

## Filipino in Periodismo: Analyzing the Common Practices of Tabloid Writers in News Writing Using Filipino Language



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**ABSTRACT:** This study is about the Filipino language in the field of journalism. The issue of spelling and guidelines in writing poses a great challenge to the National Language, which is why this study focuses on spelling in Filipino in writing news articles in tabloids. Using the Structuralism and Formalism concepts, 60 news articles from six (6) tabloids were analyzed based on the guidelines set in the *Manwal sa Masinop na Pagsulat (MMP)* (Manual on Proper Writing) by the Commission on the Filipino Language (Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF)) to determine the spelling and writing techniques used in tabloid news articles. In order to achieve the main objective of this paper, the researcher considered these steps: first, the news articles were analyzed through coding analysis based on the existing guidelines in the MMP; second, organized the coded data according to the MMP rules; lastly, six journalists were interviewed to determine the foundations of their practices in using Filipino language when writing news articles. In the researcher's analysis, it was found that almost all of the corpora used in tabloids conform to the guidelines recommended by the KWF's MMP. Although there are some words that do not fully conform to the guidelines, particularly those related to consonant clusters, substitution of E with I, O with U, and the use of hyphens. In the interviews conducted, it was revealed that the bases of the six journalists in using Filipino in writing news articles in tabloids is based on the readers' knowledge and familiarity in selecting and spelling words. Even tabloid editors still have the final decision on whether or not to accept the selected spellings of words. After getting the result, it is recommended to have a set of guidelines that all writers should follow to promote uniformity and standardization in writing in Filipino. This way, readers, especially students, will have a better understanding of proper spelling and writing in Filipino.

**KEYWORDS:** Tabloid, Journalism, News, Corpus, Coding, Filipino, Manwal sa Masin na Pagsulat (Manual on Proper Writing), Spelling Guide

### INTRODUCTION

In present times, mass media has strong influence in various aspects of human learning. Mass media plays a significant role in the family, community, religion or belief, and education (Tuazon). It serves as a channel or mechanism to communicate information that members of society should possess. One of the effective communication channels is reading materials or publications like newspapers or periodicals. Before television and radio emerged as a means of delivering information, newspapers were the primary medium of disseminating information to the public. It served as the eyes and ears of the society. Until now, even though various channels, and platforms have become rampant, newspapers and periodicals remain efficient because many people patronize them. Some people can be observed reading newspapers while they wait in public spaces or on public transportation, sip coffee at restaurants and workplaces, or in other settings (Danesi, 2002). The influence of newspapers on society cannot be denied because it is part of daily life. The traditional or common nature of newspapers in communication as a source of local, national, or even international news for readers is noticeable (Pandey, 2010). Newspapers are also an essential factor in implementing and communicating government policies and regulations (Onwubiko, 2005). They also serve as a reference and basis for daily news to promote awareness among ordinary citizens, employees, and students.

Newspapers are typically classified into two types—broadsheets and tabloids. While both provide information to the public, they have distinct characteristics and formats that set them apart. For example, broadsheets are typically larger in size compared to tabloids. Language is also a primary distinguishing factor between the two, with English being the language used in broadsheets and Filipino/vernacular in tabloids. Tabloids are often referred to as "newspapers for the masses" due to their use of Filipino language. Even though broadsheets have a bigger circulation than tabloids, many Filipinos find tabloids to be more appealing (Florendo et al., 2003).

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The role of language in journalism is important. According to Reah (1998), all information and details contained in periodicals are conveyed through language as a medium of communication. In writing news, language serves as an element in storytelling, sharing opinions, and conveying the feelings of others. Language is one of the bridges that enables us to communicate and receive messages from others. The proper selection and use of words greatly affect not only the meaning of the message but also the word form recognition of the person directly receiving the words or statement. The use of words in a statement is complicated as it has a significant effect not only on the message but also on the learning and knowledge of the person receiving the message. This is crucial in the media since word usage by journalists varies greatly and frequently leads to misunderstandings and word misuse.

Language is the primary tool of journalists and writers in tabloids to make their news, articles, and editorials effective. The role of journalists or writers is critical because if the use of language in writing news is not clear and proper, it will surely have an impact on the readers in how they use and interpret language. Virgilio Almario, Chairman of Commission on Filipino Language (Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino) compared good writing to excellent driving - that the writer should possess the same level of competence and handling expertise as a skilled driver to avoid causing issues or errors for readers or others.

*Kung ang magandang pagsulat ay may kaugnayan sa pag-imbento ng higit na mahusay na modelo ng kotse, ang masinop na pagsulat ay may kaugnayan lámang sa wastong pagmamaneho ng kotse. Tulad ng kotse ang wika. Tulad ng wika, hindi basta nagagamit ang kotse. Kailangang maalam ang tsuper sa pagpapaandar ng makina. Kailangang alam niya ang mga bahagi ng kotseng ginagamit sa pagmamaneho. Kailangang alam niya ang mga batas sa pagmamaneho upang hindi mabangga, makasagasa, o maaksidente. At upang hindi mahúli ng pulis (o editor?) dahil sa malaki man o munting paglabag sa batas trapiko (Virgilio Almario, 2014)*

*(If good writing is related to inventing a better car model, proper writing is only related to proper driving of the car. Like a car, language is not just a tool that can be used carelessly. The driver must be skilled in operating the machine, know the parts of the car used in driving, and be familiar with traffic laws to avoid collisions, hitting pedestrians, or having an accident. And to avoid being caught by the police (or editor?) for big or small traffic violations. (Virgilio Almario, 2014))*

Virgilio Almario's statement clearly explains that writing requires knowledge and mastery of the laws and rules of writing. Just like writers and journalists who write news in newspapers, particularly in tabloids, there is a high demand for proper writing because the meanings and concepts used in words are imprinted and ingrained in the minds of readers. Therefore, the focus of this study is on conventional writing habits, namely how Filipino words are written and spelled rather than word selection for captivating headlines. This can be considered one of the gaps in the study because many studies on tabloids usually focus on writing style as a form of sensationalism.

### Tabloid usage of Filipino

The use of Filipino language in tabloids has a significant impact on readers' language acquisition. In 2014, Bueza mentioned that the Filipino words used by tabloid journalists often have incorrect spelling or usage. The mentioned incorrect usage or spelling of words in Filipino, as pointed out by Bueza, which is commonly committed by media practitioners in newspapers, television, and online platforms, are based on the gathered words from the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (Commission on the Filipino Language). For example, the word "kung saan" (wherein) is frequently read and used by tabloid writers when reporting on police beats. For instance, "natagpuan ang labí ng isang lalaki sa kanto ng llang-ilang kung saan siya huling nakita" (the remains of a man were found in the corner of llang-ilang where he was last seen). In this sentence, the word "kung saan" is used to specify where he was last seen. While the meaning may be clear to the readers, a closer analysis reveals that its usage within the sentence is incorrect, as the term "kung saan" should only be used when the location is uncertain. For example, "hindi natin alam kung saang lupalop pinulot ng ating broadcasters ang kakatuwa nilang gamit ng kung saan" (we do not know from where our broadcasters picked up their amusing use of 'kung saan'). Aside from this particular word, tabloids also contain frequent misspellings such as "iba't-iba" instead of "iba't iba" (various), "kumpanya" instead of "kompanya" (company), and many others. According to Rappler's (2017) findings, commonly used words in tabloids include "aspeto" instead of "aspekto" (aspect), "imahe" instead of "imahen" (image), and the correct use of hyphens ("-") as seen in the word "de kalidad" (of quality) instead of "de-kalidad," as well as words derived from English, such as "i-(English word)." These are just a few examples of the many incorrectly used and misspelled words that can be found in tabloid publications.

Kilates (2013) emphasized in his article titled *Confused use of Filipino in Media perpetuates errors* that even a small grammatical or usage mistake, especially in the media, can lead to a complicated situation. This is not only because the information presented by news reporters may be incorrect, but also because the use of language and the way of expression itself can be erroneous.

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Kilates (2013) listed several Filipino terms that are commonly misused by many. One example is the frequent use in the media of the word "kagampan" or "kaganapan." According to him, it is important to understand that "kaganapan" means the fulfillment or realization of something, which can be translated as "fulfillment" in English. However, it is noticeable that journalists often use this word when the more appropriate term would be "pangyayari" or "event." Kilates regarded this habitual usage by news reporters as comical because they believe that the sound of this word is more appealing to listeners and viewers.

In Bueza (2014) report, he enumerated the Filipino terms that are frequently misused by authors, journalists, and other media professionals in newspapers, radio, and television. Bueza based his report on the lists of erroneous word usage in the media compiled by the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF), the government agency authorized to promote the correct usage of the Filipino language and other languages of the Philippines. The KWF not only serves as the authority on the Filipino language but also disseminates proper spelling and grammar through its publications and programs. Some of the words listed by the KWF include the following:

1. "dyaryo" vs. "diyaryo" – This word carries a diphthong 'ia' in its original form from Spanish, *diario*. According to the national orthography, in the case of diphthongs, the 'ia' is shortened to 'y.' Since there is no 'dy' cluster in Filipino, the correct spelling is "diyaryo."
2. "kaganapan" vs. "pangyayari" – It is a common mistake for journalists to use "kaganapan" when referring to events or occurrences. However, "kaganapan" means the fulfillment or completion of something, akin to the English term "fulfillment." The appropriate term to use when referring to events is "pangyayari."
3. "sa pagitan ng" – This phrase is a result of "Englishism" or following the sentence structure of English when translated into Filipino.
4. "aspeto" vs. "aspekto," "imahe" vs. "imahen" – The translations "aspeto" and "imahe" are incorrect. From their original forms in Spanish, which are *aspecto* and *imagen*, the correct spelling and translation should be "aspekto" and "imahen."
5. Hyphen (-) – The use of a hyphen is correct when combining affixes and English terms, such as "i-ban" (to ban) or "naka-SUV" (riding an SUV).

Meanwhile, in 1994, the Sentro ng Wikang Filipino (Center for Filipino Language) of the University of the Philippines initiated the Bantay-Wika (Language Watch) project to monitor the usage and development of the national language throughout the Philippines, particularly in the field of media. The project aims to observe the emergence of new words in the Filipino vocabulary, particularly in tabloids. As part of this project, a weekly transcription of articles written in Filipino from six widely circulated tabloid opinions is conducted. As a result, Bantay-Wika has recorded numerous and varied misspellings or orthographic variations of Filipino terms found in these articles, including issues such as the removal of /u/ in /uw/ in words like "kuwento/kwento" and /o/ versus /u/ in "kumpanya/kompanya," and others (Ilao, et al. 2011).

In Paul Morrow's (2013) article, "Speaking Proper Filipino," it is explained that many Filipino media practitioners use words to construct their articles without even consulting a dictionary when attempting to use the correct Filipino word. Morrow further mentioned the disagreement of linguists with political journalists and even academics when they use words that cannot be determined whether they originated from Spanish or English. This often occurs when they attempt to use what they believe to be correct terms in Filipino. Morrow listed these words, which Almario referred to as "siyokoy" words, such as *aspeto*, *konsernado*, *kontemporaryo*, *dayalogo*, *pesante*, and *prayoridad*.

The aforementioned studies serve as empirical evidence highlighting the conspicuous linguistic errors made by journalists in their utilization of the Filipino language. These errors manifest themselves at the orthographic level, pertaining to spelling, as well as in the careful selection of appropriate vocabulary. As elucidated in the earlier cited scholarly investigations, such linguistic usage patterns and readers' understanding and interpretation of the information transmitted by the media are significantly correlated.

### Language of Mass Media

In the domain of language, discourse, and media, it is widely acknowledged that apart from the content of the news, the choice of words employed by the writer in their reporting or communication significantly impacts the comprehension of news readers or listeners. This sentiment is conveyed by Pisarek (1983) in his statement:

The lexical surface of the language of a journalistic text reflects and at the same time impresses upon a reader a specific image of the world and attitude towards reality.

Based on the underlying meaning of Pisarek's statement, it becomes evident that in the selection of words, writers make decisions on how to present and enable readers to comprehend the information they are conveying.

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According to Fairclough (1995), the various uses of words originate from or are based on different ideological positions. Van Dijk (1988), on the other hand, asserts that most of the words used in newspapers are considered "opinion-controlled lexical choices." In connection with this, he further adds that the perspective and ideology of the journalist also have a significant influence, as expressed in his statement:

Lexical and semantic implications may involve evaluations based on the point of view and the ideology of the reporter.

Meanwhile, Roger Fowler's observations support the concepts of Fairclough and Van Dijk regarding the relationship between language and ideology. According to Fowler (1991), information presented in newspapers often relies on a particular ideology and perspective. He further contends that any expressions, whether oral or written, are conveyed based on a specific ideological position. As a result, the language used does not serve as a means to provide clarification of the message; instead, it can lead to deviation or misinterpretation.

In Fowler's perspective, it is implied that the significance of the "mode of presentation" is equivalent to the importance of "what is being presented" due to the linguistic elements attached to the words used. In relation to this, he emphasized that the process of selecting words in expression becomes natural (unintentional) as a result of the existing perspectives or ideologies of journalists or writers in reporting, while readers and listeners passively receive and utilize the words and information. Because of this, He regarded the idea of taking into account the grammatical and linguistic components of the words used in a presentation as a significant idea.

Through the review of literature and studies, the relationship between various aspects of language use in the media, particularly in periodicals or other forms of information dissemination platforms, has been analyzed by dissecting the perspectives and viewpoints of different scholars on significant topics in media language. Evaluating these perspectives of media language authors allowed researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the different concepts and ideas encompassed within the subject matter. The reviewed related studies and literature emphasized the manner in which language is used in the media, which affects the essence of the presented news, the readers' comprehension, and the intellectual and standardization aspects of the language itself. As stated by Bird (2002), in the essence of news writing/reporting, the style of language use influences the storytelling element, particularly in conveying various emotions such as joy, sadness, surprise, and fear. Broersma (2007) further added that the style in journalism is a choice ranging from the role in journalism to the role in the language used.

### **The Media from a Linguistic Perspective**

Thornborrow (2005) highlights a significant and intriguing aspect of the media's potential from a linguistic perspective, which pertains to how events are reported. According to Thornborrow, the media provides various means for individuals to access a vast amount of information and demonstrates the capacity of a powerful societal force.

Similarly, Prokopova's (2008) analysis of tabloid discourse or language reveals that tabloids constitute a distinct genre, deviating from conventional forms of writing. Tabloids lack the typical characteristics associated with formal writing. The language of tabloids can be considered a combination of written and spoken forms. Prokopova's analysis adopts a linguistic approach rather than a sociolinguistic one, focusing on the examination of lexical and grammatical structures. The primary objective of her study is to provide a qualitative understanding of the linguistic style of tabloids and its impact on readers.

In Reyes' (2010) study on Tagalog headline grammar, he examines the rules and characteristics of English and Tagalog headlines. He discovers that both English and Tagalog headlines share certain characteristics such as various forms of ellipsis and omissions, but they differ in sentence formation and aspects of verbs. Reyes also gathers 100 Tagalog headlines from four different Tagalog newspaper websites, namely Abante, Tonite, Radio Mindanao Star Ngayon, and Inquirer Libre. In his analysis of the collected corpora, he considers two important processes: (1) engaging in conversations with proficient Tagalog speakers and (2) comparing Tagalog headline grammar with the study conducted by Schachter and Otones (1972) on Tagalog grammar.

These aforementioned studies within the existing linguistic perspective on media elucidate how the media provides linguists with extensive access to study the characteristics, evolution, and variation of a particular language used in the media. The current study, focusing on the emerging use of the Filipino language in tabloid newspapers, contributes to the body of research on the linguistic examination of media.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The researcher's experience in reading newspapers was one of the reasons why this research was conducted. The primary objective of this study is to analyze the common practices of journalists in using the Filipino language in writing news articles for tabloids. Specifically, are the followings:

1. to identify the common practices of tabloid writers in writing news;

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2. to find out the basis of the knowledge of tabloid writers in spelling or writing news in the Filipino language; and
3. to determine whether the common practices of tabloid writers in accordance with the guidelines in the Manual on Proper Writing of the Commission on the Filipino Language, a legitimate language agency in the country responsible for setting language laws and guidelines.

### METHODOLOGY

In this paper, the researcher utilized a mixed method approach. According to Creswell (2007), mixed method refers to an approach in which qualitative and quantitative methods are combined in a single study. This allows for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of both types of data, thereby yielding a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Creswell emphasizes that mixed methods research entails more than simply collecting and analyzing data from different sources. It necessitates a thoughtful integration of qualitative and quantitative components, such as merging data during interpretation or using one method to inform the design of the other. The aim is to create a coherent and unified study that goes beyond mere data combination, enabling a more comprehensive analysis of the research problem.

In this study, a qualitative approach and a quantitative approach were employed to measure and categorize the corpora gathered from 60 news articles. For quantitative approach, the researcher quantifies the gathered corpora through coding process. For qualitative approach, structuralism and formalism perspectives of Roman Jakobson (1960) were utilized as the critical frameworks, focusing on the analysis of the form or structure of a text (corpus) rather than its content. The study drew heavily on the concept of *langue*, referring to the language system explained by Saussure within structuralism, and the form and style of language used in the text, as explained by formalism. These two main concepts served as the basis for analyzing news articles written in Filipino and published in tabloids.

As what mentioned above, the researcher utilized the method of coding to identify categories, develop concepts, and determine the main topic that encompasses all the gathered concepts. The categories, concepts, and main topic were the outcomes of three coding processes: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The primary respondents of this study were tabloid writers who produce written articles for six tabloid newspapers that use the Filipino language. The writers were selected from those who attended series and forums organized by the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (Commission on the Filipino Language) on proper usage of the Filipino language in writing.

The researcher also utilized the *Manwal sa Masinop na Pagsulat* (Manual on the Proper Writing) of Filipino by the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino as a reference for analyzing the corpus as a manual for writing in Filipino. Only ten guidelines were selected as the basis for analyzing the corpus from the 60 news articles obtained from six tabloids with significant circulation in the country—*Remate*, *PangMasa*, *Bandera*, *Pilipino Star Ngayon*, *Pilipino Mirror*, and *Balita*. These six tabloids were also represented by regular attendees of seminars conducted by the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino on the Filipino language. The news articles written by selected journalists from 2017 to 2018 were analyzed accordingly.

The news articles were analyzed based on the guidelines outlined in the Manual on Proper Writing (MMP), which consists of seventeen (17) sections/rules on spelling and writing in the Filipino language. The researcher only utilized ten (10) sections/rules from the MMP in analyzing the news articles written by tabloid writers.

The following 10 writing rules of the MMP were selected for the following reasons:

1. **Pagbaybay na Pasulat** (Written Spelling). This section includes guidelines on spelling applicable to the writing practices of journalists in tabloids. It is important to include this section in analyzing the traditional practices of writers because it recommends standard guidelines for using eight new letters in Filipino and spelling borrowed words, which are commonly used by writers when writing news articles in tabloids.
2. **Kasong Kambal-Patinig** (Vowel-Diphthong Alternation). This section contains guidelines on spelling words with diphthongs. It is important to include this section in analyzing the traditional practices of tabloid writers because there are often variations in the spelling of certain words, such as "dyaryo" or "diyaryo," "kwento" or "kuwento," and many others (Bueza, 2014).
3. **Kambal-Katinig at Digrapong SK, ST, SH, KT** (Consonant Clusters and Digraphs SK, ST, SH, KT). This section includes guidelines on the case of consonant clusters and digraphs. Although it can still be considered as a respelling, it specifically applies to words that commonly end in SK, ST, SH, KT. It is important to include this section because the use of digraphs is still part of written spelling in Filipino.
4. **Palitang E/I at O/U** (E/I and O/U interchange). This section contains guidelines on spelling certain words that involve the complicated use of E/I and O/U within a word. It is important to include this category in analyzing the traditional practices of tabloid writers because there are often variations in the spelling of certain words, such as "kumpanya" or "kompanya," "pulitiko" or "politiko," and many others (Ilao et al., 2011).

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5. **"ng" and "nang" usage.** This section refers to the rules on the use of "ng" and "nang." It is important to include this section because the usage and meaning of "ng" and "nang" in a sentence differ.
6. **Wastong gamit ng gitling (Proper Use of Hyphen).** This section includes guidelines on the proper use of hyphens. It is important to include this section in analyzing the traditional practices of tabloid writers because the form of hyphen used within a particular arrangement in a sentence or word may vary.
7. **Mga bantas (Punctuation Marks).** This section includes guidelines on the correct use of punctuation marks. It is important to include this section because punctuation marks are not solely focused on writing style. They have appropriate usage depending on the requirements of a sentence or word.
8. **Mga Bilang (Numbers).** This section includes guidelines on writing or spelling numbers. It is important to include this section in analyzing the traditional practices of tabloid writers because there are specific guidelines for writing numbers—when to use them "in figure" or "in words."
9. **Daglat, Inisyals, at Akronim (Abbreviations, Initials, and Acronyms).** This section includes guidelines on writing abbreviations, initials, and acronyms. It is important to include this section in analyzing traditional practices as writers often use abbreviations, initials, and acronyms when writing news as a way to shorten the overall length of the news article.
10. **Mga Pangalan at Katawagan (Names and Terms).** This section includes guidelines on the proper writing of names and terms for people, places, or organizations. It is important to include this section in analyzing the traditional practices of tabloid writers to understand the guidelines for using capital letters to emphasize a name.

### RESULTS OF THE STUDY

#### 1. Spelling Practices in Filipino of Selected Tabloids

##### 1.1 Common usage of the Filipino language by Tabloid *Bandera* writers

The spelling practices in Filipino used by the tabloid *Bandera* were examined based on an analysis of 10 categories (Guidelines), resulting in the identification of 25 codes. Out of the 25 codes, 19 codes or 76% of the total, adhered to or had correct spelling according to the guidelines. However, six codes or 24% of the total, were incorrect or did not follow the rules outlined in the MMP of the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF).

The author's writing and spelling practices in Filipino, based on the traditional approach to news writing, revealed that almost all of their practices in writing and spelling Filipino in each category were in accordance with the recommended guidelines of the KWF's MMP. However, three of their writing or spelling practices in Filipino did not conform to the MMP guidelines. These practices included writing "kustodiya" instead of "kustodya," using a space after a preceding sentence, using two dots for ellipsis instead of three dots, and writing proper nouns like "Charter change" and "chief Nicanor Faeldon" without capitalizing "change" and "chief."

##### 1.2 Common usage of the Filipino language by Tabloid *Balita* writers

The spelling practices in Filipino used by the tabloid *Balita* revealed that, based on the conducted examination across 10 defined categories (referred to as "Guidelines"), a total of 48 codes were identified. Among these codes, 43 codes or equivalent to 90% of the total, demonstrated adherence to the prescribed orthographic standards, as outlined in the MMP published by the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF). However, five codes or accounting for 10% of the total, deviated from these established guidelines, displaying incorrect or did not follow the rules/guidelines of the spelling manual.

Analyzing the author's writing and spelling practices in Filipino, rooted in the conventional approach to news writing, it became evident that the majority of their practices in writing and spelling Filipino across various categories aligned with the recommended guidelines outlined in the KWF's MMP. Nevertheless, two specific writing or spelling practices deviated from the prescribed MMP guidelines. These practices included the usage of "istasyon" instead of "estasyon" and the inclusion of a hyphen in "20-anyos" where it should not be present.

##### 1.3 Common usage of the Filipino language by Tabloid *PangMasa* writers

The spelling practices in Filipino used by the tabloid *PangMasa* revealed that, based on the conducted analysis across 10 defined categories (referred to as "Guidelines"), a total of 112 codes were identified. Among these codes, 100 codes or equivalent to 89% of the total, demonstrated adherence to the prescribed orthographic standards, as outlined in the MMP published by the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF). However, 12 codes, accounting for 11% of the total, displaying incorrect or did not follow the rules/guidelines of the spelling manual.

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Analyzing the author's writing and spelling practices in Filipino, rooted in the conventional approach to news writing, it became evident that the majority of their practices in writing and spelling Filipino across various categories aligned with the recommended guidelines outlined in the KWF's MMP. However, there were five specific writing or spelling practices that deviated from the prescribed MMP guidelines. These practices include:

- Using "hinostage" instead of "binihag" (although the journalist may argue that the translation "binihag" is not exact)
- Using "otoridad" instead of "awtoridad"
- Using "ilgal" instead of "ilegal"
- Using "paksyon" and "direksyon" instead of "paksiyon" and "direksiyon"
- Using "sunud-sunod" and "abug-abog" instead of preserving the letter "o" when repeating
- Using "de motor" instead of hyphenating it
- Using "7 pinaghihinalang" instead of spelling out the number (like "seven") since it is less than ten.

### **1.4 Common usage of the Filipino language by Tabloid *Remate* writers**

The analysis of the orthographic practices employed in Filipino by the tabloid publication *Remate* reveals that, based on the examination of 10 categories (referred to as "Guidelines"), a total of 117 codes were identified. Among these codes, 94 codes or equivalent to 80% of the total, demonstrated adherence to the prescribed orthographic standards, as outlined in the MMP published by the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF). However, 23 codes, accounting for 20% of the total, displaying incorrect or did not follow the rules/guidelines of the spelling manual

Examining the author's writing and spelling practices in Filipino, rooted in the conventional approach to news writing, it becomes evident that the majority of their writing and spelling in Filipino across various categories align with the recommended guidelines outlined in the KWF's MMP. However, there are several specific writing or spelling practices that deviate from the prescribed MMP guidelines. These practices include:

- Spelling "kabuang" instead of "kabuoang" because the 'O' is not changed to 'U' in consecutive 'UO' within a word.
- Replacing "O" with "U" even when there is no change in the consonant within the word, as seen in "kumpara" and "bumbero" instead of "kompara" and "bombero."
- Omitting the hyphen in "de edad," which should be "menor de-edad."
- Using "gatlang en or en dash" instead of "gatlang em or em dash" in certain parts of the news, such as "Manila, Philippines – Nasabat."
- Writing "Roa Duterte" in lowercase instead of capitalizing the "p" in "pangulo."
- Writing the initials of "new people's army" in lowercase instead of capital letters.

### **1.5 Common usage of the Filipino language by Tabloid *Pilipino Star Ngayon* writers**

The spelling practices in Filipino used by the tabloid *Pilipino Star Ngayon* reveals that, based on the analysis of 10 categories (referred to as "Guidelines"), a total of 81 codes were identified. Among these codes, 71 codes or equivalent to 88% of the total, demonstrated adherence to the prescribed orthographic standards, as outlined in the MMP published by the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF). However, 10 codes or accounting for 12% of the total, displaying incorrect or did not follow the rules/guidelines of the spelling manual.

Examining the author's writing and spelling practices in Filipino, rooted in the conventional approach to news writing, it becomes evident that the majority of their writing and spelling in Filipino across various categories align with the recommended guidelines outlined in the KWF's MMP. However, there are several specific writing or spelling practices that deviate from the prescribed MMP guidelines. These practices include:

- Using "imahe" instead of "imahen."
- Spelling "kontrobersyal" and "korapsyon" instead of "kontrobersiyal" and "korapsiyon."
- Spelling "ganun" instead of "ganoon."
- Using a hyphen in "iba't-ibang" when it should be written without a hyphen.
- Omitting the hyphen in "de edad," which should be "menor de-edad."

### **1.6 Common usage of the Filipino language by Tabloid *Pilipino Mirror* writers**

The spelling practices in Filipino used by the tabloid *Pilipino Mirror* reveals that, based on the analysis of 10 categories (referred to as "Guidelines"), a total of 94 codes were identified. Among these codes, 83 codes or equivalent to 88% of the total, demonstrated adherence to the prescribed orthographic standards, as outlined in the MMP published by the Komisyon sa Wikang

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Filipino (KWF). However, 11 codes, accounting for 12% of the total, deviated from displaying incorrect or did not follow the rules/guidelines of the spelling manual.

Examining the established orthographic practices in Filipino within the tabloid, it becomes evident that the majority of the author's writing and spelling practices in Filipino across various categories align with the recommended guidelines outlined in the KWF's MMP. However, three of their practices deviate from the prescribed MMP guidelines, including:

- Spelling words like "ininspeksiyon" (ininspeksiyon), "inanunsiyo" (inanunsiyo), "aksiyon" (aksiyon), and "hurisdiksiyon" (hurisdiksiyon) where consonant clusters were formed due to the removal of the initial vowel. Additionally, the spelling of "nagmamatiyag" is incorrect as there should be no "i" between the /t/ and /y/ sounds.
- Spelling "kumpara" instead of "kompara" and "emosyunal" instead of "emosyonal." The O should not change to U in these words since there are no changing consonants within the word.
- Using a hyphen in "pag-patay" when it should be written without a hyphen.

### Percentage of tabloid writers who adhered to the use of Filipino based on the MMP

Categories (Orthographics rules)	conforming to the MMP		not conforming to the MMP	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Category (rule) 1: Pagbaybay na Pasulat (Written Spelling)	6	100%	0	0%
Category (rule) 2: Kasong Kambal-Patinig (Vowel-Diphthong Alternation)	6	100%	0	0%
Category (rule) 3: Kambal-katinig at Digrapong SK, ST, SH, KT (Consonant Clusters and Digraphs SK, ST, SH, KT)	3	50%	0	0%
Category (rule) 4: Palitang E/I at O/U (E/I and O/U Interchange)	5	83%	1	17%
Category (rule) 5: "ng" at "nang" ("ng" and "nang" usage)	6	100%	0	0%
Category (rule) 6: Wastong Gamit ng Gitling (Proper Use of Hyphen)	5	83%	1	17%
Category (rule) 7: Mga Bantas (Punctuation Marks)	3	50%	1	17%
Category (rule) 8: Mga Bilang (Numbers)	6	100%	0	0%
Category (rule) 9: Daglat, Inisyals, at Akronim (Abbreviations, Initials, and Acronyms)	5	83%	1	17%
Category (rule) 10: Mga Pangalan at Katawagan (Names and Terms)	5	83%	1	17%

It has emerged that, from the 10 categories (guidelines) analyzed to elucidate the established practices of six (6) tabloid writers—four (4) of whom achieved a perfect score of 100%—among the six (6) tabloids, there are practices that adhere to the categories or guidelines outlined in the MMP. These categories include: 1) Written Spelling, 2) Vowel-Diphthong Alternation 5) "ng" and "nang," and 8) Numbers. Following closely are four (4) categories (guidelines): 4) E/I and O/U Interchange, 6) Proper Use of Hyphen, 9) Abbreviations, Initials, and Acronyms, and 10) Names and Terms, wherein five (5) out of the six (6) tabloid writers adhered to traditional practices aligned with the guidelines outlined in the MMP. On the other hand, three (3) tabloid writers, or 50% adhered to the category (guideline) 3) Consonant Clusters and Digraphs, and 7) Punctuation Marks, while the remaining three (3) journalists did not utilize these categories in the news articles upon analysis.

### Summary of the Filipino Writing/Spelling Practices in News Writing in Tabloids Based on the Guidelines of the MMP

It has been discovered that tabloid writers employed the following practices when using Filipino in writing news article:



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- a. Borrowed words are written in Filipino spelling, except for "imahe," which should be written as "imahen," and "hinostage," which can be written as "binihag."
- b. The original form is maintained when the word is difficult to immediately respell.
- c. The E is not changed to I at the end of a word and is maintained.
- d. In the word "istasyon" derived from the Spanish "estacion," the E at the beginning is changed to I.
- e. The O at the end of a word is replaced with U if it is followed by a suffix, except for words with double O.
- f. The O is replaced with U when there is a consonant change within the word, except for the words "emosyunal" and "kumpara," which were changed despite no consonant change.
- g. The O is replaced with U in repeated words, such as "sunud-sunod" and "abug-abog."
- h. The word "suspek" (from English "suspect") is written in Filipino without a /t/ at the end.
- i. Words with twin vowels are written in a manner that does not remove the first vowel in the twin vowel if it is in the first syllable.
- j. The first vowel is removed, resulting in a consonant cluster within the word, such as "kontrobersyal," "korapsyon," "kontrobersiyal," "ininspeksyon," "inanunsiyo," "aksyon," and "hurisdiksiyon."
- k. "Nang" is used to indicate manner and time.
- l. A hyphen is used when affixing the borrowed word while retaining its original form.
- m. A hyphen is used to separate the consonant and vowel.
- n. A hyphen is used when a cardinal number is prefixed with "anyos."
- o. A hyphen is used to denote time when the word "alas" is attached.
- p. A non-breaking en dash with space is used between successive sentences.
- q. Numbers are written in numeral form for numbers greater than ten.
- r. Proper nouns are written with capital

### **2. Bases of Journalists' Knowledge in Spelling or Writing in the Filipino Language in Tabloid News**

When it comes to using Filipino in news reporting, a significant portion of tabloid writers' knowledge does not come from any guidebook such as MMP of the KWF; instead, it comes from what they have learned from communication and media programs in college. The writing style of tabloid writers is influenced by their extensive experience and familiarity in writing in Filipino. They also take into consideration the knowledge and familiarity of their readers when selecting and spelling words. Moreover, the decision to accept or reject selected word spellings still lies with the editor. In the end, although they do not directly refer to the MMP, tabloid writers still believe in the necessity of having guidelines that all writers should base and adhere to, in order to achieve consistent and standardized Filipino writing. Through this approach, readers, especially students, will have a better grasp of proper spelling and writing in the Filipino language.

### **3. Adherence to the guidelines of the MMP in the observed spelling practices of tabloid writers**

In general, it has been found that almost all practices in writing and spelling in Filipino of the tabloid writers aligned with the recommended guidelines of the MMP by the KWF. However, there are certain guidelines in the MMP that are not fully followed by the observed practices, particularly in terms of Vowel-Diphthong Alternation and Consonant Clusters and Digraphs. The interchange of E with I and O with U is not consistently applied according to the guidelines. Even in the use of hyphens, while many writers adhere to the recommended practices, there are consistent errors in their usage, such as "anyos" being spelled with a hyphen when it should not have one, while "de edad" and "de motor" should have hyphens.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the findings of the conducted study on the structure, form, and usage of Filipino in writing news for tabloids, this study presents the following conclusions:

1. Although journalists do not directly consult the MMP of the KWF, the majority of the discovered practices in their use of Filipino in news writing aligned with the recommended guidelines of the MMP by the KWF.
2. The two guidelines in the MMP that are not fully followed by journalists or exhibit inconsistent usage are the guidelines regarding vowel-diphthongs in Filipino and the use of hyphens.
3. Similar to the perspectives of Fairclough (1995) and Fowler (1991) on various ideological positions, the influence of a writer's viewpoint and ideology is significant in their mode of expression. This was also evident in interviews conducted with journalists, where their basis for using Filipino is influenced by what they learned from their studies in media and communication programs during college.

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4. It also emerged that tabloid writers consider the familiarity of readers with spelling or words when using Filipino.
5. Based on the result of the study, the style followed by the publication or the chief editor of the publication also affects the final output.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the presented conclusions of the study, the researcher suggests the following:

1. The Commission on the Filipino Language (Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino) should intensify its campaign for adherence to the standard guidelines for writing in Filipino as outlined in the MMP. This can be done through the organization of regular forums and seminars for journalists and editors to continuously enhance their knowledge of writing in Filipino.
2. It is also recommended to incorporate teachings and improvements in Filipino language usage and adherence to writing guidelines in communication and media programs in schools and institutions. This would promote consistency and standardized use of Filipino in media. By doing so, the media can contribute to increasing the knowledge of readers, especially students, in proper spelling and writing in the Filipino language.
3. Further, it is suggested to promote the standard guidelines for Filipino in schools, starting with teachers and students, as this is where the foundational knowledge of journalists originates.
4. For future researchers, it is also recommended to conduct studies related to this topic that focus on understanding the level of awareness among journalists regarding the guidelines in the MMP for writing in Filipino.
5. Additionally, exploring the perceptions of newspaper readers regarding standardized writing in Filipino could provide valuable topic for future study.

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