

## THE TRANSFORMATIVE EFFECT OF MULTICULTURALISM ON MAGUINDANAON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between multiculturalism and the Maguindanaon language in Cotabato City, Philippines. It begins by introducing the multicultural landscape of the city and the cultural significance of the Maguindanaon language, emphasizing the need to investigate its acquisition in a multicultural context. This study explores the historical background and unique characteristics of the Maguindanaon language and explores its role in the diverse cultures of Cotabato City. It explores the integration of different ethnic groups, their interactions, and how diversity contributes to the preservation and evolution of the Maguindanaon language. This study also examines the language acquisition of Maguindanaon, considering the factors that influence acquisition and how diversity affects the language learning strategies of Maguindanaon speakers. Additionally, it evaluates sociocultural influences, challenges, success stories, and proposes strategies to promote effective Maguindanaon language acquisition within a multicultural setting, emphasizing the need for continued research and policy enhancements to support language preservation and acquisition initiatives.

**Keywords:** Multiculturalism, Maguindanaon, Acquisition, sociocultural

### INTRODUCTION

Cotabato City, situated within the Philippines, epitomizes a vivid tapestry of cultural diversity. The cityscape prides itself on being a beautiful place where different cultures, traditions, and languages come together. This blend of rich cultures defines the essence of Cotabato City, from large urban neighborhoods to the quiet shores of Lake Buluan, symbolizing the region's connection among its many people.

The basis of this culture is the Maguindanaon language, a treasure of historical and cultural importance. The Maguindanao language is more than a means of communication; it contains the narrative, culture, and symbols passed down from generation to generation, including the heritage of Cotabato City. It serves as a lens to reveal the relationship between culture and language acquisition. By examining how people participate in language acquisition in diverse communities such as Cotabato City, researchers are gaining a better understanding of how culture affects communication, communication, relationships, and the preservation of culture.

Comprehending Maguindanaon unveils more than just local language acquisition potential. It carries significant implications for comprehending the development of languages, cultures, and

interconnections worldwide. It highlights language's pivotal role as a custodian of cultural legacy and identity across diverse societies, while also suggesting a transformative process to foster cultural integration. More importantly, the in-depth study of the Maguindanaon language in the multi-ethnic environment of Cotabato City provides a unique perspective on the diversity of language, culture, and relationships. It highlights the importance of preserving linguistic heritage when dealing with the challenges of diversity and sheds light on a broader debate about cultural and social preservation in a worldwide multicultural society.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature on language acquisition within multicultural contexts offers insights into the dynamics of language learning amidst diverse sociocultural environments. The review aims to explore existing scholarly works concerning Maguindanaon language acquisition in Cotabato City's multicultural landscape.

### **MAGUINDANAON LANGUAGE: HISTORY AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The historical roots of the Maguindanao language extend to the indigenous communities of Mindanao, including the rich heritage associated with the regional culture. Considering the language's legacy in the culture, traditions, and history of the Maguindanao people, its origins can be traced back to the Sultanate of Maguindanao. The language has developed over centuries, preserving elements of culture and tradition.

In addition, Maguindanaon's cultural significance transcends language boundaries. It is a monument to indigenous knowledge, legends, and ancestral wisdom that transmit traditions and customs from one generation to the next. Through oral traditions, songs, and stories, the Maguindanaon language serves as a vehicle for storing elements of the community's identity and consciousness.

The unique characteristics of speech and speech changes make Maguindanaon unique. Its phonetic, grammatical, and lexical components reflect the uniqueness of the Philippines in the broader linguistic field. The language exhibits unique features that differ from other Filipino languages, including phonemic diversity, morphological patterns, and lexical items.

Also, changes in speech support many languages of Maguindanaon. Differences between different regions and communities in the city of Cotabato result in slight differences in speech, word usage, and grammar. This shows language changes and changes in many people around. Maguindanaon plays many roles in the diverse culture of Cotabato City. It serves as a cultural symbol that connects different communities, transcends ethnic boundaries, and promotes a sense of unity among different cultural groups. Language is a means of communication that promotes dialogue and understanding between different cultures. It is present in daily conversations, rituals, art performances, and community gatherings, supporting its important role in preserving and enhancing the city's cultural heritage. In fact, the Maguindanao language is an important pillar of the multi-ethnic landscape of Cotabato City, carrying the historical legacy, and linguistic and cultural heritage that affects different communities.

### **Multiculturalism and Language Acquisition**

Scholars like Fishman (1972) and Kanno & Norton (2003) have extensively discussed the influence of multiculturalism on language acquisition. Fishman's sociolinguistic theories provide a framework for understanding how multicultural settings impact language use and proficiency. Kanno & Norton's work sheds light on the relationship between imagined communities, identity, and language learning, offering valuable perspectives applicable to Maguindanaon speakers in a multicultural environment.

### **LANGUAGE ACQUISITION THEORIES AND MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS**

The study of language acquisition theories provides us with a lens through which we can understand how people acquire language in different cultures.

The cultural landscape of Cotabato City, including the Maguindanaon language (Skinner, 1957) adopts theories such as behaviorism, which emphasizes the role of environmental stimulation and reinforcement in language learning. For instance, within the diverse setting of Cotabato City, immersion in a multilingual environment will influence the acquisition, consequently shaping the learning trajectory of the Maguindanaon language. In contrast, nativist theories, particularly Chomsky's Universal Grammar, argue that humans have the means to use language and can learn grammatical rules intuitively. The application of this theory to Maguindanaon acquisition suggests that despite the diversity of cultures, there may be universal grammatical elements that inform language acquisition.

The interaction theory proposed by (Vygotsky, 1978) expresses the interaction between the environment and cognitive development in language acquisition. In many contexts of Cotabato City, theory suggests that interaction with different speakers can influence the way Maguindanaon is learned, thus affecting the way it is acquired.

### **Factors Influencing Multicultural Language Acquisition**

Literature has identified factors affecting language acquisition in multicultural settings. Fishman's (1972) discussion of language preservation and change in a multicultural society is particularly important for understanding Maguindanaon speakers' pursuit of the languages of various ethnic groups in Cotabato City. Additionally, Wei (2000) investigated the dimensions of bilingualism and explained the factors affecting language acquisition and proficiency in different cultures.

#### ***Acculturation and Multilingualism***

Research by Gumperz (1982) and Wei (2000) sheds light on the relationship between acculturation, multilingualism, and Maguindanaon language education, offering valuable insights into how teaching speech diversity among Maguindanaon speakers enhances comprehension of the cultural milieu, as well as fosters the development of multilingual skills.

#### ***Social Support and Language Preservation***

Researchers like Kanno and Norton (2003) and Fishman (1972) explore the significance of social support, communication abilities, and language rights in safeguarding minority languages across various cultures. Understanding these factors is crucial for comprehending

the responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities involved in preserving the Maguindanaon language in Cotabato City.

### **HOW MULTICULTURALISM SHAPES LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AMONG MAGUINDANAON SPEAKERS?**

***Code-switching and adaptation:*** Maguindanaon speakers may modify or adjust their language to suit varying environments, facilitating improved communication among diverse cultural groups.

***Cultural integration:*** Multiculturalism encourages Maguindanaon speakers to incorporate cultural elements into their language learning strategies. This combination helps encourage different perspectives and improve communication.

***Community interaction and learning:*** Multicultural interaction supports language learning strategies by providing diverse experiences. Participation in a multicultural environment provides a platform for the learning and practice of various languages.

These features and interactions illustrate the interplay of diversity and linguistic diversity in Maguindanaon. The language acquisition process is shaped by the interaction of health, culture, and language in the different contexts of Cotabato City.

### **Challenges and Opportunities of Maguindanaon Language Acquisition**

#### **A. CHALLENGES FACED BY MAGUINDANAON STUDENTS IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS**

Maguindanaon language students face many challenges in the multicultural environment of Cotabato City. First, the ubiquity of different languages in everyday speech leads to language confusion and code-switching, affecting the way it is received. Additionally, social attitudes towards the prestige of Maguindanaon relative to other major languages may influence students, especially young people.

Additionally, work often speaks louder than many words, limiting the impact and resources of Maguindanaon education. The lack of teaching materials and teaching methods specific to Maguindanaon creates additional problems affecting its education.

#### **B. GOOD STORIES OR SUCCESS STORIES IN MAGUINDANAON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

Despite the challenges, Cotabato City also has success stories in Maguindanaon Language Acquisition. Initiatives such as community language preservation programs and different storytelling programs are important in developing skills in Maguindanaon. These endeavors offer an effective means of language acquisition that transcends mere academic study, enabling students to immerse themselves in a cultural context and experience the language firsthand.

Additionally, the use of technology such as language apps or online resources helps make Maguindanaon more accessible and engaging for students. Collaboration between community leaders, teachers, and language teachers has led to new teaching methods that facilitate Maguindanaon's interactive learning experience.

### **C. STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES AND PROMOTE SUCCESSFUL MAGUINDANAON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

Appropriate strategies are necessary to deal with challenges. First, integrating the curriculum into science education and making it part of Maguindanaon's language curriculum can promote its acceptance and inclusion. Creating Maguindanaon-specific educational materials, books, and digital resources can improve accessibility and instruction.

Community leaders, such as language centers participating in camps or festivals, provide the best experiences for language acquisition. It is still a good idea to encourage exchanges where elders pass on oral culture and language to young people.

It is also important to advocate in government and schools for policies that support the protection and promotion of Maguindanaon. Collaboration among stakeholders (language teachers, educators, policymakers, and community leaders) is crucial to developing effective strategies for Maguindanao's success.

In summary, although challenges remain, there are many opportunities for Maguindanaon's prosperity in the diverse environment of Cotabato City. Preserving and promoting the Maguindanaon language can be done using many strategies and celebrating success.

### **RELEVANT POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **A. Analysis of Cotabato City Cultural and Customary Laws. Education Right**

Currently, the education system is predominantly national, and the language is widely spoken, mostly indigenous languages such as Maguindanaon. Most of the policies refer to the use of different languages for education, which results in the non-intervention of indigenous languages in education.

In addition, there are restrictions on the recognition and writing of indigenous languages in the administration and laws, hindering the integration and promotion of Maguindanao. Although there are efforts to recognize linguistic diversity, the implementation and enforcement of language policies remain inadequate.

#### **B. Recommendations for policymakers to promote effective language in multicultural contexts**

***Inclusive Education Policy:*** Policymakers should adapt education policies to recognize indigenous language varieties, including Maguindanaon, and incorporate them into the curriculum. This requires the creation of appropriate materials, teacher training, and updating of materials to promote Maguindanaon language learning in schools.

***Language Documentation and Preservation:*** Establish programs to document and preserve indigenous languages, including Maguindanaon, by preserving oral traditions, and creating language dictionaries and written vocabularies. This leads to the recognition and protection of indigenous languages in administrative and legal systems.

***Community-oriented projects:*** Policymakers ought to endorse initiatives aimed at preserving languages within communities and cultural endeavors that foster the proliferation of indigenous languages. These initiatives necessitate collaboration among community leaders, educators, and language instructors and play a vital role in advocating for the preservation of significant languages.

***Multilingual Resources and Access:*** Invest in the creation of multilingual resources, including educational materials, digital tools, and community libraries to support multilingual access. Digitization and online platforms can close the talent gap and make Maguindanaon more accessible to students.

***Cultural Sensitivity and Recognition:*** Increase cultural awareness in government institutions to ensure recognition and respect for indigenous languages such as Maguindanaon. This includes bilingual signage, accessible language services, and cultural events that highlight language differences.

***Policy Advocacy and Implementation:*** Participate in the promotion of Aboriginal languages in policy debates and advocate for legislation for the protection and use of Aboriginal languages. Promote linguistic diversity. Collaboration with authors, educators, community leaders, and policymakers is essential for effective policy implementation.

***Capacity Building and Research:*** Investments in research and capacity building are beginning to connect linguists, educators, and community members with knowledge, conservation, and innovation.

Consequently, promoting the acquisition of good languages, especially indigenous languages such as Maguindanao in the multicultural environment of Cotabato City, requires a holistic policy framework. Adopting common policies that recognize, protect and promote linguistic diversity is important for supporting cultural and social cohesion.

## CONCLUSION

### ***Summary of Key Findings on Maguindanaon Language Acquisition in a Multicultural Environment***

Exploring Maguindanaon Language Acquisition in the multicultural environment of Cotabato City reveals multifaceted dynamics. It shows the problems students face in different languages and shows the impact of culture on language needs. It also shows the importance of Maguindanaon in preserving its culture despite problems in education and the political system.

This study analyzes the uniqueness of Maguindanaon speech, revealing its change and complexity, while also showing changes influenced by culture. Challenges such as limited resources, educational biases, and social norms hinder Maguindanaon's well-received message, but the stories are complete and community's support programs appear to be protective and capable in this context.

***Importance of preserving the Maguindanao language in the multicultural context of Cotabato City and introducing it to the diverse ecosystem of Cotabato City.***

The legacy of the Maguindanao people is important. Maguindanaon holds ancestral traditions, oral history, and community traditions that provide a common thread in the culture.

Its preservation is important in promoting a sense of unity and continuity among the people of Maguindanaon and contributing to the rich multiethnic fabric of the city. Preserving indigenous languages such as Maguindanaon ensures cultural diversity and strengthens relationships, thus reinforcing the city's identity as a meeting point of cultures.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH AND EVALUATION**

Future research should focus on a variety of measures designed to address the challenges identified in language acquisition in Maguindanaon. This includes in-depth research into effective teaching methods to include Maguindanao in the education system, exploring the impact of digital technology on language promotion efforts, and transcribing oral language to preserve language heritage.

Initiatives should prioritize community-based language preservation services that involve the collaboration of linguists, educators, policymakers and administrators. Additionally, advocating for inclusive language policies and the inclusion of indigenous languages in administrative areas requires sustained efforts and policy debates.

Exploring the intersection of language, identity, and diversity in Cotabato City's diverse communities remains a promising avenue for future research. Furthermore, initiatives that promote cultural and cultural acceptance of linguistic diversity can have a positive impact on promoting integration and language proficiency.

In brief, safeguarding and advancing the Maguindanaon language form the foundation of preserving heritage in Cotabato City. Future efforts and initiatives should strive to foster an environment that embraces linguistic diversity and guarantees the preservation of cultural heritage.

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