

## Maintaining the Heritage Language in the Family's Linguistic Cocktail

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### Abstract

This study mainly explored the language planning vis-à-vis heritage language maintenance of a migrant multilingual Igorot family in Malaybalay, Mindanao. By employing descriptive qualitative research design via Focus Group Discussion (FGD), this study revealed that the family's language planning is covert, with the father acting as an unconscious language planner. This role has helped maintain the heritage language, 'Kankanaey,' within a multilingual linguistic cocktail, which includes Ilocano, Filipino, English, and Bisaya. Though multilingualism gives birth to this linguistic cocktail in the family to communicate in different communication situations (i.e., family, family-relative, social, and educational affairs), it does not directly threaten the maintenance of their heritage language because it is practiced between and among family members and relatives. The family's use of Kankanaey within their inner circle, despite the grandson's unfamiliarity with it, does not suggest a gradual loss of the language. As the grandson is still in his teenage years, there is potential for him to acquire and maintain the heritage language. This study further demonstrated that the language planning of the family serves as a concrete basis for the local legislators to make policies concerning education, specifically a policy involving the recognition of heritage languages that form students' linguistic identities, a policy capable of securing these languages to serve as bridging languages to learn best a second language.

**Keywords:** *Family language planning, language ideologies, language practices, management strategies, heritage language maintenance*

### Introduction

Recent perspectives on migration and its influence on linguistic formation and decision have been the interesting trajectory guiding the works on deliberate and unconscious efforts of the family to form language ideologies, translating these ideologies to language practices, and observing these practices from generation to generation as a management strategy to maintaining a heritage language as it forms the linguistic identity of the parents (Selleck, 2023; Spolsky, 2012; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). In migration, Family Language Planning (FLP) plays a central

role in balancing the heritage language with the dominant language, while negotiating between generational expectations and societal influences. This dynamism involves not only the preservation of cultural identity but also the children's language development in a multilingual society. Being situated in dynamic social systems of the new community, the language ideologies, practices, and management strategies of the migrant families may deliberately or unconsciously draw inspiration from the communal mainstream where the migrant children's language development, including their heritage language development, is influenced by many factors such as society's attitude towards minority languages, the educational system, language programs, and linguistic input from both home and school, leading the parents to decide whether to give up the heritage language to accommodate the mainstream or the majority language (Curdt-Christiansen, 2022).

As migrants who are exposed to a dominant culture and language, the parents have the desire to instill their heritage culture into their children, especially the transmission of their heritage language with a hope that by practicing their culture and speaking their language, the vitality of their unique identity is maintained to involve parental language maintenance through enforcing a monolingual heritage language context for parent-child interaction (Selleck, 2023; Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015, Kayam & Hirsch, 2014; Altmna et al., 2014). However, there are some observations made on language socialization that are contrary to parental efforts involving the maintenance of their heritage language in the family. These observations narrate how the language choices and interactional practices of the children influence and shape parental language behavior and contribute to language shift by resisting and negotiating the parents' use of heritage languages. The parents have to resolve the resistance and negotiation to accommodate the mainstream language, which implies linguistic development and academic achievement of their children believing that educational institutions are very important in their language practices, which in turn, make their language ideologies, practices, and management strategies diverse and complex (Biseth & Yagmur, 2018; Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015; Perez- Baez, 2013). While there has been significant research on FLP in various migration contexts, there remains a gap in understanding how migrant families in the Philippines navigate language planning, especially in the context of indigenous groups like the Igorot people. The diversity and complexity vis-à-vis language planning of migrant families is further reduced to children's linguistic contestation, negotiation, and redefinition of their parents' ideologies. Gyogi (2015) informs that despite having differences in language practices and backgrounds, the children verbally negotiate and construct their bilingual positions at home through their flexible use of the two languages. Their language practices are not a passive response to their parents' beliefs but an exercise of their agency through contestation, negotiation, and redefinition of the language ideologies of their parents, which amounted to two types of agencies: (1) construction of the positive self-image and negotiation of the parent-child relationship through the active use of English, and (2) resistance to the parents' monolingual policy through flexible use of two languages. These agencies are at par with Selleck's (2023) framework on separate bilingualism, where parents have their children speak their heritage language alone, and on flexible bilingualism, where the children speak two languages in parent-child interaction.

Earlier studies seemed to suggest that despite the deliberate efforts of the migrant parents to maintain their heritage language as mainly subsumed in their language ideologies, practices, and management strategies, parents have to be flexible to resolve and accommodate the attempt of their children to contest, negotiate, and redefine their beliefs considering their need to communicate

in different communication levels such as in education level which requires a key language to academic achievement (Selleck, 2023; Bezcioglu-Goktolga & Yagmur, 2018; Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015; Gyogi, 2015; Kayam & Hirsch, 2014; Altmna et al., 2014; Perez-Baez, 2013). To verify this finding, the present research tries to clarify whether education is the immediate level influencing the diversity and complexity of the language ideologies, practices, and management strategies vis-à-vis heritage language maintenance of migrant families in the Philippines. This paper, therefore, explores the language planning vis-à-vis heritage language maintenance of a migrant multilingual Igorot family who migrated about 22-23 years ago from Benguet, Luzon, where 'Ilokano' serves as its mainstream language while 'Kankanaey' its heritage language, to Malaybalay, Mindanao, where 'Bisaya' serves as its mainstream language while 'Binukid' its heritage language.

Using the descriptive qualitative method, this study is structured based on the framework of Family Language Planning (FLP) and its construction components mainly involving the language ideologies which determine the beliefs of the studied migrant multilingual Igorot family about the use of minority and majority languages, language practices which involve their linguistic acts according to their language ideologies, and management strategies aimed at influencing their language practices (Spolsky, 2012), whether external where the new community deliberately or unconsciously decides the use of a dominant language, or internal where the decision is made to support language practices in the family (Schwartz, 2010).

### *Statement of the Problem*

This study mainly explored the language planning vis-à-vis heritage language maintenance of the migrant multilingual Igorot family in Malaybalay, Mindanao. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. How is heritage language maintenance considered in the language planning of a migrant multilingual Igorot family in Malaybalay, Mindanao? Is the language planning overt (explicit) or covert (implicit)?
2. What communication situations have influenced the migrant multilingual Igorot family to use multiple languages other than their heritage language(s)? Does the use of multiple languages strengthen or threaten the maintenance of their heritage language(s)?
3. How is the language planning of this migrant multilingual Igorot family relevant to language-in-education planning and policy-making in Malaybalay, Mindanao?

### **Framework of the Study**

This study is hinged on the concepts of family language planning and its construction components, multilingualism and communication situations, maintenance of heritage language, and language shift. Family language planning (FLP) is an endeavor invested in the home context regarding language practices among family members (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009) which explores the three (3) main components: a) language ideologies that determine the beliefs of family members about the use of minority and majority languages, b) language practices which involve the linguistic acts of family members according to their language ideologies, and c) management strategies which concern about the deliberate efforts of family members to influence their language

practices (Spolsky, 2012), either external where a speech community decides the use of a certain language or internal where the decision is made to support language practices at home (Schwartz, 2010). This concept has been widened by Fogle (2013), cited in Gomes (2018), that the decisions made by parents about language use at home may not always be overt and explicit but may also involve covert or implicit mechanisms that favor some language and literacy practices at home over other languages which may be driven by macro and micro dynamics.

Macro and micro dynamics are the two main factors that shape and contribute to the construction of FLP. Both macro factors, like the political and sociocultural environment, and micro factors, like the home literacy environment and parents' expectations, are the driving forces in shaping FLP (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). On macro factors, for instance, when a national policy values English at the educational and sociopolitical levels, parents are also inclined to accept the dominance of English in their families (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014), while on micro factors, parents' perceptions and practices play an important role in determining the attitudes of children towards the use of a language (Bezioglu-Goktolga & Yagmur, 2018). The parents' own language learning experiences affect how they shape their linguistic interactions with their children, where their linguistic input determines the bilingual development of their children (King & Fogle, 2006; De Houwer, 2007). However, when their children start to socialize outside the home environment, the children tend to resist the language practices of their parents and bring home any language used at the sociopolitical or educational level (Bezioglu-Goktolga & Yagmur, 2018).

Communication levels, such as sociopolitical and educational, contribute to shaping a speaker's linguistic behavior that amounts to committing multilingualism. The term multilingualism is defined as the use of two or more languages, either referring to individuals or societies. An individual committing multilingualism is often caused by the need to communicate within a range of different contexts where a person may be exposed to a language used in the family, in school, or a marketplace (Biseth, 2009). One form of multilingualism showing a positive relationship between a speaker's heritage and second language is referred to as additive multilingualism, where a speaker learns an additional language to communicate at different contexts or different communication levels while maintaining and developing the heritage language (Cummins, 2000b; Heugh 2000, cited in Biseth, 2009). One key initiative to achieving the noble purpose of additive multilingualism, especially for minorities or marginalized groups, is for the education sector to recognize the first language of the learners (Cummins 2000b; Desai 2000, Kymlicka, 2001, cited in Biseth, 2009), where academic institutions offer communication situation at an education level that relatively influences learners' linguistic decision.

Communication situations relatively imply the use of multiple languages that may either call for or affect the effort to maintain a heritage language. Maintenance of a heritage language is a language management strategy that seeks to maintain the languages of the parents as these languages form their linguistic identities. The language maintenance efforts of the parents and the active orientation of the children using a heritage language enforce the maintenance of the heritage language (Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015). A heritage language is maintained when the children are brought to a new community after leaving their home of origin, where parents desire to maintain their cultural identity as a significant motivating factor in transmitting their heritage language to their children. The parents may desire to inject the same heritage identity in their children with the hope of keeping a connection and a reminder of their home. With this desire, language

serves as the medium through which they hope their children will develop the same identity and build attachment and connection to the identity of their heritage community while upholding their cultural traditions like practicing to maintain their heritage language (Selleck, 2023).

With the effort of the parents to maintain their heritage language, Kheirkhah and Cekaite (2015), however, informed that some observations on language socialization demonstrate how the language choices and interactional practices of the children influence and shape parental language behavior where the children also contribute to language shift by resisting the parents' use of heritage languages. Gafaranga (2010), cited in Kheirkhah and Cekaite (2015), narrates how children display their problems in understanding their heritage language and how they initiate negotiations about language choice when interacting with their parents. The parents resolve these negotiations by adopting and shifting to using the majority language as the medium of conversation to accommodate the linguistic needs of their children. This practice with the parents, including children's participation in academic conversations with their peers using the majority language, constitutes a factor that contributes to generational language shift (Rindstedt & Aronsson, 2002; Evaldson & Cekaite, 2010, cited in Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015).

## **Methodology**

The study was conducted in the first barangay of Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, Mindanao, while employing descriptive qualitative research design to purposely explore the language planning vis-à-vis heritage language maintenance of a migrant multilingual Igorot family who migrated from Benguet, Luzon, to Malaybalay, Mindanao. Descriptive qualitative research is reported to be a design applicable to studies that aim to identify concepts involving characteristics, perceptions, frequencies, and categories while integrating standard methods, such as surveys, narrative studies, and observations (McCombes, 2020). The design directed this study to employ the narrative method realized through the conduct of an FGD as its main data-gathering procedure where the data taken were also supported with claims generated through the non-participant observation method.

## **Participants**

This study involved members of a migrant multilingual Igorot family in Malaybalay, Mindanao, consisting of a father, a mother, two (2) daughters, and a grandson. Except for the grandson who was not born yet during the migration period, the rest of the family members originally migrated from Benguet, Luzon to Malaybalay, Mindanao. Table 1 presents this background information, showing Benguet, Luzon, as the family's place of origin before their relocation. Table 1 also provides the ages of the family members during the migration, and the conduct of this study implies that migration occurred 22 or 23 years ago. Finally, Table 1 shows the languages generally used among the family members, namely, English, Filipino, Kankanaey, Ilokano, and Bisaya.

**Table 1**

*Demographic Background and Linguistic Profile of the Family Members*

Role	Place of Origin	Age During Migration	Age at Present	Language(s) Spoken
Father	Benguet, Luzon	47	70	Kankanaey, Ilokano, English, Filipino, and Bisaya
Mother	Benguet, Luzon	48	71	Kankanaey, Ilokano, Filipino, English, and Bisaya
Daughter 1	Benguet, Luzon	17	39	Kankanaey, Ilokano, Bisaya, English, and Filipino
Daughter 2	Benguet, Luzon	12	34	Kankanaey, Ilokano, Bisaya, English, and Filipino
Grandson	Malaybalay, Mindanao	Not born yet	18	English, Bisaya, and Filipino

**Instrument**

In this study, the researchers developed an interview guide, which was divided into two parts. The first part included at least five questions that aimed to satisfy the demographic backgrounding and linguistic profiling of the family members. The second part, on the other hand, included at least 15 questions that aimed to satisfy the language planning vis-à-vis heritage language maintenance of a migrant multilingual Igorot family in Malaybalay, Mindanao. The instruments also embedded at least six FGD protocols along with the guide questions to properly observe ethical considerations.

**Validity Procedure in the Preparation of the FGD Protocol**

To ensure the validity of the FGD protocol, the interview guide and questions were first reviewed by language planning and migration experts, as well as local practitioners familiar with the linguistic and cultural context of the Igorot community. This review process was aimed at confirming the relevance and clarity of the questions, as well as their alignment with the study’s objectives. Following the feedback, the final version of the FGD protocol was pre-tested with a small sample from a similar migrant family to identify any potential issues in understanding or ambiguity. Adjustments were made based on this pre-test to refine the questions and ensure that they accurately addressed the research objectives.

**Data Gathering Procedure**

To explore the language planning vis-à-vis heritage language maintenance of the migrant multilingual Igorot family in Malaybalay, Mindanao, this study employed specific data gathering procedure, which included the approval of a consent letter, the conduct of FGD, and the

## **Approval of the Consent Letter**

The researcher sent a consent letter to the father as the head of the family. The consent letter informed the head of the family of the purpose of the study while inviting him and the rest of the family members to participate in the study, specifically in the conduct of FGD as the main data-gathering method and giving them the choice to withdraw their participation for any possible reasons at their disposal. To confirm their participation, the consent letter was approved by having the family members affix their signatures to the consent letter.

## **Focus Group Discussion**

The focus group discussion served as the main data-gathering method of the study to afford in-depth information on language planning vis-à-vis heritage language maintenance of the migrant multilingual Igorot family. Given the approval of the family members, the researcher facilitated the discussion with the five family members, namely, the father, the mother, the two daughters, and the grandson. This study employed FGD as a qualitative method for gathering data on a specific topic through a structured and focused discussion with a small group of people. It was especially convenient as a complement to other methods of data collection employed in this study to provide in-depth information (Gundumogula, 2020).

## **Transcription of the Proceedings**

To assure the objectivity of the study and to prevent the manipulation of the data at hand, this study subjected the record of the discussion for transcription to an expert who had a couple of years of work experience in a transcribing company before getting employed for a teaching position. The transcription was necessary to extract the data while attempting to satisfy the overarching objective of the study.

## **Ethical Consideration**

It was necessary for this study to properly observe and comply with the set of ethical standards by following several protocols where the researcher assured that a) the participants signed the consent letter to confirm their participation in the study, b) the participants understood the purpose of the study and that they were free to withdraw their participation for any possible reasons at their disposal, c) the participants had their copies of the questions before the discussion, d) the participants were free to use English, Filipino, or Bisaya during the discussion, e) the participants gave their consent to record the proceedings of the discussion and f) the participants received necessary support to successfully join the discussion.

## **Analysis of Data**

To answer the research questions, the researcher carefully reviewed and coded the transcript of the data which narrated implicitly the language ideologies, practices, and management strategies vis-à-vis heritage language maintenance of the migrant multilingual Igorot family in Malaybalay, Mindanao. Data reduction was then conducted, with only the most pertinent responses addressing the research questions retained. The findings were synthesized and presented in the results and

discussion section, organized by themes and frames.

## Results and Discussion

The discussions are organized into four major themes:

- a.) The language ideologies, practices, and management strategies in the family.
- b.) Communication situations influencing multilingualism in the family.
- c.) The implications of the language ideologies, practices, and management strategies on heritage language maintenance.
- d.) The relevance of these language ideologies, practices, and management strategies to language-in-education planning and policymaking in Malaybalay, Mindanao.

### Ideologies, Practices, and Management Strategies in the Family

As presented in Table 2, this subsection discusses the language ideologies of the family members, which determine their beliefs about the use of minority and majority languages, language practices that involve their linguistic acts according to their language ideologies, and management strategies that concern their deliberate efforts to influence their language practices (Spolsky, 2012), either external where the mainstream or majority language of the community influences their language practices or internal where the linguistic decision is solely made to support their language practices (Schwartz, 2010).

**Table 2**

*Summary of Language Ideologies, Practices, and Management Strategies in the Family*

Role	Language Ideologies	Language Practices		Management Strategies	
		L1	L2s	L1	L2s
Father	English is a globally intelligible language and a key to academic preparedness and achievement.	Kankanaey	Ilocano English Filipino Bisaya	Internal	Internal Dual External External
Mother	English is a globally intelligible language and a key to academic preparedness and achievement.	Kankanaey	Ilocano Filipino English Bisaya	Internal	Internal External Dual External
Daughter 1	English is a globally intelligible language and a key to academic preparedness and achievement.	Kankanaey	Ilocano Bisaya English Filipino	Internal	Internal Dual Dual External
Daughter 2	English is a globally intelligible language and a key to academic preparedness and achievement.	Kankanaey	Ilocano Bisaya English Filipino	Internal	Internal Dual Dual External
Grandson	English is a globally intelligible language and a key to academic preparedness and achievement.	English	Bisaya Filipino	Dual	Dual External

Legend: L1 - First Language L2s - Second Language(s) Dual- Internal and External

Generally, the result shows that there are five (5) languages used and spoken among the members of the family studied, including Kankanaey, which serves as their heritage language, and other languages in addition to their heritage language, namely, Ilocano, English, Filipino, and Bisaya, while sharing a belief that English is a globally intelligible language and a key to academic preparedness and achievement. The result further reveals a significant difference in their management strategies where the parents and the children vary in managing the use of Bisaya, tagging it as managed externally for the parents, suggesting that they only use and speak the language when interacting with the members of their new community, while both internally and externally for the children, suggesting that they use and speak Bisaya when interacting with the members of their new community and when interacting with the family members except their parents. It was observed that the parents can understand but can barely interact using the language, and thus decide to use Filipino when interacting with community members. Another significant difference observed is the management strategy of the grandson, which is very different from that of the father, mother, and two daughters. For them, Kankanaey serves not just their first but also, their heritage language, which is managed internally, suggesting that the language is spoken only at home. In the case of the grandson, on the other hand, English serves as his first language, but not necessarily his heritage language, which is managed both internally and externally, suggesting that English is spoken because of the influence of his community, say, school, and the effort of the family to use the language at home driven by their common language ideology.

### *Parent-Parent Interaction*

In parent-parent interaction, the father uses and speaks mostly Ilocano, sometimes Kankanaey, and rarely English, while the mother uses and speaks mostly Ilocano and sometimes Kankanaey. Ilocano is mostly the language used in their interaction because it is the mainstream or dominant language used and spoken in the place of their origin before their migration. But the language does not serve as their heritage language, forming their linguistic identity, but Kankanaey, where they use and speak occasionally. Interestingly, the father can also speak English because he was able to earn not just his bachelor's degree but also his master's and doctorate degrees, where English was the main medium of instruction. Currently, the father is also the President of a developing college in Cotabato, Philippines, and is expected to have more engagements using English. On the other hand, despite the influence of Bisaya as the majority language of the new community, the parents did not attain a significant proficiency level in using the language. They can understand the language but cannot interact using it. Serving as the College President since 2012, the father has to stay with the mother in Cotabato, where the mainstream language is Maguindanaon, and not Bisaya. This linguistic situation is a factor that is keeping them from attaining a certain level of proficiency to use Bisaya, for their stay in Malaybalay, Mindanao, with their children and grandson is rather occasional.

### *Parent-Child Interaction*

In parent-child interaction, the father uses and speaks mostly Ilocano, sometimes English, and rarely Kankanaey, while the mother uses and speaks mostly Ilocano and sometimes Kankanaey when interacting with their children. In the case of the children, they use and speak mostly Ilocano and sometimes Kankanaey when interacting with their parents. The children, who were in their teenage years during the migration period, were primarily exposed to Ilocano as the

majority language spoken in their first community, as well as Kankanaey as the heritage language spoken in their first community, as well as Kankanaey as the heritage language of their parents. This linguistic situation explains why they can speak Ilocano and Kankanaey when interacting with their parents. Further, since Ilocano serves as the mainstream or majority language in their first community rather than their heritage language, the parents and the children use and speak mostly in Ilocano when interacting with each other and rarely in Kankanaey.

### *Grandparent-Grandson Interaction*

In grandparent-grandson interaction, both the grandparents, who are, in the context of this study, the parents, use and speak English when interacting with their grandson, who is, in the context of this study, the son of daughter 1. Since he was in his younger years, they would interact with him only in English, believing that since English is the language of education, interacting with their grandson in English would help him be prepared for his education. Despite coming into his teenage years, they would still interact with their grandson using the same language because it has become the norm between and among them. In the same manner, the grandson uses and speaks English when interacting with his grandparents because English serves as his first language and the common language used and spoken between and among them.

### *Sibling-Sibling Interaction*

In sibling-sibling interaction or the interaction between the two daughters, they mostly interact in Bisaya and sometimes in Ilocano. Since Bisaya serves as the mainstream or majority language spoken in their new community, migrants, unlike their parents, eventually attained a certain proficiency level the language. This situation explains why they interact mostly in Bisaya and not in Ilocano, though the latter used to be the majority language spoken in their first community. Interestingly, when the interaction happens in the presence of other people, especially when the topic seems too personal, the siblings would decide to use and speak in Ilocano.

### *Mother-Son Interaction*

When the son, who is, in the context of this study, the grandson, was in his younger and crucial years, the mother, who is, in this context, the daughter 1, only used and spoke English when interacting with him, driven by the same language ideology of her parents. However, when her son was in his teenage years while getting fluent and proficient in the English language and while being exposed to Bisaya as the mainstream language of their new dynamic community, she decided to use and speak mostly in Bisaya, sometimes in Ilocano, and rarely in Kankanaey when interacting with him. Because he was not born yet during the migration period, the son did have the opportunity to acquire Ilocano and Kankanaey, turning their interaction less effective when the mother interacts in these languages, given that he cannot interact using these languages, but can merely decode familiar but limited expressions in the same languages, and thus decide to return to his mother in English or Bisaya.

*Aunt-Nephew Interaction*

The interaction between the aunt, who is, in the context of this study, the daughter 2, and nephew, who is, in the context of this study, the grandson, is almost similar to the mother-son interaction. His aunt, having the same language ideology as her parents and sibling on the use of English and their positions for using Bisaya, Ilocano, and Kankanaey, would interact with him in these languages. She has the opportunity to practice these languages with him because they are staying in the same house or because his mother chose to stay with her parents and sibling even after getting separated from her husband. Like her sibling, she would also interact with her nephew in English when he was still in his younger years and Bisaya, Ilocano, and Kankanaey when he was in his teenage years. Because he is only proficient in interacting in Bisaya, he would return to his aunt using the language, not in Ilocano nor Kankanaey because he cannot understand nor speak these languages.

*Communication Situations Influencing the Use of Multiple Languages Other than the Heritage Language in the Family*

As presented in Table 3, this subsection presents the communication situations influencing the family members to use and speak additional languages other than their heritage language and, therefore commit multilingualism with the hope of meeting their need to communicate within a range of different contexts where they may be exposed to a language used in the family, in school, or other places or events (Biseth, 2009).

**Table 3**

*Summary of Communication Situations Influencing Multilingualism in the Family*

Communication Situation	Father	Mother	Daughter 1	Daughter 2	Grandson
Family Affairs	Multi	Multi	Multi	Mutli	Bi
Family-Relative Affairs	Multi	Bi	Bi	Bi	Mono
Social Affairs	Bi	Mono	Mono	Mono	Bi
Educational Affairs	Bi	Bi	Bi	Bi	Bi

Legend: Mono – Monolingual Bi – Bilingual Tri – Trilingual Multi– Multilingual

In family affairs, when interaction happens while gathering together, it was narrated that the family members use and speak multiple languages, namely, Kankanaey, Ilocano, English, Filipino, and Bisaya. When asked, the father translated this situation using a cocktail language, where they simply and conveniently use any language of their choice regardless of the topic. For instance, as narrated, when the father used English when interacting with other members, the mother and the children would return to him in Ilocano or sometimes in Kankanaey. But in the case of the grandson, he could only use English and Bisaya when family members gather for a conversation, given that he did not have the opportunity to acquire other languages that other family members speak.

In family-relative affairs or when the relatives come to visit them from Benguet, Luzon, the father appears to be trilingual while narrating that he would interact in English with his relatives who were able to attend school and eventually learned and acquired the language in Ilocano with relatives who can simply use the mainstream language of Benguet, Luzon, and in Kankanaey with relatives who cannot interact in English and Ilocano, but only in their heritage language Kankanaey. The mother and the children appear to be bilingual when interacting with their relatives, narrating that they interact with them in Ilocano and in Kankanaey, which Selleck (2023) termed as flexible bilingualism, where speakers speak two languages in their interaction. The grandson, on the other hand, appears to be monolingual because he can only interact with his relatives in English, given that he cannot speak the majority and minority languages spoken in Benguet, Luzon. It was observed that in social affairs like church, the father and the grandson appear to be bilingual. The father speaks Filipino and English when interacting with the other members of the church because the father (grandfather) can understand but can barely speak Bisaya the mainstream language in Malaybalay, Mindanao, while the grandson can speak in English when speaking to his peers and in Bisaya to older ones. On the other hand, the mother and the children appear to be monolingual when interacting with members of their new community, say, in the church. Because the mother can understand but can barely speak the mainstream language, she only interacts in Filipino while her daughters are in Bisaya since they have attained a certain level of proficiency in using the language.

In educational affairs, all members of the family studied appear to be bilingual, where they interact in English and Filipino. The result is influenced using English as the main medium of instruction, where these members eventually learned and acquired the language. Other than English, members were also compelled to learn and acquire Filipino as a secondary medium of instruction for courses like Filipino, Araling Panlipunan, and the like. In this view, educational affairs is one communication situation where the family members meet, implying that the language policy for education has a uniform influence on their linguistic decision.

The migrant multilingual Igorot family's use of multiple languages, influenced by communication situations such as work, education, and social interactions, has both strengthened and threatened the maintenance of their heritage language. While the need to communicate in dominant languages like Tagalog or Cebuano in public and professional contexts is essential for integration, it can lead to a language shift if the heritage language is not actively used within the family. Recent studies on multilingual migrant families show that factors like age, education, and social networks play significant roles in shaping language use patterns. As seen in Table 3, the family's language choices reflect a balance between accommodating societal norms and maintaining their heritage language, with trends shaped by both external pressures and internal decisions on language practices.

### *Implications of the Language Ideologies, Practices, and Management Strategies to Heritage Language Maintenance in the Family*

The language planning of the family studied, in the position of the father, is covert or implicit rather than overt or explicit, suggesting that the use of multiple languages in the family in addition to their heritage language is not mandatory. It originally started with the father's belief that English was the globally intelligible language and a key to academic preparedness

and achievement, and thus unconsciously used English at home, especially when interacting with his grandchildren even before they migrated from Benguet, Luzon. In this sense, the father leads and takes the role of the unconscious language planner in the family, where the response of the mother, daughters, and grandson is unsolicited, for they unconsciously follow the decision by implementing the same practice at home. It is, therefore a freewheeling language planning than structured where the use of multiple languages is welcomed depending on the convenient language at the disposal of each member when the entire family members gather for a conversation.

The language planning of the family constructed through their language ideologies, practices, and management strategies also, therefore suggests the maintenance of Kankanaey as their heritage language. The language is practiced in interactions between and among family members and becomes part of the family's linguistic cocktail, where Kankanaey is used and practiced along with Ilocano, English, Filipino, and Bisaya. However, to the grandson, the language is foreign because he cannot understand and speak it, though there were times that he would hear other family members using and speaking it. There are expressions in this language that gradually become intelligible to him, but the situation does not promise him to be conversational when interacting with them. But this situation does not necessarily suggest a gradual loss of their heritage language because, during the conduct of the study, the family has started to practice Kankanaey at home, as well as Ilocano as the mainstream language in Benguet, Luzon, spoken mostly by his relatives, given that the grandson is in his teenage years and is still capable of learning and acquiring these languages to maintain the family's heritage language.

#### *Relevance of the Language Ideologies, Practices, and Management Strategies in the Family to Language-in-Education Planning and Policy Making*

The language ideologies, practices, and management strategies of the studied migrant multilingual Igorot family who migrated from Benguet, Luzon, to Malaybalay, Mindanao, are concrete bases for the legislators in the city to making policies concerning education, specifically a policy involving the recognition of heritage languages that form students' linguistic identities, to see that these languages, minority as others may call them, are vital towards the cognitive development of the learners while welcoming and affirming what languages the learners already know and speak in learning rather than learning in English or Filipino alone. If the city legislators in Malaybalay, Mindanao do not support the national government's intent to continue with the MTB-MLE, the maintenance of the heritage language will not be secured.

The language ideologies, practices, and maintenance strategies within the Igorot migrant family are intricately linked to both overt and covert language planning. The family holds a strong belief in the importance of preserving their heritage language as a key component of cultural identity, which is reflected in their explicit efforts such as using the language in daily communication, attending language programs, and organizing cultural events. These overt language planning actions are complemented by more implicit strategies, like casual language use among younger family members or informal language socialization at home. Comparing these practices with other Igorot migrant families reveals a common pattern of combining overt, structured language planning with covert, everyday language practices to maintain the heritage language. Generational differences within the family highlight the varying degrees of engagement, with older members more actively involved in explicit language maintenance efforts, while younger members contribute through

subtler, yet significant, forms of language planning. This interplay of overt and covert strategies underscores the complex nature of language maintenance across generations.

The language planning of the migrant multilingual Igorot family is relevant to language-in-education planning and policymaking in Malaybalay, Mindanao, as it highlights the intersection of heritage language maintenance and multilingual education. Local policies, such as those supporting Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE), should be examined to assess whether they align with the family's practices. If local government units (LGUs) oppose national policies on MTB-MLE, this might indirectly promote heritage language maintenance, as the family's use of the heritage language serves as a bridge for learning other languages. The role of LGUs in influencing educational policies, including their power to support or challenge national language policies, requires further exploration of local legislative practices.

## Conclusion

The findings suggest that the language planning of the Igorot family is explicit, as evidenced by their active participation in community and educational initiatives aimed at language preservation. This deliberate and overt effort stands in contrast to more passive or covert forms of language planning, where language maintenance might occur without intentional strategies. The family's conscious decision to incorporate language planning into daily life reflects a strong commitment to preserving their cultural identity and heritage language across generations. Based on the results presented and discussed, this study concluded that the implicit or covert language planning, constructed through language ideologies, practices, and management strategies of the migrant multilingual Igorot family in Malaybalay, Bukidnon, helps maintain Kankanaey, the family's heritage language, within their linguistic cocktail alongside Ilocano, Filipino, English, and Bisaya. Despite this multilingualism, which is shaped by different communication situations—namely, family, family-relative, social, and educational affairs—the study found that the use of multiple languages does not threaten the maintenance of the heritage language, particularly within family and family-relative affairs, where Kankanaey continues to be practiced. However, a concern arises as the grandson does not use Kankanaey or Ilocano, potentially putting the heritage language at risk of being lost in future generations. As the son grows older, possibly starts a family, and does not speak Kankanaey, the challenge of language transmission increases. This study highlights the importance of language planning in preserving heritage languages for future generations. Furthermore, the language practices of the family provide a concrete basis for city legislators to craft policies in education that recognize heritage languages as key components of students' linguistic identities. These policies could secure the maintenance of heritage languages, ensuring that they serve as bridging languages for acquiring a second language, thus enhancing students' learning opportunities and supporting their academic success.

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