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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### COINED WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS IN INFORMAL ORAL COMMUNICATION

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#### ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to gather and classify some coined words and expressions in informal oral communication. The study was basically oral since the study was limited only to uttered rather than written expressions. Uttered coined words and expressions become different when written. It is in oral communication where one can emphasize pitch, stress, and juncture. Aside from the context, the meanings attached to these words depend a lot on these supra-segmental phonemes. The research was conducted among 100 college and high school students selected at random. All of these Cebuano-speaking respondents also used and understood Tagalog or Filipino words. Moreover, English words have become part of their language repertoire because they also practice code switching. The study employed a descriptive method in the interpretation of data based on the questionnaires, interviews, and researcher's observations. Results showed that coined words and expressions have distinct characteristics and can be classified according to form, meaning, and expression. Furthermore, their effectiveness depends on many factors. Their meaning and correctness are under some circumstances and nature of the speakers in a given context. However, the active usage of these coined words and expressions in oral communication rests on the persons who have been fond of using them. The study recommends that it is of utmost importance to conduct a similar study based on the currency of coined words and expressions since language is considered dynamic, and that it changes through time and culture.

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#### INTRODUCTION

During the first half of the twentieth century, the descriptive approach to language made rapid strides as liberal forces convinced many people both in and out of academic circles that the tasks of those concerned with language, including grammarians and lexicographers, is not to prescribe hard and fast rules but to describe the current state of the tongue (Gerber, 1968). Conservative voices were for the most part subdued until the publication in 1961 of Webster's Third New International Dictionary, America's principal unabridged dictionary which had not been newly edited since 1934. When the new edition appeared, it was immediately apparent that its editors had wholeheartedly embraced the descriptive approach. They had in fact based their new volume solidly upon the basic linguistic concepts endorsed by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). These are:

- Language changes constantly.
- Change is normal.
- Spoken English is the language.

- Correctness rests upon usage.
- All usage is relative.

Change upon daily usage is not only recognized by the dictionary, but it is welcomed as the basic principles upon which linguistic decisions must be made. Coining of words is common. Everybody has the right to coin words for some purpose or under some circumstances. This contributes to language change. People today give new meaning to words that already exist. They tend to create new words out of their whims, feelings and for fun. But these newly coined words and expressions will persist so long as they are actively used by people.

**Statement of the Problem:** This research is about coined words and expressions in informal oral communication. The study is basically oral since the study was more particular in uttered rather than written expressions. Uttered coined words and expressions become different when written. It is in oral communication where one can emphasize pitch, stress and juncture. The meanings attached to these words depend a lot on these supra-segmental phonemes aside from the context. The study is also informal or colloquial, rather than formal communication for the utterances being studied are more on the product of informal communication situations.

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Formal speech, serious communications, and technical conversation were not included. The correctness of these coined words and expressions rests upon usage.

**Significance of the Study:** This study can help students, educators, and other communicators know and become aware of some coined words and expressions and their meanings. In this way, they may be able to understand and become updated with such words and expressions which may turn colloquial or standard terms in the near future. Thus, this study helps individuals become part of the active language-in-use.

## METHODOLOGY

The data was gathered at MSU-IIT campus, Iligan City, Philippines in August 1991 where the lingua franca is Cebuano. All of the respondents of the study also speak and understand the Tagalog or Filipino language. In addition, English words have become part of their language repertoire as when the students say "Time na?" (Is it time already?). This study employed the descriptive method in the interpretation of data based on the responses gathered from the questionnaires, interviews, and researcher's observations. The coined words and expressions that serve as data of this research are limited. Students who have not been included as respondents may have some other coined words and expressions. Among the 100 respondents of the study selected at random, 60% of them were college students and the remaining 40% were from the Developmental High School (DHS) whose age ranged from sixteen to thirty years old.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Coined words and expressions add color to conversations. Many of them have no particular meaning when written except for their established respective meanings. However, in oral communication, the meanings of these expressions depend upon the speaker, the situation, occasion and time. The popular expressions in informal conversations gain their meaning arbitrarily. There is no need for an explanation to make things clear because it might affect the conversation's spontaneity. These expressions do not have to be taken seriously unless the speaker means something negative. They are used in informal and oral speech for fun. Some expressions may be criticisms, but these are not serious ones and are meant to be taken lightly. Such expressions are considered criticisms for effect, in Filipino expression, "Joke only but true". If the one criticized gets angry or pleased, the conversation is a success because the expression is well-understood. If he or she will just laugh, smile or sneer with the critic, it is a feat. Either way, coined words and expressions give life or intensify life to a boring or interesting conversation. This makes the conversation lively and updated. It is said that all slang words are coined but not all coined words and expressions are slang. Examples are: *Aw diay*, *Daw be*, *Dia ka*, *No*, *Palag ka*, *Type*, *Sosyal*, or the like. The following is a list of the coined words and expressions elicited from the informants. The researcher has classified the data into groups based on their distinct characteristics.

**Group A.** Here, the coined words (cw) are formed saying the original word (ow) pronounced in backward spelling.

**Group B.** In this group, the words have their syllables interchanged or modified.

CW	OW	
Alaw	<i>Wala</i>	None
Alkab	<i>Bakla</i>	Gay
Wapo	<i>Opaw</i>	Bald
Yatap	<i>Patay</i>	Dead
lkal	<i>Laki</i>	Male

Batsi	<i>Sibat</i>	Escape
Budik	<i>Bukid</i>	Province; rural
Buk-ID	<i>Bukid</i>	Province; rural
Grabemaranyun	<i>Grabe naman iyon</i>	It is super; It's too much
Ibay	<i>Bayi</i>	Female
Necor	<i>Corny</i>	Cheesy
Pakals	<i>Paschal</i>	Eat; Banquet
Takwal	<i>Kwalia</i>	Money
Yosi	<i>Sigarihyo</i>	Cigarette

**Group C.** In this group, the coined words are formed in acronyms and numbers. Some of these originated from already established ones like *MP* or *NPA*, but were given other meanings.

BGT	<i>Biktima sa Gugmang Tiaw-tiaw</i>	Victim of foolish love
BO <sub>3</sub>	<i>Burit (from the chemical compound BO<sub>3</sub> = Borate)</i>	Lie; False
BS	<i>Bugnaw'g Simod</i>	One who cannot express himself
HITACHI	<i>Himantayon, Tabian, Chismosa</i>	(A brand of electric fan) Observant, talkative, gossip
JR	<i>Joy Ride</i>	
KSP	<i>Kulang Sa Pansin</i>	Attention-hungry
LQ	<i>Lovers' Quarrel</i>	
MP	<i>Mamunitay'g Papel Mamunitay'g Patay</i>	Paper- picker Dead- Picker
MU	<i>Mutual Understanding Misunderstanding</i>	
NPA	<i>No People Around No Permanent Address</i>	From the original <i>NPA</i> = New People's Army
OA	<i>Over Acting</i>	
Oishi	<i>Who is he/she</i>	
OPM	<i>Oh, Promise Me</i>	
OSA	<i>Oozing with Sex Appeal</i>	
OS	<i>Over Staying</i>	
S	<i>Sosyal</i>	Sociable
SI	<i>Sexual Intercourse</i>	
SIPSIP	<i>Sucker= kiss ass</i>	Socially Insecure Person / People Seeking Instant Promotion/Popularity
SM	<i>Segunda-mano Sa Maranaoan</i>	Second-hand Maranao Market
ST	<i>Super Talino Sobrang Tabang Sex Trip</i>	Extra Intelligent Extra fat
TCCIC	<i>Take care coz I care</i>	
TDH	<i>Tall, Dark, and Has some Tila Dalang Kitkit</i>	Tall, Dark and Rich Petting
TDK		
TH	<i>Trying Hard</i>	
TL	<i>Tulo Laway True love</i>	Salivate
TOA	<i>Transfer of Affection</i>	
UGG	<i>Ulipon sa Gugmang Giatay</i>	Slave of a toxic love ( <i>atay</i> = liver)
143	<i>I love You</i>	
14344	<i>I Love You Very Much</i>	
5254	<i>Mahal na Mahal Kita</i>	I Love You Very Much

**Group D.** In this group, the coined words are formed by omitting the last word or the last syllable (s). Often, the letter "s" is being suffixed to the shortened or clipped words.

**Group E.** In this group are many slang words coined out of the whims and moods of students. Other expressions here are established words but have new or slur meanings depending upon the context.

Beaubrains	<i>Beauty and brains</i>	
Casa	<i>Kasagingan</i>	Banana plantation
Children's Park	<i>Children -Making Park</i>	A dark park
Chism	<i>Chismis</i>	Gossip
Cute	<i>Nakakatakayut nakakatakot</i>	= Horrible
Gai	<i>Gaisano</i>	A mall
Kapalmuks	<i>Makapal ang mukha</i>	Thick faced – a person who has no shame
Katam	<i>Katam-is</i>	Sweet
Kitam	<i>Kita mo?</i>	Do you see?
Loan	<i>Lunod</i>	Drowned
Love song	<i>Labaw'g suwang</i>	Protruding chin
Loving	<i>Labing salawayon</i>	Despicable
Michael	<i>Sa may kilid May kiking-kiling sa utok</i>	At the corner Flip
Naïve	<i>Naiiba</i>	Unusual; different
Naning	<i>Naningkamot</i>	Trying hard
Neat	<i>Native</i>	Not handsome; not appealing
Oks	<i>Okay; alright</i>	
Patio	<i>Paturon-turon</i>	To eat "turon"
Presasp	<i>Presidential aspirant</i>	
Promdi	<i>From the Province</i>	
Promo	<i>Puro mugbo</i>	All short
Quiz	<i>Question</i>	
Top	<i>Tapad</i>	To sit beside
Tiguls	<i>Tigulang</i>	Old; mature
Shabs	<i>Shabu</i>	
Yakult	<i>Yawang kulot</i>	Curly-haired villain

Abugar	<i>To treat</i>	
Ah-ah	<i>No; I don't like it, wait, etc.</i>	
Areglaha	<i>Settle it</i>	Take notice
Atik	<i>Joke</i>	
Atimana	<i>Take care of it</i>	Take notice
Babaying bagul	<i>Tomboy</i>	
Babaying itlugan	<i>Gay</i>	
Bagsok	<i>Child; youngster</i>	
Baifu	<i>Girlfriend</i>	
Balaw	<i>Tomboy</i>	Lesbian
Batog	<i>To perch</i>	To go home
Barbaki	<i>Sexual intercourse</i>	
Bisaya	<i>Local; lacks class</i>	
Boki	<i>Poor taste</i>	
Bo-peep	<i>To fall asleep</i>	
Bulan-bulanon	<i>Lunatic</i>	Flip
Caltex	<i>Tikalon</i>	Braggart
di-maantoy	<i>Di maantos</i>	Can't take it anymore
Dopax	<i>Madman</i>	
Gamhanan	<i>Powerful</i>	Drunk
Iki	<i>Money</i>	
Iktad	<i>To run</i>	
Ilara tits	<i>You can't fool me</i>	
Imfal	<i>Sexy</i>	
Itfabs	<i>Ugly</i>	
Itfiok	<i>Cute</i>	
Jomblox	<i>Weird</i>	
Kaging	<i>Shocked</i>	
Kaligo daan	<i>Take a bath first</i>	Don't bother
Kika/kiko	<i>Puppet</i>	Can be manipulated easily
Kulfofs	<i>Dull</i>	
Laida	<i>To behave like a gay</i>	
Lamlam	<i>To talk nonsense</i>	
Mirat	<i>Boy</i>	
Nahon	<i>Panahon</i>	Time
Ngislit	<i>Ngisi</i>	Smile=sneer
Niega	<i>Ngilngiga</i>	Over; super; horrible
Ninety-nine	<i>Insane</i>	Flip
Nitfal	<i>Male sex organ</i>	
Pa-charchar	<i>Pa-cute</i>	To appear cute
Pagarpar	<i>To talk nonsense</i>	
Palalab	<i>Beloved</i>	
Pibo	<i>Five pesos</i>	
Sadsad	<i>To dance</i>	Disco
Spikikay	<i>Sexual intercourse</i>	
Takirfub	<i>Prostitute</i>	
Tapwe	<i>Fifty pesos</i>	
Tasi	<i>Witty</i>	
Tikig	<i>Shocked</i>	
Totyal	<i>Social</i>	Sociable
Ulfuls	<i>True or false</i>	
Unswa/untwa	<i>Unsa</i>	What
Ustag	<i>One hundred pesos</i>	
Uyafaks	<i>Bright</i>	Intelligent
Yapa/yapo	<i>Beautiful/ handsome</i>	
Yutfuts	<i>Female sex organ</i>	

**Group F.** Here, the English words are translated erroneously to Cebuano for effect but the translation could somehow relate to the meaning of the established expressions.

Air Supply	<i>Proud; braggart</i>	
Appear	<i>Yes; I second the motion</i>	
Barricade	<i>Barkada</i>	Clique
Bench model	<i>Someone who always sits on the bench</i>	
Bitter-half	<i>An unwelcome partner</i>	
Bright eyes	<i>Someone who always looks at some other's test paper during examination</i>	
Boreding house	<i>A place where one gets bored</i>	
Bugs	<i>Crazy; eccentric; mad</i>	
Corned beef	<i>Corny; cheesy</i>	
Cover-up	<i>Alibi; excuse</i>	
Dancerous	<i>Fond of dancing</i>	
Darb	<i>Friend; Brod</i>	
Disappear	<i>No; I object</i>	
Divorced	<i>Bow-legged</i>	
Drama	<i>Meaning; plan; want; like</i>	
Echos me	<i>Excuse me</i>	
Evaporate	<i>To get lost</i>	
Eye-to-eye	<i>Cross-eyed</i>	
Fights	<i>That will do; can be; go on; okay</i>	
Five-six	<i>A person who is limping (A person with polio)</i>	
Gentledog	<i>Not a gentleman</i>	
Harsh germicide	<i>A helper who can cause destruction at the same time</i>	
Harsh ingredient	<i>A member of a group who does not cooperate</i>	
Heavy perfume	<i>A person who smells bad</i>	
Holesome face	<i>A face that has many pimples</i>	
I miss you house and lot	<i>I miss you so much</i>	
Influx	<i>Beautiful</i>	
Jewels	<i>Proofs; evidences; signs of credibility; carat</i>	
Kill me	<i>Make me happy</i>	
Ladykiller	<i>Mamatay na lang ang dalaga, di pa kaingon ang ulitawo</i>	A man who is tongue-tied
Laboratory/loverary	<i>Dating/meeting in the laboratory/library</i>	
No earth/world	<i>Innocent; ignorant; no knowledge</i>	
No weather	<i>No more time</i>	
Of chores / cures	<i>Of course</i>	
One by one ("1x1")	<i>A person whose asset is only the face (as in "1x1" ID photo size</i>	
Power	<i>Not just any other</i>	
Premiere	<i>Lewd</i>	
School bus	<i>Someone who sends and fetches his girlfriend/partner</i>	
Secureitize	<i>To guarantee</i>	
Service	<i>One who waits for someone</i>	
Sigurade	<i>To make sure</i>	
Six-footer	<i>Six-pututer</i>	"Putut" refers to person who falls short in height requirement
Smiling face	<i>Kataw-ana'g nawong</i>	Funny face
Stay feet	<i>Stay put</i>	Don't move
Suicide	<i>To take risk</i>	
Talkable	<i>Cannot be denied</i>	
To-it	<i>Nice</i>	
Trip	<i>Being liked for fun</i>	
Type	<i>Of someone's taste</i>	
Vitamin A	<i>Anything that pleases the eye</i>	
Vitamin C	<i>Cigarette</i>	
Way siguro sa chorus	<i>We can never tell what happens next</i>	
Yesh	<i>Yes</i>	

**Group G.** These are expressions whose meaning lie greatly in the situation, time, usage, and listeners being up-to-date in informal language usage. The meanings attached to respective words are not definite or absolute.

*Asa ka* – where you (I don't think so)

a. B1: Mo abroad ko. (I'll go abroad.)

B2: Asa ka broad. (No, you're not.)

b. G1: So you'll be going with him.

G2: Asa ka. (No)

*Asese/atsetse* – a comment on something

a.B1: I can sing like Gary Valenciano.

B2: Atsetse! (Really?)

b.G1: I'll never do the first move.

G2: Atsetse! (As you say so.)

*Aw diay* – a comment (really; is that so?, etc.)

a.G: Hello, John.

J: Aw, diay. ( Oh, it's you.)

b.B1: This is how we do it.

B2: Aw, diay. (Okay.)

*Bangas ka* – variation for “malas ka” (you're unlucky; a comment on someone/something that goes wrong)

*Bang-bang* - to approach; to put down; to comfort, etc.

a.B1: Kanang bayhana dili ma bang-bang. (That girl is unapproachable.)

B2: Bang-bangon nato. (Let's approach her.)

*Daw be* – a shortened form of the expression “Hindaw be” (May I see).

*Ek-ek* – issue; behavior, drama, whatever, etc.

He's got so much ek-ek.

*Gi-liver* – variation for “giatay” (“Atay” is “liver”); expression when something goes wrong. *Iring* – (from “cat”) interested Nag-iring-iring siya kang Fe. (He's into Fe.)

*Lugar* – (from *place*) – you mean; whatever, etc.

B1: Tarungon ni nako. (I'll have this done right.)

B2: Seryoso ka lugar. (So, you're serious).

*What is* = for emphasis or effect

He always obeys her, what is, loyal.

She goes there always, what is, nature lover.

**Group H.** These are expressions in which the English construction is ungrammatical or the usage is erroneous for effect.

*At last, I ana now graduation.*

(At last, I am now graduating.)

*I am now preparation.*

(I am now in the process of preparing)

*The time is still a baby.*

Bata pa ang oras. (It's still early)

*The room is very powdered.*

(The room is full of dust.)

*She will oronate the new queen.*

(She will crown the new queen.)

## Conclusion and Recommendation

After analyzing and interpreting the data gathered, the researcher has these general findings:

- Coined words and expressions can be heard anywhere so long as there are groups of people interacting for social purposes.

- The effectiveness of these coined words and expressions depends on many factors like the situation, occasion, time, age, sex, and many others.
- The currency of these words do not connote any formalization, instead, these are conversational.
- The meaning and correctness of these coined words and expressions rest upon usage.
- When one is fond of coining words and expressions in informal oral communication, he or she must take many considerations to make their utterances effective especially for those who are not updated with language-in-use at certain times.
- Not all words and expressions gathered as data in this study are actively used. Their currency in spoken language rests on the persons who have been fond of using them.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance to conduct a similar study on the active usage of some coined words and expressions since language is considered dynamic, and that language changes through time and culture.

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