

# Language loyalty of the Ibanags: A basis for a project-based language solidarity extension program

*Lealdade linguística dos Ibanags: uma base  
para um programa de extensão de  
solidariedade linguística baseado em projetos*

*Lealtad lingüística de los Ibanags: una base  
para un programa de extensión de solidaridad  
lingüística basado en proyectos*

## RESUMO

As pessoas que vivem no norte das Filipinas, principalmente na região do Vale de Cagayan, falam o ybanag como língua. Utilizando um desenho de investigação sequencial-explicativo, este estudo investigou o compromisso dos Ibanags com a sua língua nativa numa cidade no norte das Filipinas. De acordo com as conclusões do estudo, os entrevistados utilizam principalmente o Ybanag como linguagem de autoexpressão e para se comunicarem com suas famílias, vizinhos e comunidade. Por outro lado, a comunicação no local de trabalho, na igreja e nas escolas é conduzida principalmente em filipino. Uma atitude favorável é demonstrada pelos entrevistados em relação à língua Ybanag. Quando os entrevistados foram categorizados por idade e sexo, não houve variação perceptível em seus idiomas preferidos. Os resultados também indicaram que não há variação significativa nas atitudes dos entrevistados em relação à língua Ybanag quando são agrupados por idade e sexo. Portanto, é aconselhável que a comunidade implemente um programa de extensão de solidariedade linguística baseado em projetos, a fim de proteger a língua Ybanag.

Palavras-chave: Ilagan; Isabela; domínios de uso da linguagem; sociolinguística.



## ABSTRACT

People who live in the Northern Philippines, notably in the Cagayan Valley Region, speak Ybanag as a language. Using a sequential-explanatory research design, this study investigated the Ibanags' commitment to their native tongue in a town in the Northern Philippines. According to the study's findings, the respondents mostly utilize Ybanag as a language of self-expression and to communicate with their family, neighbors, and community. On the other hand, communication in the workplace, the church, and schools is primarily conducted in Filipino. A favorable attitude is shown by the respondents regarding the Ybanag language. When respondents were categorized by age and gender, there was no discernible variation in their preferred languages. The results also indicated that there is no significant variation in the respondents' attitudes toward the Ybanag language when they are grouped by age and gender. Therefore, it is advised that the community implement a project-based linguistic solidarity extension program in order to protect the Ybanag tongue.

Keywords: Ilagan, Isabela, domains of language use, sociolinguistics.

## RESUMEN

Las personas que viven en el norte de Filipinas, especialmente en la región del valle de Cagayán, hablan ybanag como idioma. Utilizando un diseño de investigación explicativo secuencial, este estudio investigó el compromiso de los ibanag con su lengua nativa en un pueblo del norte de Filipinas. Según los hallazgos del estudio, los encuestados utilizan principalmente el ybanag como lenguaje de autoexpresión y para comunicarse con su familia, vecinos y comunidad. Por otro lado, la comunicación en el lugar de trabajo, la iglesia y las escuelas se realiza principalmente en filipino. Los encuestados muestran una actitud favorable hacia la lengua ybanag. Cuando los encuestados fueron categorizados por edad y género, no hubo variación discernible en sus idiomas preferidos. Los resultados también indicaron que no hay una variación significativa en las actitudes de los encuestados hacia el idioma ybanag cuando se los agrupa por edad y género. Por lo tanto, se recomienda que la comunidad implemente un programa de extensión lingüística solidaria basado en proyectos con el fin de proteger la lengua ybanag.

Palabras clave: Ilagan; Isabela; dominios de uso de la lengua; sociolingüística.

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**Correspondência:**

Nome por extenso do autor principal

Rua XXX, número XXX, Bairro XXX, Cidade, Estado, País.

**Direito autoral:**

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. BACKGROUND

Language is an essential component of cultural beauty. The act of nation building is driven by the passion and consistency of language use. So, language loyalty is the essence of a country. The Ybanag language is widely spoken in Cagayan Valley, the Philippines.

A local study indicates that the once-dominant minority language in the Cagayan Valley Region is currently under peril and headed for extinction. A language dies every 14 days, according to the Living Tongues Institute's estimate that between 50 and 70 percent of the world's languages are endangered. Researchers have previously observed that rural Filipinos seem to give up their native tongues when they adopt the dominant languages and cultures they are exposed to.

TAN (2013) asserts that of the 500, 000 speakers of the language, there may be fewer Ibanag speakers now. While English and Filipino have been designated as the official languages of communication in Philippine academic settings, indigenous languages, particularly those with less than one million speakers, are in danger of dying out or becoming extinct. The major Philippine languages like Filipino and Ilocano are slowly displacing some of those indigenous tongues in favor of English.

Loyalty to a language is the outcome of a desire to uphold cultural practices and preserve an identity that is expressed through the use of that language. Even in difficult circumstances, those who are dedicated to a language will try to keep it alive. Language shift and language stability are two ways to look at language loyalty.

According to SZECSY and SZILAGYI (2021), loyalty to one's language is typically demonstrated by a desire to uphold cultural customs and preserve an identity that is expressed via the use of that language. Even in difficult circumstances, those who are dedicated to a language will try to keep it alive. Language maintenance refers to the methods that groups employ to maintain the survival of the language to which they are devoted.

The type of communication situation, namely communication among "their own" or among "others," is what matters most. Communicative loyalty is related to the communicative function of the language and assumes the real presence of communicative skills of speakers, but it manifests itself differently and depends on parameters of the communicative situation such as age, social status, and level of communicators' education (LI, MOSKVITCHEVA & ALEKSANDROVA, 2019).

The default language for the speaker can be chosen using language preferences. Speaker can also decide whether they want to be able to change the language that is used to present their portal. Depending on the circumstance, which may have an impact on the speaker's language and communication style, the strategy may occasionally vary. When they are in a different social group, location, or even in common venues like market ad school, it is possible to identify the factors that cause these abrupt changes in communicative approach.

Since the strongest sense of identification is tied to speaking the same language, disregarding indigenous languages results in a nation losing its identity on both an individual and a national level. In this situation, the researcher would like to ascertain the Ibanags' language loyalty in Ilagan City, Philippines in order to ascertain whether the people are still speaking the language and, if not, to develop a program to extend linguistic solidarity. Additionally, the community will gain from this study in terms of maintaining its culture and retaining an identity that is expressed with the aid of the Ibanags' linguistic fidelity.

## 1.1 Research Questions

Generally, this study was conducted to determine the language loyalty of the Ibanags in Ilagan City, Philippines. Specifically, it aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the language preference of the Ibanags in the following situations:
  - a. Talking to family;
  - b. Talking to people in school;
  - c. Talking to people in the neighborhood;
  - d. Talking to people in the workplace;
  - e. Talking to people in church;
  - f. Expressing themselves.
  
2. What is the attitude of the Ibanags towards the Ybanag language?

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1 Design

The researcher used a mixed method specifically the sequential-explanatory design to collect and gather information about the language loyalty of the Ibanags in Ilagan City, Philippines. This mixed-method design is employed to offset the weakness of one method (CRESWELL, 2015).

### 2.2 Subject and Study Site

The participants of this study were the Ibanags of Ilagan, Isabela ranging from teens aged 13-19 years old, general population aged 20-59 years old, and senior citizens aged 60 years old and above. The key-informants for the interview are the cultural masters and native Ybanag speakers of the town. Inclusion-exclusion criteria was also followed in the selection of the participants of the study. For the quantitative part, there were 45 respondents, while 15 participants for the qualitative part.

## 2.3 Instrumentation

Survey questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were the instrument used in the study. The questionnaire was divided into different sections: profile, domain of language preferences, and attitudes toward the use of Ybanag language. The interview questions were based on the use of a priori approach.

## 2.4 Procedure

The researcher made a letter for the approval to conduct the study. The study started from January 2022 to October 2022. The participants' consent was secured first before administering the survey questionnaire and the interviews were conducted during their available time and chosen location. Member checking via correspondence technique was also employed in the transcription of interviews.

## 2.5 Mode of Analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS, while the interviews were transcribed, coded and thematized using a repertory grid. From the data analyses conducted, data categories were formulated and themes evolved. The qualitative data gathered were used to support the quantitative part of the study. The quantitative data and themes were analyzed by looking at the data under each one and connecting them with common concepts and statements.

## 2.6 Ethical Consideration

At the initial phase, request letters and consent forms were given and sought from the respondents and key informants of the study. All the involved participants were informed of the study's objectives and aims, and their rights and responsibilities. They were also guaranteed anonymity. Numbers were used to represent them in the interview transcription and data analysis.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 3.1a Language preference of the Ibanags when communicating with their Family

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Father</i>	Ybanag	30	66.7
	Tagalog	7	15.6
	Ilocano	8	17.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Mother</i>	Ybanag	30	66.7

	Tagalog	7	15.6
	Ilocano	8	17.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Siblings</i>	Ybanag	29	64.4
	Tagalog	7	15.6
	Ilocano	9	20.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Aunts and Uncles</i>	Ybanag	28	62.2
	Tagalog	8	17.8
	Ilocano	9	20.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Grandparents</i>	Ybanag	31	68.9
	Tagalog	7	15.6
	Ilocano	7	15.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>relatives outside the locality</i>	Ybanag	9	20.0
	Tagalog	18	40.0
	Ilocano	18	40.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>relatives outside the country</i>	Ybanag	7	15.5
	Tagalog	22	48.9
	Ilocano	16	35.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use at family meetings?</i>	Ybanag	16	35.6
	Tagalog	14	31.1
	Ilocano	15	33.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use when you write a personal letter to your father, mother, or any member of your family?</i>	Ybanag	10	22.2
	Tagalog	26	57.8
	Ilocano	9	20.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<i>Language</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Rank</i>
<i>Ybanag</i>	20.6	1
<i>Tagalog</i>	12.8	2
<i>Ilocano</i>	11	3
<i>Others</i>	0	-

Table 3.1 presents the data on the most used language by the respondents when talking to their family. This result is also evident on the interview conducted where the participants mentioned that when they are talking with their family, they used the Ybanag language especially when the topic is about their day-to-day activities. Among their responses were:

P1: *I use Ybanag when I talk with my mother and father. We don't use other language at home because we can only express ourselves freely when we use Ybanag.*

P5: *We use Ybanag at home. When I am with my family, for example when I am with my grandparents, we communicate using the language.*

P11: *I am using Ybanag even in my letters sent to my parents when I am still working abroad. There are times I use Tagalog, but I am more at ease using my mother tongue.*

Everyone needs to be able to talk clearly. A person's ethnic group is bound to them when they can communicate effectively in their first or native language, which also helps to create their identity. The first place a child learns effective communication is at home, where they should feel protected from criticism. This significantly adds to the usage of indigenous languages being predominant at home and while interacting with the family. The process of rapprochement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people will be aided by a greater awareness and respect for Indigenous languages. This is similar to the results of LINDERO (2017) which concluded that families of indigenous backgrounds use their indigenous language in communicating within their family. This is due to the non-discriminating environment in the household and the ease of self-expression when speaking the native tongue.

### 3.1b Language preference of the Ibanags when communicating in their school

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>What language do you use when you talk to your teachers?</i>	Ybanag	2	4.4
	Tagalog	23	51.1
	Ilocano	19	42.2
	Others	1	2.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use when you talk to your colleagues/classmates?</i>	Ybanag	2	4.4
	Tagalog	25	55.6
	Ilocano	18	40.0
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Which language is used in giving school instructions?</i>	Ybanag	1	2.2
	Tagalog	23	51.1
	Ilocano	8	17.8
	Others	13	28.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	Ybanag	12	26.7



<i>Which language is used in the classrooms?</i>	Tagalog	24	53.3
	Ilocano	9	20.0
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Which language is used in the school's curriculum?</i>	Ybanag	1	2.2
	Tagalog	22	48.9
	Ilocano	9	20.0
	Others	13	28.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<i>Language</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Rank</i>
<i>Ybanag</i>	3.6	4
<i>Tagalog</i>	23.4	1
<i>Ilocano</i>	12.6	2
<i>Others</i>	5.4	3

Table 3.2 presents the data on the most used language by the respondents when communicating in the school. It was shown that in all the parameters of school communication, Tagalog is the most spoken language.

In relation to table 3.1, if children are trained to speak with their indigenous language at home and when communicating with family members, they are more likely to bring this aspect when they go to school, but since Tagalog is perceived to be a more formal medium used in school, it is evident that the respondents use Tagalog. This can be seen on the results of the interview conducted where the participants mentioned that in school, they use the language “understood by many” in order to be understood by their interlocutors. Moreover, the school is located in the part of the Municipality dominated by Ilocano speakers, which explains why the second most used language is Ilocano. Among the participants mentioned:

P2: *I speak Iloco in school because my friends talk to me using the language. As for my teachers, we use either Tagalog or English. But there are teachers who would allow us to use our mother tongue Ybanag especially in our Literature class.*

P13: *I use whatever the required language at school. I cannot use Ybanag because only few people can understand my language.*

P8: *What I noticed from my colleagues is that even though we are all Ybanag speakers, we use English and Tagalog in the office. Yes, there are instances that we use Ybanag but only when uttering expressions.*

P4: *My classmates use Ybanag when we were still in elementary. Now, since the younger generation were not taught and exposed to the language, I communicate with them using Tagalog in school.*

As a result, Ybanag is seen as a minority in the educational setting. As a result, it came in last out of all the languages used. Teaching an indigenous language improves the spirit by highlighting the importance of cultural diversity and creating respect for one another. The revitalization of indigenous youth's cultural identities must also be a goal of education.

### 3.1c Language preference of the Ibanags when communicating in their Neighborhood/Community

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>What language do you use when you meet Ybanag friends in the neighborhood?</i>	Ybanag	24	53.3
	Tagalog	9	20.0
	Ilocano	12	26.7
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use when you want to buy something in the market?</i>	Ybanag	14	31.1
	Tagalog	16	35.6
	Ilocano	15	33.3
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use when you use your mobile in making a phone call in the Ybanag community?</i>	Ybanag	16	35.6
	Tagalog	17	37.8
	Ilocano	12	26.7
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<i>Language</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Rank</i>
<i>Ybanag</i>	18	1
<i>Tagalog</i>	14	2
<i>Ilocano</i>	13	3
<i>Others</i>	0	-

The table presents the data on the most used language by the respondents when communicating in their neighborhood/community. It was shown that when the respondents converse with their Ybanag friends in the neighborhood, they use the Ybanag language. Likewise, as the participants were interviewed, it was revealed further that when the community they belong to use Ybanag, they will use Ybanag. As P2 mentioned “*This is not actually required by the community or my neighbor but since we are Ybanag speakers in the community, we are speaking the language to express ourselves better.*” This is also apparent in other responses of the participants like:

P4: “I used Ybanag when conversing with my neighbor. We are all Ybanag speaking people in the community so it is never an issue or hard for us to use the language in day-to-day conversations.”

P5: “Yes, we use Ybanag especially if we are talking about our cultural practices. We also use it when we are in the market if the seller is also an Ybanag speaker.”

In relation to Tables 3.1a and 3.1b, an indigenous person living in an indigenous community where they speak the same language will most likely converse and communicate in their mother tongue. With the expanding global acknowledgement of indigenous knowledge systems, hope is being reignited for indigenous languages to thrive and proliferate in spoken and written forms. Numerous indigenous tribes have already established their own mechanisms for language revitalization. It is critical to guarantee that a traditional language is used only with the community's direct involvement, approval, and instruction. This is similar to the results of the study conducted by DWEIK, NOFAL & QAWASMEH (2014) when they conducted a study that focuses on the language loyalty of Muslims in Vancouver, Canada. Results of language use in the neighborhood show that native language which is Arabic is used mostly in the Muslim community in Vancouver than English when talking with friends in the neighborhood.

### 3.1d Language preference of the Ybanags when communicating in their Workplace

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>What language do you use with your colleagues at work?</i>	Ybanag	9	30.0
	Tagalog	13	43.3
	Ilocano	8	26.6
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use with your customers at work?</i>	Ybanag	11	36.6
	Tagalog	10	33.3
	Ilocano	9	30.0
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use at work when you discuss business or technical matters with your boss?</i>	Ybanag	7	23.3
	Tagalog	14	46.6
	Ilocano	9	30.0
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use at work when you discuss business or technical matters with your colleagues?</i>	Ybanag	8	26.6
	Tagalog	13	43.3
	Ilocano	9	30.0
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use at work when you discuss general topics (weather, sports, politics) with your colleagues?</i>	Ybanag	9	30.0
	Tagalog	12	40.0
	Ilocano	9	30.0
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use when you write an e-mail to your Ybanag colleagues?</i>	Ybanag	11	36.6
	Tagalog	15	50.0
	Ilocano	4	13.3
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use when you give instructions and directions orally at your workplace to your Ybanag colleagues?</i>	Ybanag	10	33.3
	Tagalog	13	43.3
	Ilocano	7	23.3
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<i>Language</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Rank</i>
<i>Ybanag</i>	9.3	2
<i>Tagalog</i>	12.9	1
<i>Ilocano</i>	7.9	3
<i>Others</i>	0	-

Table 3.1d presents the data on the most used language by the respondents when communicating in their workplace. Note that the teen respondents were excluded from the tabulation of this results because the workplace variable is not yet applicable to them. Only respondents from the general population and seniors are included in this portion, constituting to a total of 30 respondents.

Workplace is a diverse environment, comprised of many people from many different backgrounds. As compared to tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 where the native Ybanag speakers tend to communicate within their local community which speaks the same indigenous language as they use, people in the workplace tend to be more language specific due to many reasons—professionalism, easier understanding and fear of discrimination. Individuals in fear of discrimination or disadvantages arising from the use of indigenous language are less likely to prefer these as official languages. This result is further manifested in the interview where the participants mentioned that “*we do not use Ybanag in their workplace because they use the language of the majority which is Tagalog.*” They also mentioned that they only use Ybanag when they know that “*our listener is also Ybanag speaker.*”

A study based on data from the United States Census Bureau's 2015 American Consumer Survey shows that Tagalog is the most commonly spoken non-English language after Spanish in California, Nevada, and Washington (CBS LOS ANGELES, 2017). Tagalog is one of three recognized languages in workplaces in San Francisco, California, along with Spanish and Chinese, making all essential city services be communicated using these languages along with English. LESADA (2017) also noted that other career fields are able to rely less on their native tongue and more on Tagalog in the workplace.

### 3.1.e Language preference of the Ibanags when communicating in their Religion

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>What language do you use when you pray in your homes?</i>	Ybanag	18	40.0
	Tagalog	15	33.3
	Ilocano	12	26.7
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use when you pray in your church/mosque?</i>	Ybanag	14	31.1
	Tagalog	17	37.8
	Ilocano	13	28.9
	Others	1	2.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use when you supplicate after praying?</i>	Ybanag	15	33.3
	Tagalog	18	40.0
	Ilocano	12	26.7
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>What language do you use at religious meetings outside churches/mosques?</i>	Ybanag	6	13.3
	Tagalog	19	42.2
	Ilocano	19	42.2
	Others	1	2.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<i>Language</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Rank</i>
<i>Ybanag</i>	13.3	3
<i>Tagalog</i>	17.3	1
<i>Ilocano</i>	14	2
<i>Others</i>	0.5	4

Table 3.5 presents the data on the most used language by the respondents when communicating in their church. The result was also observed during the interview where the participants mentioned that they use the language of their churchmates and language of known by

many. They mentioned “We use Tagalog or Filipino in the church. Even the sermons, praise and worships songs are in Tagalog (P11).” P2 said “I use English when delivering my sermons but when I explain it, I use Tagalog because it is understood by many. If I observe that my audience know Ybanag, I will use the language.” P6 mentioned “Yes, I use Ibanag in the church, but I prefer Tagalog or Filipino because the young generation cannot understand the Ybanag language especially that I am in charged with the youth ministry.”

Similar to the results of table 3.4, Ibanag people tend to use the Tagalog language when they communicate and converse in religious gatherings because it is viewed as something more formal and comprehensive to other non-ybanag language speakers. This is similar to the study of BACCAY (2019) in which respondents from the areas in the Northern Philippine region of Ilocos use Tagalog more than Ilocano in masses and events held by religious groups. It was found out that the predominance of the use of Tagalog language which is the basis of the national language in the conduct of religious gatherings is to encourage more participants, not because it was most preferred.

### 3.1.f Language preference of the Ibanags when communicating for Self-Expression

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>In what language do you express yourself when you are happy?</i>	Ybanag	25	55.6
	Tagalog	8	17.8
	Ilocano	11	24.4
	Others	1	2.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>In what language do you express yourself when you are angry and stressed?</i>	Ybanag	28	62.2
	Tagalog	6	13.3
	Ilocano	11	24.4
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>In what language do you express yourself express yourself when you are in a hurry?</i>	Ybanag	26	57.8
	Tagalog	8	17.8
	Ilocano	11	24.4
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>In what language do you express yourself express yourself when you dream?</i>	Ybanag	26	57.8
	Tagalog	9	20.0
	Ilocano	10	22.2
	Others	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<i>Language</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Rank</i>
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<i>Ybanag</i>	26.3	1
<i>Tagalog</i>	7.8	3
<i>Ilocano</i>	10.8	2
<i>Others</i>	0.3	4

Table 2.6 presents the data on the most used language by the respondents when expressing themselves. This result is apparent in their responses during the interview. P1 highlighted that “Whenever I communicate, I use my mother tongue especially when I really wanted to shout out my feelings. I feel comfortable with it even though others might think I am very noisy.” P14 also said “I am always at ease when I use Ybanag in my daily conversation. That is why even at school or in our church, and I am required to give my commentaries or responses, I use Ybanag especially when my listeners know the language.”

Evidently, people tend to express themselves in the language that they are most comfortable. For those who are listening, expressing emotions can be a source of discomfort. Certain individuals are inherently incapable or uncomfortable with receiving and digesting the sentiments of others. It is critical for people to have an emotional language in order to verbally describe their emotions. When people vocally communicate their feelings, the more explicit they may be, the less ambiguous their emotions will be for the one interpreting the information. They are able to describe the intensity of the emotion they are experiencing, whether it is light, moderate, or powerful, as they increase their emotional language.

This is comparable to the results of the study conducted by DWEIK, NOFAL & QAWASMEH (2014) when they conducted a study that focuses on the language loyalty of Muslims in Vancouver, Canada. Results of language use in the domain of emotion and self-expression indicate that Arabic is the dominant language in self-expression among the Muslim Arabs of Vancouver. They report using mostly Arabic when they are happy, angry and when they are in a hurry. They use it unconsciously in their dreams and to express their happiness.

### 3.1 Attitudes of the Ibanags towards the Ybanag language

<i>Statements (I believe that Ybanag language is...)</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Qualitative Description</i>
1. the most beautiful language.	3.26	Strongly Agree
2. the most prestigious language	3.28	Strongly Agree
3. the symbol of my Filipino identity.	3.26	Strongly Agree
4. more useful than English.	2.24	Agree
5. my national language.	2.93	Agree
6. important to be taught in school.	2.66	Agree
7. dying in my home.	1.95	Disagree
8. dying in the Philippines	2.24	Agree
9. important to be used in all domains.	2.31	Agree

<i>10. important that my children communicate effectively in it.</i>	2.71	Agree
<i>11. important to be used in mosques, religious activities and meetings.</i>	2.86	Agree
<i>12. important to be used in every aspect of daily life as English language is used.</i>	2.73	Agree
<i>13. associated with the Philippines heritage and history</i>	3.35	Strongly Agree
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>2.75</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 3.2 presents the attitudes of the Ybanags towards the Ybanag language. Item 7 which states that “I believe that Ybanag language is dying at home” got the lowest weighted mean of 1.95. This means that the respondents disagree to the statement that the Ybanag language is dying at home. This was supported by the previous results of this research, on table 2.1 which showed that Ybanag is the most spoken language by the respondents at home. Item number 13 got the highest weighted mean of 3.35. This means that majority of the respondents strongly agree to the statement “I believe that Ybanag language is associated with the Philippines heritage and history”. Overall, the statements obtained a grand mean of 2.75 which signifies positive attitude of the respondents towards the Ybanag language.

The results are similar to the study of Esteron (2020). It was worth noting that the respondents seem to have very high regard toward Ybanag, thus a very positive attitude toward their mother tongue. With a mean score of 1.22, the respondents agree that Ybanag is an important part of them. This could be since it is their first language. It also helps that Ybanag is the language of the community. This finding is quite expected given that Ybanag figures in the respondents’ immediate environment, family, and community. Interestingly, however, this positive attitude toward Ybanag could not have been only pragmatic but also symbolic. Their attitude is positive rather than negative because they perceive Ilocano language as an easy language to learn as it is a language that is familiar to them. Richard & Schmidt (1992) note that speakers tend to develop a positive or negative attitude toward a language relative to their impression of the difficulty or simplicity of the language. Moreover, since these respondents speak Ybanag as their mother tongue, it would be easy for them to identify the language. In this way, not only their Ybanag language identity but also their Ybanag ethnic identity is constructed.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

There was an equal number of respondents across age groups and males make up the majority of the respondents with a small margin from the females. Ybanag is the predominant language used by the respondents in communicating with the family, neighborhood and community,



and as a language of self-expression. On the other hand, Tagalog is the predominantly used language in communication in school, workplace and church. Regarding attitude towards the Ybanag language, the respondents portray a positive attitude. There was no significant difference on the language preference of the respondents when they are grouped according to age and gender. In terms of the significant difference on the attitude of the respondents on the Ybanag language when grouped according to age and gender, the results show no significant difference.

With regards to language loyalty, as defined in the earlier sections of this paper it pertains to the preference for a particular language; continued use of a language because of this, especially within a culture where another language is dominant. It is evident that on occasions and circumstances where the respondents communicate and/or converse with people belonging to the same Indigenous group which is Ybanag, they prefer to use their own language. But considering the Language of solidarity, as defined on Merriam webster, it is a unity (as of a group or class) that produces or is based on community of interests, objectives, and standards. People use the dominant language when communicating with diverse group of people just to fit within that group. And it is evident in the study that when these Ybanags were surrounded by people speaking a language which the respondents perceive as “more dominant”, they tend to converse with that dominant language. With the premise given by the definition of language loyalty and language of solidarity, the researcher concludes that the language loyalty is still exhibited by the respondents of this study.

With these results, respondents should maintain the use of the Ybanag language so as not to let the language and the culture as a whole die. This can be improved by speaking the language to young members of the family to continue the transfer of language to the young and aid in its language acquisition.

Language teachers should also consider each language spoken by each student, be it a minority or a major one, as unique part of their culture, so as not create stigma and prejudice on native language speakers.

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## O/A(S) AUTOR(ES/AS)

### Ma. Theresa L. Eustaquio

Dr. Ma. Theresa L. Eustaquio is an Associate Professor I of Isabela State University Echague Campus, Philippines. She is a graduate of Doctor of Philosophy in Language Education at Saint Louis University, Master of Arts in Education major in English and Bachelor of Arts in English at Isabela State University. She published researches along testing and assessment, language teaching, curriculum planning, and sociolinguistics. [ma.theresa.eustaquio@isu.edu.ph](mailto:ma.theresa.eustaquio@isu.edu.ph)

### Juanito P. Tandoc Jr

Dr. Juanito P. Tandoc Jr. is a full-fledged Professor of Isabela State University Echague Campus, Philippines. He is a graduate of Doctor of Philosophy in Language Education at Saint Louis University, Master of Arts in Education major in English at University of La Salette and Bachelor of Arts in English at Isabela State University. He published researches along psycholinguistics, language teaching, and sociolinguistics. [juanito.p.tandoc@isu.edu.ph](mailto:juanito.p.tandoc@isu.edu.ph)