, but never for their limited Filipino. As if Filipino competence doesn't matter.

> "Parents encourage kids to speak English at home believing it ensures success abroad. When I assign Filipino essays, parents complain that it's unnecessary and outdated."

> "Some parents rewrite or translate their child's homework into English before submission, saying it looks more professional."

Question No. 3. How do societal, technological, or institutional factors influence the use and promotion of the Filipino language?

3.1 Society rewards English

Eight (8) respondents expressed that parents constantly ask why their kids need to master Filipino when jobs and scholarships today are overwhelmingly English-based. Society strongly associates English with success, intelligence, and social prestige. Fluent English speakers are admired as smart or elite, while those who use deep Filipino are sometimes labeled as baduy or probinsyano, creating a stigma that affects students' confidence and identity. Additionally, they mentioned that the Filipino language becomes just a compliance requirement, something taken to complete the academic checklist rather than a language seen as valuable for the future. Even if they promote Filipino in the classroom, societal forces outside school are more influential and constantly pull students toward prioritizing English.

> "Parents constantly ask why their kids need to master Filipino when jobs and scholarships today are overwhelmingly English-based."

> "Filipino language becomes just a compliance requirement, something taken to complete the academic checklist rather than a language seen as valuable for the future."

3.2 Influencer Culture and Youth Trends

Five (5) respondents expressed that TikTok and vlogging normalize code-switching. That's not necessarily bad, instead it shows Filipino language is evolving and adaptable. But pure Filipino becomes rare, especially with a deep vocabulary. Social media rewards what's trendy and global, not what's culturally rich or linguistically correct. Influencers shape what young people think is cool. If English or Taglish sounds expensive, students drop Filipino terms quickly once they feel outdated or baduy. The language becomes something to perform for humor not something to express serious thought. Additionally, they mentioned that Algorithms also push creators to use more English for wider reach. With short-form content, communication becomes fast and minimal. Complex Filipino expressions don't fit the format. Acronyms, emojis, and borrowed English take over. Even regional languages suffer. To fit in with Manila-centric content, students abandon Cebuano, Ilocano, and others online. Local identity gets flattened because social media rewards familiarity and mass appeal.

> "TikTok and vlogging normalize code-switching. That's not necessarily bad, instead it shows Filipino language is evolving and adaptable. "

> "Algorithms also push creators to use more English for wider reach. With short-form content, communication becomes fast and minimal."

3.3 Buwan ng Wika Syndrome

Five (5) respondents expressed that the Filipino language becomes the star only during Buwan ng Wika, complete with barong, folk dances, and contests. But after August, it's back to business: English for instruction, English for prestige, English for success. Filipino is treated like a festival, not a functional language. Additionally, they mentioned that they don't produce enough modern terminology in Filipino. Instead of developing vocabulary for robotics, medicine, or climate science, they stick to historical and literary content. Students feel the Filipino language is disconnected from the real world. The Filipino language is seen as an easy subject. At best, it's a break from difficult classes at worst, just something to pass to graduate. That mentality comes from how institutions structure priorities.

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> "We don't produce enough modern terminology in Filipino. Instead of developing vocabulary for robotics, medicine, or climate science, we stick to historical and literary content."

Research Objectives 2. To examine strategies and approaches used by educators and language advocates to promote and sustain the use of the Filipino language.

Question No. 1. What strategies have you found effective in encouraging the use of Filipino among students or the community?

Make Filipino part of daily life, not just academics

Eight (8) respondents expressed that they incorporate Filipino in casual classroom interactions like greetings, quick chats, and jokes so students experience the language in a more relaxed and natural way. The Filipino language becomes alive when it is not limited to quizzes, grammar drills, or essays. Even simple things like properly saying *po* and *opo*, or using deeper vocabulary when expressing personal stories, are encouraged and celebrated. Additionally, they mentioned that they also encourage students to use Filipino in real-world tasks such as ordering food in the canteen, participating in campus events, or communicating during organization meetings. Sometimes they have short Filipino-only challenges during break time, which helps build confidence without pressure. They even ask student organizations to include Filipino in their posters,

announcements, and social media captions. Through these small but consistent efforts, students begin to see Filipino as a language for friendship, humor, and everyday life, not just a subject to pass.

> "I incorporate Filipino in casual classroom interactions like greetings, quick chats, and jokes so students experience the language in a more relaxed and natural way."

> "I also encourage students to use Filipino in real-world tasks such as ordering food in the canteen, participating in campus events, or communicating during organization meetings."

1.2 *Let students express modern culture through Filipino*

Five (5) respondents expressed that instead of forcing classic literature all the time, they have students create spoken word poetry, fan fiction, memes, and even TikTok videos *in* Filipino. They get excited seeing the language adapt to their world and their digital habits. They also analyze OPM song lyrics, react to trending Filipino content, and translate pop culture references into deeper Filipino expressions. Additionally, they mentioned that some students even continue producing Filipino content outside the classroom because they realize their peers appreciate it online. Validating pop culture as a legitimate medium of expression, students view Filipino not as a subject stuck in the past but as a language that evolves with them. This builds pride, confidence, and genuine motivation to use Filipino in modern contexts.

> " Instead of forcing classic literature all the time, I have students create spoken word poetry, fan fiction, memes, and even TikTok videos in Filipino."

> "Some students even continue producing Filipino content outside the classroom because they realize their peers appreciate it online."

1.3 *Promote Filipino as a language of emotion and identity*

Five (5) respondents expressed that when students write about family, childhood memories, or personal struggles, they instinctively shift to Filipino. The language feels more intimate. They encourage them to express emotions in Filipino because certain experiences simply resonate deeper in our own words. In reflective essays, journals, spoken word performances, and storytelling activities, they emphasize that Filipino is a language of empathy, humor, affection, and even pain. Additionally, they mentioned that they also highlight unique Filipino expressions that cannot be directly translated into English without losing their cultural nuance. Those emotional roots make the Filipino language a vessel for sincerity. Through these, students realize that Filipino captures layers of feeling English sometimes cannot.

> "When students write about family, childhood memories, or personal struggles, they instinctively shift to Filipino."

> "I also highlight unique Filipino expressions that cannot be directly translated into English without losing their cultural nuance."

Question No. 2. Can you share examples of programs or initiatives that successfully promoted the Filipino language?

2.1 *Filipino in Digital Spaces Project*

Eight (8) respondents expressed that they encouraged students to produce TikTok storytelling, vlogs, meme-making contests in Filipino. Their classmates loved it because the content felt modern and relatable. Students naturally mix humor, emotion, and current trends, making Filipino a language of identity, culture, and social commentary rather than just a school subject. Additionally, they mentioned that creating content

challenges the students to experiment with idioms, slang, and wordplay, boosting their confidence in storytelling and persuasive language. They start seeing the Filipino language as trendy and relevant. Through memes and vlogs, they connect the language to current events, pop culture, and daily life, evolving it in real time.

> "We encouraged students to produce TikTok storytelling, vlogs, meme-making contests in Filipino. Their classmates loved it because the content felt modern and relatable."

> " Creating content challenges, the students to experiment with idioms, slang, and wordplay, boosting their confidence in storytelling and persuasive language."

2.2 Arts-Based Filipino Education

Five (5) respondents expressed that they let students perform spoken word poetry, short films, and theater pieces using Filipino. Filipino is their go-to language when they are trying to express themselves. They discovered its emotional power. Students often express vulnerability, humor, or nostalgia more naturally in Filipino. Words carry cultural nuances that English sometimes misses, allowing them to convey feelings more authentically. Additionally, they mentioned that arts projects encourage experimentation with language metaphors, rhythm, rhyme, and dramatic dialogue which deepens vocabulary and linguistic confidence. Watching their classmates perform in Filipino inspires others to try, creating a ripple effect. Students begin valuing expressive Filipino as a medium of communication, not just a subject to memorize.

> "We let students perform spoken word poetry, short films, and theater pieces using Filipino."

> "Arts projects encourage experimentation with language metaphors, rhythm, rhyme, and dramatic dialogue which deepens vocabulary and linguistic confidence."

2.3 Filipino Heritage Immersion Day

Five (5) respondents expressed that instead of limiting celebration to Buwan ng Wika, they created monthly mini-events like food history, Filipino slang evolution, and indigenous storytelling. Students eagerly anticipated each event, which made the language come alive. Additionally, they mentioned that linking the Filipino to culture, tradition, and hands-on experiences shows students that the language is embedded in everyday life. By participating and sometimes documenting these events digitally, students actively engage with Filipino language, strengthening both linguistic skills and cultural identity year-round.

> " Instead of limiting celebration to Buwan ng Wika, we created monthly mini-events like food history, Filipino slang evolution, and indigenous storytelling."

> "Linking Filipino to culture, tradition, and hands-on experiences shows students that the language is embedded in everyday life."

Question No. 3. How do you adapt your methods to ensure that Filipino remains relevant and widely used in different settings?

3.1 Student-led cultural events make Filipino enjoyable and relevant

Five (5) respondents expressed that they make Filipino part of campus life, not just the classroom. They organize student-led events where culture and language mix naturally Filipino film screenings, spoken-word nights, OPM music jams, and food fairs with stories behind dishes. They empower student organizations to

lead Filipino-centered activities such as plays, debates, and improv competitions that use humor and youth culture. Additionally, they mentioned that they also create spaces where Filipino is visible and interactive like poetry walls, mural boards for favorite quotes, and themed days like Filipino Fridays where announcements, playlists, and signage all highlight the language. When Filipino become tied to belonging, fun, identity, and pride, students choose to use it naturally not because they are required to, but because it is a language that celebrates who they are.

> " I make Filipino part of campus life, not just the classroom. I organize student-led events where culture and language mix naturally Filipino film screenings, spoken-word nights, OPM music jams, and food fairs with stories behind dishes."

> "I also create spaces where Filipino is visible and interactive like poetry walls, mural boards for favorite quotes, and themed days like Filipino Fridays where announcements, playlists, and signage all highlight the language."

3.2 Lessons focus on personal narratives and emotional expression

Five (5) respondents shared that they anchor lessons on personal narratives because when students write about family, heartbreak, or triumphs they can express it very well using Filipino language. They explore how language shapes memory and identity, and students realize that Filipino is the language of their deepest truths. They create life-story projects, letters to loved ones, and interviews with grandparents where emotions naturally flow in Filipino. Additionally, they mentioned that dialects are celebrated as part of who they are, with the Filipino language serving as a bridge that unites diverse backgrounds into one shared narrative. Through safe spaces for storytelling and emotional expression, Filipino becomes more than grammar rules or vocabulary lists but it becomes home, a language of identity, memory, and heart.

> " I anchor lessons on personal narratives because when students write about family, heartbreak, or triumphs they can express it very well using Filipino language."

> " Dialects are celebrated as part of who they are, with the Filipino language serving as a bridge that unites diverse backgrounds into one shared narrative. "

3.3 Filipino is shown as capable of expressing intelligence and innovation

Eight (8) respondents mentioned that they show how the Filipino language belongs in global conversations from news commentary and scientific discoveries to digital activism and international pop culture. Students discuss world events and emerging technologies entirely in Filipino to prove that the language can handle complex, modern topics. They create research summaries, infographics, and explainers using Filipino academic terminology, breaking the mindset that only English can express intelligence or innovation. Additionally, they shared that students also learn translation skills and study digital advocacy campaigns where hashtags and movements in Filipino unite voices worldwide. They also explore OPM, films, books, and online creators gaining international attention, showing that the Filipino language is part of the global cultural flow. Through these activities, students realize that Filipino is not a barrier to success, it is a tool of empowerment, a language that connects them to each other and to the world.

> "I show how the Filipino language belongs in global conversations from news commentary and scientific discoveries to digital activism and international pop culture."

> "Students also learn translation skills and study digital advocacy campaigns where hashtags and movements in Filipino unite voices worldwide."

5. Discussion

The study highlights how language ideologies continue to shape educational realities by normalizing hierarchical perceptions of linguistic value within institutional and social environments. Rather than operating solely through formal policy, these ideologies are embedded in everyday expectations surrounding academic competence, professional mobility, and modern identity. This supports theoretical perspectives asserting that language hierarchies are socially reproduced through routine interaction and institutional discourse according to Groff et al. [36]. However, the findings extend these perspectives by illustrating how educators do not simply reproduce dominant ideologies but actively negotiate them, demonstrating that language beliefs remain fluid and open to reinterpretation within pedagogical contexts.

Institutional practices appear to function as ideological mechanisms rather than purely administrative structures. The tensions observed between language policies and everyday classroom realities suggest that implementation challenges stem not only from logistical constraints but also from deeper assumptions about global competitiveness and academic legitimacy. Ideological underpinnings of language planning while also complicating policy-focused analyses by revealing how teachers informally adapt institutional expectations through professional judgment [37]. Such mediation underscores the dynamic relationship between institutional authority and classroom agency, reinforcing arguments that supports Vanbuel [38] study that educators serve as active participants in language policy enactment rather than passive implementers.

The sociocultural dimensions emerging from the study illustrate the coexistence of linguistic pride and perceived linguistic hierarchy. Participants' perspectives indicate that Filipino remains closely tied to emotional expression, cultural belonging, and interpersonal connection, even as external pressures elevate English as a symbol of opportunity and prestige. This dual orientation reflects broader sociolinguistic processes of hybridity and negotiation within multilingual societies [39]. Instead of indicating a straightforward decline of Filipino, the findings suggest an ongoing recalibration of linguistic identity shaped by generational shifts, media exposure, and evolving social norms. According to Panjaitan and Patria [40], social media is influential in language evolution, particularly among youth, and its implications for language preservation, education, and cultural identity should be considered. These dynamics challenge deficit-based narratives by emphasizing resilience and adaptation within linguistic communities.

Technological environments further illustrate how structural forces and individual agency intersect in contemporary language use. According to Urbaite [41], there is a need for a balanced approach between traditional methods and technological advancements to create effective and inclusive language learning environments. Digital platforms may privilege English through algorithmic visibility and globalized content ecosystems, yet they simultaneously provide opportunities for linguistic innovation and cultural expression [42]. The study contributes to emerging discussions on digital sociolinguistics by highlighting educators' strategic efforts to integrate Filipino into online learning spaces and multimedia communication. These practices demonstrate that technology is not inherently detrimental to language preservation but instead serves as a contested space where linguistic identities are continuously renegotiated.

Pedagogical practices discussed in the study emphasize the transformative potential of classroom interaction in reshaping language ideologies. Instructional strategies that frame Filipino as capable of addressing complex, contemporary, and interdisciplinary topics contribute to reframing perceptions of intellectual legitimacy. Culturally responsive pedagogy and language empowerment while also extending these discussions by illustrating how pedagogical innovation functions as ideological intervention [43]. When learners encounter Filipino as a language of analysis, creativity, and digital engagement, classroom practices move beyond skill development toward the reconstruction of linguistic value systems [44].

Therefore, the findings suggest that the mainstreaming and preservation of Filipino are shaped by intersecting structural, sociocultural, and technological forces that operate simultaneously at macro and micro levels. Rather than depicting language marginalization as inevitable, the study reveals ongoing processes of negotiation through which educators, institutions, and communities actively redefine linguistic meaning. This perspective advances language ideology scholarship by demonstrating that language hierarchies are continuously reproduced yet equally subject to reinterpretation through everyday educational practice. The discussion therefore underscores the importance of viewing language preservation not only as a policy objective but also as a dynamic social process shaped by human agency and contextual realities.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal that the mainstreaming and preservation of the Filipino language are influenced by a complex interplay of societal, institutional, technological, and cultural factors. English dominance in schools, workplaces, and media creates a perception that Filipino is less prestigious or relevant, leading students to prioritize English for academic and professional success. Social media and pop culture reinforce this trend, while parental and institutional attitudes often limit Filipino to a secondary or compliance-based role, reducing its use in daily life and emotional expression. Consequently, students frequently experience code-switching and struggle to articulate complex ideas or emotions fully in Filipino. Despite these challenges, educators and language advocates employ a range of strategies to promote Filipino as a living, expressive, and culturally relevant language. Initiatives include integrating Filipino into casual classroom interactions, leveraging modern pop culture and digital platforms, organizing student-led cultural events, and emphasizing personal narratives and emotional expression. Programs such as TikTok storytelling contests, arts-based education, and heritage immersion days demonstrate the adaptability of Filipino in contemporary contexts. These efforts help students perceive Filipino not merely as an academic requirement but as a language of identity, creativity, innovation, and global relevance. The study underscores that while structural and societal barriers continue to limit the functional and symbolic presence of Filipino, targeted educational practices, community engagement, and culturally responsive pedagogy can effectively shift perceptions. Promoting Filipino requires both systemic support and ongoing efforts to make the language meaningful, modern, and empowering for learners, ensuring its preservation and vibrancy for future generations.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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