



LANGUAGE DISTRIBUTION IN THE PROVINCE OF APAYAO

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the distribution of languages in Apayao Province and found that Ilocano and Isneg are the most commonly spoken languages across its municipalities. Locals use these languages as their primary or secondary means of communication, indicating their essential role in community interactions. Furthermore, the prevalence of multiple secondary languages in specific locations indicates a highly multilingual environment, implying the presence of numerous indigenous and cultural groups. This multilingual setting showcases Apayao's cultural variety and the harmonious coexistence of its linguistic communities.

The findings reveal that Apayao's linguistic diversity enriches the cultural landscape and provides significant opportunities for language preservation. To support this, the study encourages the Apayao people, particularly those in authority, to create educational materials, collaborate with cultural groups, and organize language festivals and workshops. Furthermore, cultural activities that include native traditions, songs, and dances may help preserve indigenous languages and strengthen Apayao's cultural identity for future generations.

Keywords: *Language Distribution, Language Diversity, Cultural Identity, Indigenous languages, Primary languages, Secondary languages*

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the treasures that the Philippines has, is to have a variety of languages and dialects that served as our identity and be part of our communication in daily lives. As per the data of Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino, the Philippines has approximately 120 to 180 different languages spoken. Filipino, a standardized version of Tagalog, is the country's official language and is taught in schools across the country. Both Filipino and English are official languages.



Truly, the Philippines has a lot of languages and dialects to speak because of its cultural and linguistic diversity, Linguistic diversity varies from region to region. Some of the most multilingual regions are also the most physically rugged and home to more indigenous peoples. Just like in north Luzon, myriad languages are spoken; including dozens of dialects in the Cordillera Administrative Region alone. This region comprises the following provinces: Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Kalinga, Ifugao, and Mountain Province. The mountains of the Cordillera are an island of linguistic diversity amidst a sea of Ilocano-speaking provinces; this is the reason why people are far more likely to understand Ilocano or English than the national language which is Tagalog.

Apayao is one of the provinces in the Cordillera Administrative Region. At present, in terms of geographical and political reference, the province is divided into Upper and Lower Apayao. Upper Apayao has three towns namely: Calanasan, Kabugao, and Conner. It has a mountainous topography characterized by towering peaks, plateaus, and intermittent patches of valleys. On the other hand, Lower Apayao has four towns which are Luna, Flora, Pudtol, and Sta, Marcela. These municipalities are generally flat, with rolling mountains and plateaus.

Various ethno linguistic communities or tribal groups including other indigenous groups such as Isnags, Ilocano, Itneg, Kalinga, Kankanaey, Malaueg, and Tagalog is a resident of the province. The Isnag is considered as the original yApayaos and the rest of the tribal groups or Indigenous Peoples (IPs) like Kankanaeys, Kalingas, Bontoks, Ifugao, Ibalois, Itnegs/Tinguians, Bago, Malauegs, Ibanags, and Itawes are considered as migrants of the province. The diversity of the culture in the province symbolizes diversity in the local language spoken and written.

This study investigated at which municipality of the province are predominately home to particular languages to understand the distribution of languages in Apayao. This shed light on Apayao's linguistic variety and regional dispersion trends. Investigating the causes and justifications given by the locals for their language preferences is crucial to fully comprehend these processes.



2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Language as always said, is an important part of communication which is a primary feature of all cultures. As language changed over time, many cultural groups incorporated words into their common understandings. Over time, these words and their associated meanings gained prominence, culminating in the emergence of language. Intercultural communication is a symbolic process for creating, preserving, and transforming social reality. One of the most significant problems that people from different ethnic origins have while conversing is language. (Tupas & Lorente, 2014).

Language Distribution and Language Mapping

The early interest of geographers in linguistic maps, as well as the employment of geographical markers to designate language-speaking zones, lay the groundwork for linguistic mapping.

Geographers were the first to create linguistic maps because they were interested in knowing the distribution of various languages. Sebastian Münster, a cartographer, utilized topographical markers to indicate to language-speaking regions. For instance, "between River X and Mountain Range Y, you will discover that groups A, B, and C speak language Z as a common language." This is an example of how early cartographers referred to language-speaking regions. This is a tactic that early explorers with little linguistic knowledge would have used in describing the surrounding geography and its inhabitants. Gottfried Hensel (1741), utilized maps to demonstrate the linguistic diversity found in different locations. Based on his studies, Hensel was among the first to build maps of language diversity. He portrayed the various ways in which the Lord's Prayer was recited throughout Europe on his maps.

With the same view, Edmond Halley mapped the magnetic currents of the earth, commonly refer to as an isogonic map, in 1701 in an effort to improve the ability of sailors to navigate the oceans. Subsequently, the used of maps for practical reasons became a bit popular. Not long, the cartographers were interested in human spatial phenomena such as social demography, which led to the development of themed maps. As a direct result of this, maps were eventually utilized in illustrating many facets of human existence that includes



ones language. These maps are examples of themed maps that concentrate on specific subjects.

Many aspects of a given territory's linguistic situation can be represented using language maps. They frequently depict certain perspectives on the linguistic setting as perceived from the outside, linguists and other researchers, for example (Iannaccaro, 2011). Maps, on the other hand, can be used to depict the geographical distribution of perceptions of speakers on language variation.

In a wider context, language has been studied worldwide through the lens of language mapping. Ritchie, et. al. (2016) discussed language mapping in general, as well as the several types of language maps that exist today. When geographers wanted to communicate the exact description of a physical site, and its visual style in the seventeenth century, linguistic mapping was born as a tradition. This custom dates back to the era in question.

Drude (2018) stressed that existing language maps (maps intended to represent language localization) can often exhibit mostly non-overlapping areas or single dots. He said this is because current language maps are not as accurate as they might be. Both of these options are inadequate in light of the significantly more complicated, language users and language speakers are distributed geographically. In the future, maps should take into consideration persons who speak many languages, as well as diglossia and different geographic locations. The patterns of linguistic domains that are used and have meaning provide the conceptual underpinning. Each language requires a sizable collection of maps for a variety of domains, which must then be integrated (through an overlay or other more complex approaches) in order to produce either a single language or numerous languages. The use of interactive maps can either enable access or provide information to extra information from the outside world or enable the depiction of changes over time.

Since the beginning of this century, geographical distribution of languages has gained linguistic interest and so has the diversity of languages across regions and countries. This interest reached its first high during the first decade of this century. With the present emphasis being placed on immigration and growth by "hyper-diverse" communities that speak many languages, there is now the possibility for a new impetus (King & Carson, 2016).



In many societies including the public and private, new members want to know which languages are spoken. In addition, how they could communicate with people who were visiting or setting in a new place and what linguistic competencies they brought with them, which could either or break their success in a matrix society.

Language maps usually divide geographic regions into sections with each section specifying which language is spoken there (it could be a continent, country, or even the entire world). The meaning of “is spoken” is not always clear; it has been interpreted as “is widely used,” “has official status,” or even “is spoken at all” (meaning: implying, at the very least, that it is spoken), “people who know this language are/were living there”) The first scenario often applies to official languages and national languages, whereas the second scenario typically applies to minority and indigenous languages; as a result, these languages could show up on language maps despite the fact that very few people actually use them (Barrot et al., 2022).

It is common for geographical regions to be segmented into such groupings so that each (land) area correspond to a particular linguistic group. These regions are often shown as “polygon forms” filled in with a particular color or pattern. As a result of their monochromatic nature, they do not have internal variation, meaning that no additional variations, such as population density, can be produced. This is because there is no way to differentiate between them (Reid, 2018; Benson, 2022).

However, in a deeper sense of language mapping, Yang, et. al. (2017) in their study on the “Commonalities and differences in the neural representations of English, Portuguese, and Mandarin sentences: When knowledge of brain-language mappings for two languages is better than one” it was found that a classifier trained to categorize sentences in a single language. It indicates that brain representation of concepts include both universals and language specificities. This indicates the presence of both universals and language specificities in brain representations of concepts.

Language usage as well as its association with affective well-being were investigated in the study of bilingual and bicultural teenagers in Indonesia, “Affective well-being in bilingual adolescents from three ethnic groups in Indonesia” (Sari et. al 2019). The study included selected Javanese, Toraja, and Chinese adolescents aged 14 years old. According to



Sari et. al. (2019), to investigate the connections between the use of language, vocabulary knowledge, and affective well-being, a mediation model was tested. The study discovered group disparities in vocabulary, the usage of language, and its acquisition, but the associations between language knowledge and usage and affective well-being were consistent across ethnic groups. Notably, use of the national language was favorably associated with affective well-being, whereas use of ethnic languages had no discernible impact on emotional well-being. This study demonstrates the effects of bilingualism on well-being vary depending on the situation, and that various features of bilingualism, just like the use of language inside the home, public places, or knowledge of the language, might have varied effects on affective well-being depending on the environment. Affective well-being among three ethnic groups of bilingual teenagers in Indonesia.

In the same manner, Creese (2005) investigated two alternative approaches to community analysis in a multicultural secondary school in London. The first method is linguistic anthropology-based, came from Hymes and Gumperz's concept of a speech community. There is now a second strategy, involving the community of practice, which is increasingly used in management studies and the business sector. Despite the study's emphasis on a shared repertoire, it asserts that the community of practice lacks a comprehensive philosophy of language use. In contrast, the concept of a speech community, which is rooted in linguistic anthropology, provides a more comprehensive framework for comprehending the complex interplay of signs and symbols in language. Language, according to this viewpoint, is intrinsically social and serves a variety of cultural roles, making it a cultural artifact linked to human organization and civilization. The research focuses on the methodological aspects of applying these two techniques to evaluate ethnographic data from a multicultural school, finally revealing the advantages of the linguistic anthropological tradition in explaining language use in this environment.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study used the qualitative research design, and Thematic Analysis to investigate Apayao's linguistic landscape. To collect relevant data, the study used a purposive sampling approach combined with a researcher-created interview questionnaire. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observations were used to gather data



from the community people. This strategy allowed the researcher to record a diverse range of perspectives, increasing the depth and richness of the data acquired.

The study sample consisted a total of 84 respondents having selected twelve (12) respondents from each municipality. A comprehensive language mapping was conducted throughout Apayao's seven municipalities, namely: Calanasan, Conner, Kabugao, Sta. Marcela, Flora, Pudtol, and Luna.

4. RESULTS

Understanding the frequently spoken languages in Apayao necessitates diving into two critical aspects: first, investigating the languages spoken at home provides insights into the province's cultural heritage and local identities, which are profoundly based in family context. Second, analyzing language preferences for daily interactions demonstrates how these languages are utilized realistically in a variety of social circumstances, providing a comprehensive picture of their function in creating community cohesiveness across Apayao's municipalities.

Language(s) Spoken at Home

The heart of communication lies within the walls of homes. Families converse, share stories, and express their emotions using a diverse array of languages. Understanding the languages spoken at home within Apayao Province provides valuable insights into the province's cultural and linguistic landscape. This study focused on the various languages used by different groups in their households, reflecting the unique linguistic diversity of Apayao. By examining the home languages of the participants across multiple municipalities, we gained a clearer picture of how historical, cultural, and social factors shape the province's linguistic identity.

The existence of many languages in the different areas of Apayao indicates a diverse, multicultural landscape in which various ethnic groups coexist and interact regularly. This complex interaction of cultural and linguistic identities emphasizes the province's dynamic variety. In this study, it delved into the languages that resonate in the intimate spaces of Apayao homes. Here are some statements that reflect the participants' responses regarding



the languages they primarily use at home. These insights provide a clearer understanding of their language preferences within their households:

Luna's usage of Ilocano at home demonstrates its importance as a primary language of communication, rooted in her upbringing and cultural identity. *"Kua ma'am, Ilocano ti ussaren mi nga pagsasao ijay balay kasi isu ti dimmakkelan mi nga pagsasao"* ("It's like this ma'am, we use Ilocano at home because this is our dialect since we were young"). This statement emphasizes the cultural and familial influences that form Luna's language. The speaker states that they speak Ilocano at home because it is the dialect they grew up with. This demonstrates the intergenerational transmission of language, with Ilocano being passed down as the primary language in the family. The use of Ilocano in everyday life demonstrates how local languages retain their strength and impact, even in multilingual areas, highlighting the close relationship between language, identity, and family tradition.

Flora's household language practice, which alternates between Kalinga and Ilocano, reflects a mix of linguistic traditions, with Ilocano dominating. *"Hmm kua ag-Kalinga kami kasi ni mama ket Kalinga pero most of the time ket Ilocano met lang ti us-usaren mi."* translates to, *"Hmm we speak in Kalinga sometimes because mama is from Kalinga but most of the time, we speak in Ilocano."* This highlights the importance of family background on language use, with Kalinga associated with cultural identity and Ilocano, the region's most widely spoken language, dominating their daily contacts. The choice of language illustrates how people balance cultural legacy and practical communication demands, demonstrating linguistic blending and coexistence within families and communities.

Conner's experience switching between Malaueg and Ilocano at home demonstrates the flexibility and adaptability of language use in a multilingual family setting. *"Aglala-ok ngay ma'am, nu maminsan ket agsao kami Malaueg tunno kuan eh Ilocano tu maninen"* translates to, *"It's a mix of languages ma'am, sometimes we speak in Malaueg then later, Ilocano again."* This sentence demonstrates Conner's linguistic diversity, as the speaker alternates between Malaueg and Ilocano. The speaker tells how they alternate between the two languages based on the situation. This demonstrates the impact of language interaction in the area, as Conner is physically close to Malaueg-speaking areas such as Rizal and Cagayan, as well as Ilocano-speaking districts. Language mixing demonstrates how



individuals in multilingual communities frequently use multiple languages interchangeably, impacted by social context, regional proximity, and daily interactions, displaying the natural blending of cultural and linguistic influences.

Sta. Marcela's statement implies that Ilocano is the only language spoken at home, highlighting its exclusivity and the absence of other languages in daily interactions, such as this statement: *"Isu lang ammo mi nga pagsasao ti Ilocano ma'am, awan ti sabalin hahaha!"* translates to *"Ilocano is the only language we know ma'am, and no other else hahaha!"* This statement emphasizes Ilocano's dominance in Sta. Marcela, in which the speaker playfully states that Ilocano is the only language they know. It demonstrates how regional language influences communication, as Ilocano is the primary language spoken in the area, restricting exposure to other languages. This demonstrates how local linguistic contexts can lead to a strong affinity for a single dominant language.

Pudtol's utterance confirms the household's strong affiliation with the Ilocano language, emphasizing a deep cultural and linguistic bond with being Ilocano: *"Ilocano kami nga talaga idiy balay ma'am"* translates to, *"We really are Ilocanos at home ma'am."* This remarks the strong Ilocano identity inside the Pudtol household, with the speaker emphasizing that Ilocano is the primary language spoken by the family. It demonstrates how language influences cultural identity, with Ilocano profoundly embedded in both family life and daily communication, establishing the link between language, home, and regional tradition.

In addition, Kabugao, Calanasan and Conner also exhibit great linguistic diversity, with Isnag and Ilocano being one of the predominant languages spoken at home by the participants. The different language patterns illustrate the varied cultural and social dynamics within each municipality, highlighting Apayao Province's rich and diversified linguistic legacy. Here are sample conversations with participants:

Kabugao's discourse exemplifies a dual-language practice at home, in which Isnag and Ilocano are utilized in general, *"Eyy ahm... ag-Ilocano kami sagpaminsan ma'am pero nu dakami lang ken dagiti annak ko ti adda balay ket ag-Isnag kami ah talaga."* translates to, *"Sure ma'am... eyy... we speak in Ilocano but if we are just alone with the kids, we really speak in Isnag."* This implies that, while Ilocano is the public or general language, Isnag



retains its significance and usage within the family, demonstrating a strong cultural and linguistic tie to Isnag in personal circumstances. Catama et al.'s (2016) study on the difficulty of preserving a heritage language is closely related to the current study's findings. P3-Kabugao's practice of switching between Ilocano and Isnag at home symbolizes the fight to conserve a heritage language (Isnag) in the face of a more frequently used language (Ilocano). This emphasizes the broader difficulty emphasized by the authors, that retaining a heritage language within a multilingual environment necessitates a purposeful effort to balance and preserve its use in personal and familial settings.

However, other participants stated that they use different languages at home, deciding which language to speak based on personal preference or the context of the interaction. This demonstrates the flexibility and diversity of their language use within the household. Here are some sample statements:

Conner's comment, *"Eh, kua ma'am... kumporme usaren mi ngay, kasla kuma nu Ilocano ti inusar ko agdamag ket Ilocano met sungbat da. Pero nu Igorot panagdamag ko ket sumungbat da met ti Igorot. Or nu maminsan ket sumungbat da met ti Malaueg. Awan ti kusto nga usaren mi ngay ma'am hehehe"* translates to, *"Eh, it's like this ma'am... we use varied languages, for example when I used Ilocano in asking them, then they also answer me back in Ilocano. If I ask them in Igorot, they also answer me back in Igorot. But sometimes they answer me back in Malaueg. There's no specific language that we are using ma'am hehehe."* This exemplifies a flexible and context-dependent approach to language use at home, in which language choice varies depending on the occasion and the language spoken by others. This demonstrates a flexible multilingual setting in which people switch languages depending on who they are speaking with and what they need to communicate, rather than sticking to a single language.

Luna says that the language they use at home is determined by their location. *"Nu adda kami balay da Apong mi idiyay upper ket agsao kami ti Isnag ngem nu agawid kami ditoy balay mi ditoy lower ket siyempre ag-Ilocano kami nu kua"* translates to, *"When we are at our grandparents' house in the upper, we speak Isnag, but when we come home to our house here in the lower, of course we speak in Ilocano."* When they visit their grandparents in upper Apayao, they speak Isnag, reflecting on their cultural background.



When they return to their own house in lower Apayao, they speak Ilocano, which is more widely spoken. This demonstrates their household's bilingualism, with language choice influenced by both family and geographical setting. Fishman's (1991) study on language shift and maintenance investigates how language use adjusts to different circumstances, illustrating how languages can be kept or shifted based on social and situational factors. This lends support to the observation of diverse language use in different situations, emphasizing the adaptability of language practices.

Sta. Marcela mentions a limited use of other languages outside occasional Tagalog, *"Ilocano lang kanayon ma'am, kasi madi mi met ammo ti agsao iti sabali, except ti Tagalog nu maminsan"* translates to, *"We always speak Ilocano only ma'am, because we don't know how to speak other languages except for Tagalog sometimes"*; whereas, Calanasan, *"Oray nu Isnag kami ay magsau kami mah latta ka Ilocano ka balay mi"* translates to, *"Uray nu Isnag kami, ket ag-Ilocano kami latta idiy balay"* in Ilocano, and *"Even we are Isnag, we still speak Ilocano at home"* in English, highlight regular use of Ilocano at home, regardless of ethnicity or location. The statements show a strong preference for speaking Ilocano in a variety of circumstances, even among those who identify with other languages such as Isnag.

Grosjean's (2010) research on bilingualism and multilingualism investigates how people navigate and use several languages in different circumstances. It focuses on the dynamics of language use in multilingual environments, demonstrating how one language can dominate in some areas of life, such as at home or work, even when other languages are spoken. This is comparable to the current survey, in which Ilocano is the most commonly spoken language at home, despite the presence of other languages. Both studies highlight how primary languages can survive in multilingual settings, demonstrating language use's adaptability and context-dependence.

Ilocano is widely spoken in Luna, although Sta. Marcela locals speak both Ilocano and Tingguian (Igorot) at home. Flora's residents speak Ilocano and Aeta, whereas Ilocano, Isnag, and Kalinga are often spoken in Pudtol. Conner has the most variety of languages, including Ilocano, Isnag, Malaueg, Kalinga, and Igorot. Isnag is primarily used at home by Kabugao



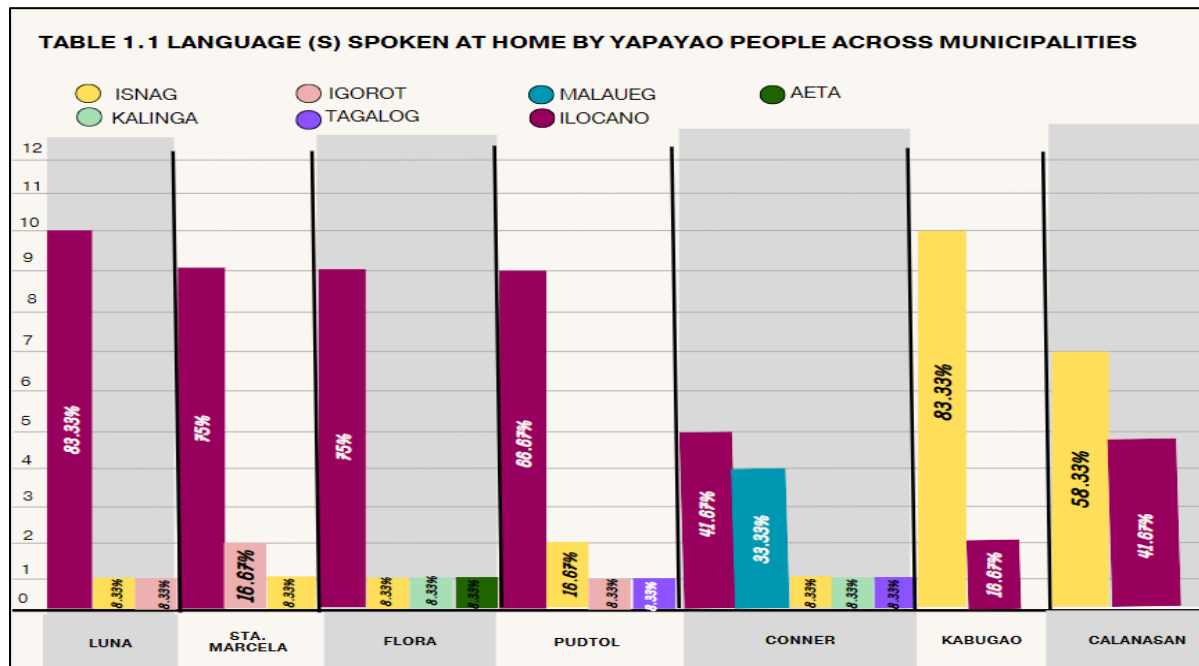
and Calanasan. This linguistic diversity reflects Apayao's diverse cultural fabric, which is molded by the coexistence and interplay of many languages.

Luna, *"Napeklan kami nga Ilocano madam, isu nga dayta latta met ah ti pagsasao mi ah kanayun."* translates to, *"We are natives of Ilocano madam, that is why it's always our language."* and Kabugao, *"It is always Isnag that we often use in speaking at home."*, both encourage using Ilocano and Isnag as their major languages at home. Also, Sta. Marcela, *"Umapat kam lang na Tingguian nu wad kami ad abung mi ngem nu lumtaw kami ket min Ilocano kami latta ta siya met na maawatan jad sabali ay ipugao"* translates to, *"Agsao kami lang iti Tingguian nu adda kami idiy balay mi, ngem nu rumwar kami ket ag-Ilocano kami latta ta isu met ti maawatan ti sabali nga tao"* in Ilocano, and *"We only speak Tingguian when we are at home but when we go out, we still speak Ilocano because it is the language understood by other people"* in English, emphasizes the practice of speaking Tingguian at home but switching to Ilocano while interacting outside, demonstrating a method of keeping heritage languages private while employing a more generally understood language in public situations.

Conner explains that they speak Malaueg at home but switch to Ilocano in public. *"Malaueg kami kito balay pero nu adda kami public eh Ilocano kami met."* translates to, *"We are Malauegs at home but when we are in public, we are Ilocanos too."* This reveals a strong contrast in their language use, with Malaueg reserved for more personal family settings, safeguarding their cultural identity within the home. However, in public, they use Ilocano to conform to the prevailing language of the larger community. This demonstrates the practical requirement for bilingualism, with Ilocano serving as a common language for social integration and Malaueg being an important element of their personal and cultural expression at home. Piller's (2016) study focused on how people manage several languages in different circumstances, such as keeping heritage languages at home while utilizing dominant languages in public. This validates the current study's findings that people use their primary language at home but switch to a more generally known language in social situations. Both studies look at how language habits change depending on the context, as well as the function of language in cultural identity and social interaction.



Table 1. Language(s) Spoken at Home by yApayao people across Municipalities



Luna's major language is Ilocano, which is spoken at home by 10 out of 12 people (83.33%). This indicates Ilocano's strong cultural and social influence in the area. Isnag, which accounts for 1 or 8.33% of the speakers, is less often spoken but still exists, indicating a smaller group inside Luna; while Igorot is also used by few, accounting for 1 or 8.33%, indicating a small but significant existence. Seventy percent (75%) or 9 of the respondents in **Sta. Marcela** speaks Ilocano at home, making it the most widely spoken language and primary mode of communication. With 2 or 16.67% of speakers, Tingguian (Igorot) has a significant presence, reflecting the influence of the Igorot community in Sta. Marcela. At 1 or 8.33%, Isnag is less often spoken, implying a smaller Isnag-speaking community. Ilocano is the dominant language of **Flora**, with 9 or 75% of the population speaking it at home. Isnag, Kalinga, and Aeta speakers, with smaller communities each, comprising of 1 or 8.33%, showcase a varied linguistic landscape. In **Pudtol**, 8 or 66.67% of the respondents use Ilocano at home, demonstrating its great influence. At 2 or 16.67%, Isnag plays an important but secondary role, representing a sizable Isnag-speaking community. Each at 1 or 8.33%, Igorot and Tagalog are less widespread but nonetheless used by few indigenous peoples. In **Conner**, Ilocano is being used at home, spoken by 5 or 41.67% of the people, demonstrating its considerable cultural influence. Malaueg with 4 or 33.33% of speakers, play important role in the community, highlighting the municipality's linguistic variety. The



prevalence of Isnag, Kalinga and Tagalog, each with 1 or 8.33% of speakers, contributes to Conner's multilingual nature, making it a diversified and culturally rich town where multiple languages coexists and interact. Isnag is the major language used at home in **Kabugao**, with 10 or 83.33% of the people speaking it, showing a strong cultural and social influence. Ilocano has 2 or 16.67% which is less spoken, although it is still there, indicating a smaller Ilocano-speaking group. Lastly, Isnag is the native and oftenly used language at home in **Calanasan**, accounting for 7 or 58.33% of the speakers. Ilocano, which is spoken by 5 or 41.67% of the respondents, indicates a sizable Ilocano-speaking community in this municipality.

In summary, table 1.1 shows that **Ilocano is the primary language spoken at home** in the majority of the municipalities. However, additional languages like Isnag, Malaueg, Kalinga, Igorot, Aeta, and Tagalog are also spoken, demonstrating the province's linguistic variety. This finding confirms the study of Miguel, et. al. (2024), which found that the presence of diverse languages spoken in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) with 22, emphasizes the importance of recognizing indigenous languages alongside more frequently spoken ones like Ilocano.

Language Preferences in Daily Interactions

This study determined which languages are favored in various social circumstances, including households, businesses, schools, and community interactions. Exploring these preferences gives us insight into the cultural and socioeconomic elements that impact communication in the province. This analysis emphasized the extensive use of Ilocano, as well as the major prevalence of indigenous languages such as Isnag, demonstrating Apayao's rich linguistic variety. Understanding these linguistic preferences helps us appreciate how historical and cultural settings influence daily interactions and communication patterns in the province.

In daily interactions, locals across Apayao's municipalities oftentimes use the Ilocano language. While some people speak other languages like Kalinga, Igorot, Isnag, and Malaueg, they are less common than Ilocano. The preference for Ilocano emphasizes its importance as a key mode of communication among the locals, promoting interactions and



building a shared linguistic environment in educational and social settings. Here are some statements from the participants:

The findings revealed that Pudtol, Luna, and Conner, all students, primarily communicate in Ilocano with their classmates in informal settings: *“Nu gagangay lang nga makisarsarita kami ti klasmeyts mi ket Ilocano usaren mi, ngem nu adda kami uneg ti klase ket agusar kami ti English or Tagalog lalo nu ag-recite kami.”* (“On ordinary conversations with classmates, we use Ilocano, but when we are inside the classroom, we use English or Tagalog specially when our turn to recite.-Pudtol); *“Talaga nga agil-ilocano kami nga agkaka-klase ma’am uray py nu Isneg da or Ybanag da.”* (“We really are speaking in Ilocano together, eventhough they are Isneg or Ybanag.” -Luna); and *“Eh hmm, Ilocano latta met ma’am nu makisarita kami ti kaklase mi.”* (“Eh hmm, we always speak in Ilocano with our classmates, ma’am.”-Conner) However, in official school settings, particularly during recitations, they use English or Tagalog. This reflects a bilingual or multilingual attitude, with Ilocano utilized for ordinary talks and English or Tagalog favored for academic settings.

Luna uses Ilocano to enhance mutual understanding among residents, as it is the common language in the area. *“Ag-Ilocano nak nu makisarsarita nak sabali nga tao, ket maawatan dak met kasi Ilocano kami met amin ditoy Luna.”* (“I speak in Ilocano whenever I talk with other people, and they actually understand me because we are all Ilocano here in Luna.”). Despite the prevalence of several indigenous languages, Ilocano has emerged as a lingua franca, allowing for more efficient communication among linguistic groupings. This practice emphasizes the importance of Ilocano in creating social cohesion and bridging any linguistic obstacles, allowing for smooth interactions within the community.

Sta. Marcela, speaks Ilocano since it is the most common language in their area, making it the most convenient way to communicate with others in the community. *“Ket Ilocano ah ma’am, kasi kaadwan met ket Ilocano tao ditoy.”* (It’s Ilocano ah ma’am, because most of the people here are Ilocano.”). Even if other indigenous languages are spoken, Ilocano has become the preferred language for everyday interactions, socializing, and conducting business.

Residents from several localities in Apayao exhibit a wide range of linguistic preferences in their daily talks. While Ilocano is still the most commonly spoken language in



most locations, other languages like Isnag and Malaueg are also widely utilized. In certain localities, some prefer a mix of languages, reflecting the province's multilingualism. This diversity of language preferences among locals reflect a flexible and adaptive communication environment in which various languages coexist and are used interchangeably depending on the context and individuals involved in the conversation. The use of Ilocano as a common language contributes to a cohesive communication framework, whilst the inclusion of other languages showcases Apayao's cultural and linguistic variety.

Flora: *"Hmmm... kaadwan kadagiti kliyente mi ket agsao da ti Ilocano, isu nga mas kayat ko agsao Ilocano tapnu kasta ket agkikin-naawatan kami."* ("Hmmm.... most of our clients are Ilocano that is why I prefer to use Ilocano too, so that we could understand each other.") and Conner: *"Nu adda kami office eh ag-Ilocano kami kasi mas adu makaawat Ilocano pero nu lunchbreak or nu agkikinnulitan or agkukulebet kami hahaha during breaktime ket ag-Malaueg kami ti pada mi nga Malaueg."* (When we are in the office, we speak Ilocano as the common language of all, because most of the people understand Ilocano better; but during our lunchbreak or "teasing time" hahaha, we speak Malaueg to our fellow Malauegs."). They choose Ilocano as their primary language for professional contacts because it is widely understood by clients and coworkers. However, during casual occasions such as lunch breaks or social exchanges, they switch to Malaueg with peers who speak the same language. This emphasizes the strategic use of words based on context and audience.

Heller (2007) looked at how bilingual people manage language use in various social contexts, such as utilizing a dominant language for formal communication and switching to a less dominant language in informal settings. This is consistent with the findings of the current study, which found that Ilocano is utilized professionally and Malaueg is chosen for casual contacts. Both studies emphasize the adaptability of language practices in response to situational and relationship circumstances.

Locals from Luna, Flora, Pudtol, and Calanasan prefer to use Ilocano in their daily undertakings; while Sta. Marcela and Conner prefer to use mix languages. However, Kabugao makes extensive use of the Isnag language.



Conner, “Eh, ag-Ilocano kami, ag-Malauweg kami, ag-Igorot kami... depende nu sino kasasao mi ngay.” (*“Eh, we speak in Ilocano, Malauweg, Igorot... it depends upon whom we are talking to.”*) and Sta. Marcela, “Minsan Ilocano, minsan Tagalog nga adda bassit English na lalo nu agkasaba kami ma’am.” (*“Aah... there are more people who understand Ilocano when we preach ma’am.”*). They speak several languages depending on the occasion and audience.

Conner alternates between Ilocano, Malauweg, and Igorot depending on who she is chatting with, whereas Sta. Marcela speaks Ilocano, Tagalog, and English occasionally. This demonstrates the strategic use of language to facilitate communication with various audiences and contexts. Hornberger's (2002) study on multilingual language policies investigated how language use adapts to dominant languages within communities to guarantee effective communication, comparable to how respondents in the current study prefer Ilocano for greater understanding. Both studies demonstrate how people use the most common language to guarantee everyone understands one another in multilingual settings.

Luna likes to speak Ilocano since it is more understandable to his target audience, who are largely Ilocano voters: *“Mas maawatan ti tao nu agsao ta ti Ilocano, ta kaadwan nga botante ket Ilocano da.”* (*“People understand better when we speak Ilocano, because most voters are Ilocano too.”*). On the other hand, Conner sometimes combines Malauweg and Ilocano when he cannot find the correct word to use, allowing him to communicate more successfully in both languages: *“Eeh... pagnayunek nu maminsan ti Malauweg ken Ilocano lalo nu madik maibaga nga dagus jay word nga kayat ko nga ibaga. Kasla kuma nu imbes “saba” kunak ket “bagat” kunak metten hehehe.”* (*“Eeh... I sometimes combine Malauweg and Ilocano together especially when I cannot say the word I want to say right away. For example, instead of saying “saba” I say “bagat” [banana] hehehe”*). This suggests that clear communication and audience understanding influence language choice and mixing.

Sta. Marcela, *“Ilocano kami ditoy ngem maminsan adda dagiti gumatang nga agsao Tagalog lalo nu dagita aggapu sabali nga lugar, isu nga sungbatan mi met laeng isuda nu kua ti Tagalog.”* (*“We are Ilocanos here but sometimes there are customers specially from*



other places who are speaking in Tagalog that is why we also answer them back in Tagalog.”) and Pudtol, “Makisarita kami kanyada depende nu anya usaren da nga panagsao. Nu ag-Ilocano da ket ag-Ilocano kami met, nu ag-Tagalog da ah ket ag-Tagalog kami met.... Ngem nu ag-Isnag da ket sumungbatak met latta ti Ilocano kasi maawatak ti ibagbagada ngem madik lang ammo nga isao ti Isnag hahaha! (“We interact with them according to the language they use. If they speak in Ilocano then we also speak in Ilocano, if they use Tagalog, we also use Tagalog... but if they speak in Isnag, I answer them back in Ilocano still, because I can only understand Isnag but I really cannot speak the language hahaha!”). These participants change the language they use based on who they are talking to. Sta. Marcela switches to Tagalog while interacting with customers from other locations, whereas Pudtol responds in Ilocano even when addressed in Isnag because she understands but does not speak the language. This shows a flexible, context-dependent approach to language usage.

Grosjean's (2010) bilingualism research emphasizes how bilingual people alter their language use dependent on their interlocutors and context, similar to how Sta. Marcela and Pudtol switch languages to ensure successful communication. Both studies emphasize bilinguals' practical adaptation in multilingual situations.

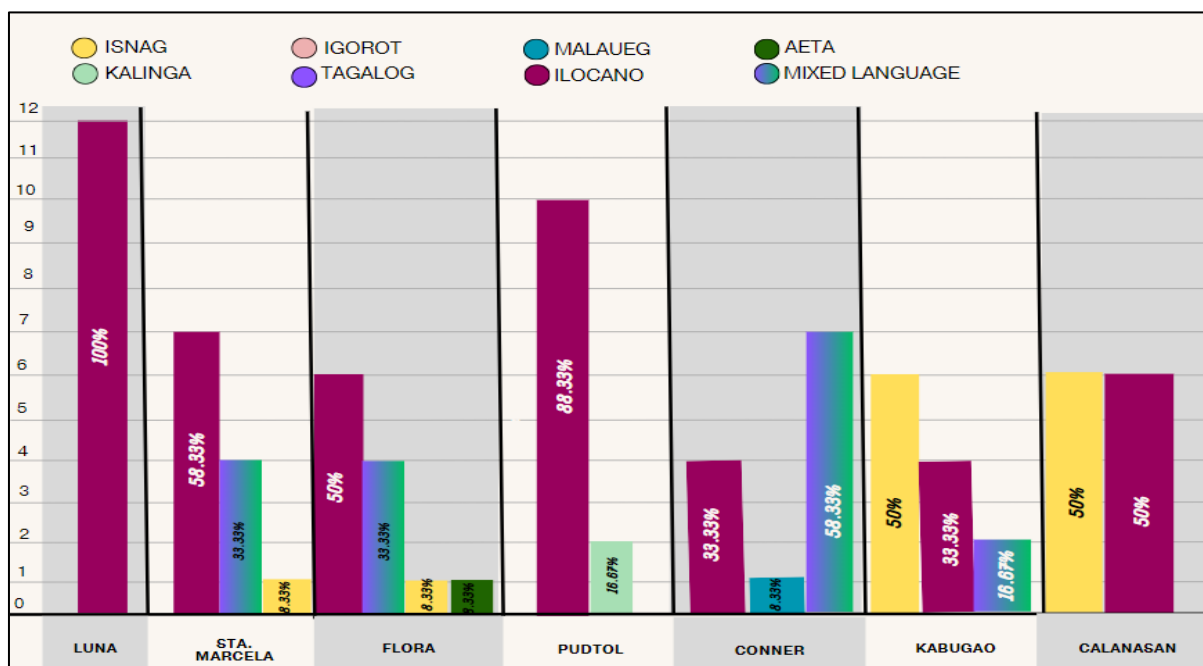
Calanasan communicates primarily in Ilocano, despite being part of the Isneg group. “Oray iyah napeklan nga Isnag ki komunidad mi, pilpilitang ku ku magsau ka Ilocano ota hapu na kadaya toltolay kangrunaan na kadaya tagababa agkan da makaawat ka Isnag nga panagsau, atan da ngala dudduma ngamay agkan ngamin ay makaawat”, translates in Ilocano as: “Uray nu Isnag diay kumonidad mi ket mapilitan nak latta nga agsao ti Ilokano ngamin dagiti tao lalo nu aggapu da ti lower ket saan da makaawat ti Isnag nga pagsasao, adda man ngem bassit da lang.” (“Although I am from the Isneg community, I am forced to speak in Ilocano because people especially those from the lower cannot understand the Isnag language, there might be some, but only few.”). This shows that Ilocano has emerged as the main language in their interactions, maybe as a result of its widespread use in the region or the influence of nearby groups. While they are ethnically Isneg, they may have chosen Ilocano for practical reasons, such as ease of communication with a wider range of individuals or the dwindling use of the Isneg language in everyday life. This demonstrates



how external linguistic pressures can change language preferences, even within indigenous communities.

Auer's (2013) study on code-switching investigates how multilingual people switch languages depending on their conversation partners and the context of the interaction. This is consistent with the findings of the current study, which shows that language use changes depending on the audience and situation. Both studies show how people switch languages based on who they are talking to and the situation.

Table 2. Language Preferences in Daily Interactions Across Apayao municipalities



Ilocano is the most preferred language in **Luna**, with 100% of the people speaking it on a daily basis. This total domination highlights Luna's cultural and linguistic homogeneity, with Ilocano serving as the major language of communication for all citizens. Ilocano is the prevalent language in **Sta. Marcela**, spoken by 7 or 58.33% of the respondents, and it serves as the primary language for daily interactions. Thirty percent (33.33%) or 4 of the respondents speaks a mix of languages (Ilocano, Tagalog, and Igorot), demonstrating high linguistic variety. Isnag, spoken by 1 or 8.33% of the respondents, contributes to the community's multilingual nature, demonstrating a rich and diverse language environment among the yApayao people in their daily life. **Flora's** preferred language is Ilocano, which is preferred by 6 or 50% of the inhabitants for daily interactions. A mix of Ilocano and Isnag is used by 4 or 33.33% of the respondents, indicating significant language variety. Both Isnag



and Aeta are spoken by 1 or 8.33% of the respondents, showing smaller populations that contribute to Flora's multilingualism. The distribution of languages in **Pudtol** emphasizes Ilocano's cultural dominance in this municipality, where it is the predominant language for 10 or 83.33% of the respondents, while simultaneously recognizing the considerable presence of the Isnag language, which is spoken by 2 or 16.67% of the respondents. In **Conner**, 7 or 58.33% of the respondents speaks mix of languages (Ilocano, Malaueg, Isnag, Kalinga, and Igorot), showing the area's linguistic richness. Ilocano is also commonly spoken, with 4 or 33.33% of speakers using it, and Malaueg spoken by 1 or 8.33%, adding to the community's bilingual aspect. In **Kabugao**, Isnag is the most preferred language, spoken by 6 or 50% of the respondents, followed by Ilocano (4 or 33.33%) and a mix of Ilocano and Isnag (2 or 16.67%). This distribution emphasizes Isnag's importance, as well as the existence of Ilocano and multilingualism in the community. Both Isnag and Ilocano are equally preferred in **Calanasan**, with 6 or 50% of the respondents speaking either language. This balanced distribution emphasizes the municipality's dual linguistic influence, with both languages playing an important part in daily communication and reflecting the municipality's cultural diversity. This implies that while Isnag is predominant, Ilocano also plays a crucial role in their communication and everyday social interactions.

Language(s) spoken in each Municipality

Each municipality was examined independently to obtain a thorough picture of Apayao's linguistic landscape. This method allowed for a thorough examination of the predominant languages spoken throughout the province, revealing distinct linguistic patterns.

Table 3 shows the comprehensive summary of the primary and secondary languages used by various groups in Luna, Sta. Marcela, Flora, Pudtol, Conner, Kabugao, and Calanasan.

Table 3. Primary and Secondary Languages spoken in each municipality

Municipality	Primary Language(s)	Secondary Language(s)
Luna	Ilocano	Isnag, Igorot
Sta. Marcela	Ilocano	Tingguian (Igorot)



Flora	Ilocano	Isnag, Aeta
Pudtol	Ilocano, Isnag	Igorot, Kalinga, Tagalog
Conner	Ilocano, Malaueg	Isnag, Itawes, Igorot, Kalinga, Tagalog
Kabugao	Isnag	Ilocano
Calanasan	Isnag	Ilocano

Luna

The majority of Luna residents use **Ilocano** as their primary language, emphasizing its importance in daily communication, cultural customs, and social interactions. The extensive use of Ilocano demonstrates the municipality's linguistic unity. Meanwhile, Isnag and Igorot are acknowledged as secondary languages, indicating a sizable Isnag- Igorot- speaking group. The presence of Isnag and Igorot contributes to Luna's cultural richness, reflecting the cohabitation of several ethnic groups.

Sta. Marcela

The majority of people in Sta. Marcela speak **Ilocano**. This reflects the municipality's strong Ilocano cultural and linguistic influences. The presence of Tingguian (Igorot) and Isnag as a secondary tongue, suggest a sizable minority group within the community. Tingguian speakers add to Sta. Marcela's cultural and linguistic diversity, giving a layer of rich indigenous history. This bilingual dynamic implies that, while Ilocano is the dominant language in most social and official contacts, certain parts of the population value and retain Tingguian (Igorot), most likely in more traditional or community-specific settings. This linguistic combination depicts the coexistence of dominant and indigenous cultures in Sta. Marcela.

Flora

Flora's major language is **Ilocano**, which means it is the most commonly used language in daily interactions and community affairs. This reflects the municipality's substantial Ilocano cultural presence. Along with Ilocano, Isnag and Aeta are used as



secondary languages. The presence of Isnag as a secondary language indicates a sizable Isnag-speaking community in Flora, demonstrating the municipality's linguistic variety. Furthermore, the presence of Aeta as a secondary language indicates a tiny but significant Aeta population, which contributes to the area's unique cultural tapestry. Flora's multilingual scenario depicts the cohabitation of several ethnic groups, each preserving their language history while participating with the dominant Ilocano-speaking community. Flora's language diversity improves the municipality's social and cultural dynamics, generating a society that respects and values its diverse linguistic roots.

Pudtol

Pudtol has a rich linguistic diversity, with **Ilocano and Isnag** acting as the predominant languages. This shows that both Ilocano and Isnag are commonly spoken and are essential to the community's everyday communication and cultural identity. The existence of two primary languages indicates a balanced demography in which both Ilocano and Isnag speakers are prevalent. Furthermore, the municipality supports a variety of secondary languages, including Igorot, Kalinga, and Tagalog. This emphasizes Pudtol's multicultural aspect, in which different ethnic groups coexist and interact. The use of Igorot and Kalinga languages indicates the presence of indigenous groups, although Tagalog serves as a common language for cross-regional contact and integration. Pudtol's multilingual atmosphere encourages rich cultural exchange and improves the community's language landscape, encouraging inclusivity and diversity.

Conner

Conner is a great example of linguistic diversity, with **Ilocano and Malaueg** as the predominant languages. This suggests that these two languages are extensively spoken and integral to the population's daily life and cultural manifestations. The prevalence of several primary languages demonstrates a diverse range of cultural identities in the municipality, demonstrating a community in which different linguistic groups coexist peacefully. **Isnag, Itawes, Igorot, Kalinga, and Tagalog** are among the secondary languages that contribute to the linguistic diversity. These secondary languages indicate the presence of smaller ethnic groupings and the value of inter-ethnic communication. Tagalog, in particular, functions as a bridge language, allowing for more communication and integration with other regions. This



bilingual environment provides an inclusive society in which varied language and cultural backgrounds are acknowledged and celebrated, therefore, enriching Conner's community dynamics.

Kabugao

In Kabugao, **Isnag** is the major language, meaning it is the most widely spoken and culturally significant language in the area. This domination of Isnag indicates the ethnic group's considerable presence and influence in the municipality. The usage of **Ilocano** as a second language indicates a sizable Ilocano-speaking minority. While Isnag is commonly used in everyday communication, Ilocano is more likely to be utilized in broader regional contacts, such as trade, education, or administration. This bilingual environment in Kabugao exemplifies a community that values traditional Isnag culture and language while simultaneously embracing and incorporating the Ilocano language, resulting in a rich, diversified linguistic tapestry.

Calanasan

Isnag is the primary language in Calanasan, emphasizing its significance in everyday communication, cultural traditions, and communal life. The Isnag-speaking community has a deep cultural legacy and a strong feeling of identity, which explains its supremacy. **Ilocano** as a secondary language suggests that there are many Ilocano speakers in the area. This bilingual dynamic indicates that, while Isnag is the major language, Ilocano is also frequently used, possibly in business, education, and interactions with surrounding towns. The inclusion of Ilocano with Isnag demonstrates Calanasan's linguistic plasticity and multicultural fabric, in which traditional Isnag culture coexists with the greater impact of the Ilocano-speaking populace, linguistic blend enriches the community, promoting cultural exchange and mutual understanding between different ethnic groups.

To sum it up, **Isnag** is the primary language of Kabugao and Calanasan, as well as Pudtol, indicating that these places have considerable Isnag-speaking populations. Malaueg is a primary language in Conner, but it is not included in any other municipalities, implying a limited linguistic presence. Igorot, Kalinga, and Itawes are secondary languages, demonstrating the residents' multilingualism.



To highlight, **Ilocano is the most widely spoken language in Apayao**, serving as the main language in Luna, Sta. Marcela, Flora, and one of the most widely spoken languages in Pudtol and Conner. It is also a second language in Kabugao and Calanasan. This implies that people of Apayao are multilingual in nature but uses Ilocano more often than the other, across various fields of life. Soria's (2016) study, which ranks Ilocano as the third largest language in the Philippines after Tagalog and Cebuano, provided important context for the current study on Apayao's linguistic landscape. Both findings emphasize Ilocano's widespread use and vital influence in the country. The current study expands on Soria's findings by conducting a more localized assessment, concentrating specifically on how Ilocano, as well as other languages such as Isnag, function within Apayao's complex linguistic environment. This connection emphasizes the significance of Ilocano in both national and regional contexts, strengthening its dominance and prevalence in the Philippines' linguistic hierarchy.

These data show that, while Ilocano is the most widely spoken language in Apayao, there is a great deal of linguistic diversity, with Isnag also playing a significant role. Each municipality has its unique linguistic identity, shaped by historical, cultural, and social factors, adding to the province's rich and diverse linguistic landscape.

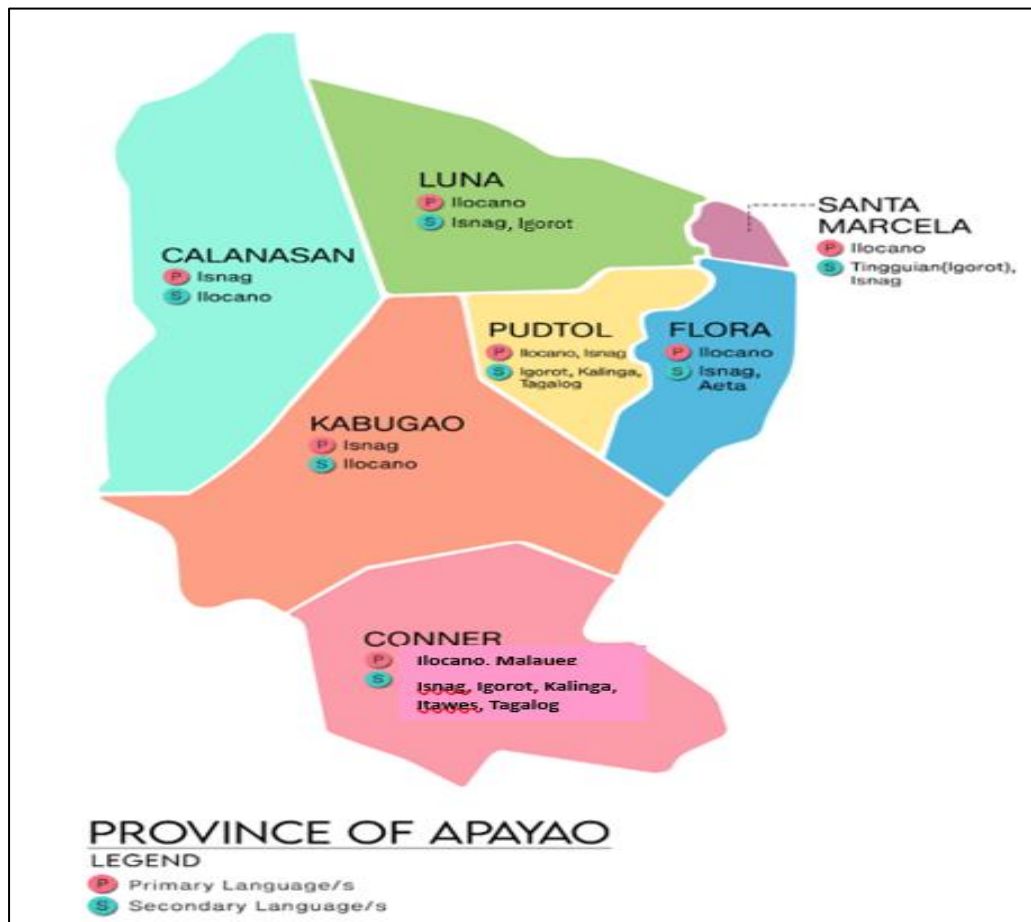


Figure 1. Language(s) spoken in each municipality

Figure 1 summarizes the languages that are frequently spoken in each municipality. Based from the findings, respondents' spoken languages across municipalities reveal different patterns in their primary and secondary language(s) for their daily conversation.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it has been concluded that Ilocano and Isnag are the most common languages used in the municipalities of Apayao Province and are used by the locals either as their primary or secondary means of communication. Furthermore, a wide variety of secondary languages can be found in some locations which implies the presence of many indigenous and cultural groupings. The existence of multilingual environment in the province emphasizes the diversity of cultures and the peaceful coexistence of many linguistic groups. Such language variety offers special opportunities for language preservation as well as it contributes to the rich cultural structure of Apayao.



The Local Government Unit (LGU) might consider to support initiatives that document and promote the linguistic diversity of Apayao, including the development of educational materials and resources in local languages. They are encouraged to collaborate with cultural organizations to organize language festivals and workshops that celebrate and preserve the province's linguistic heritage. They may also organize cultural events that highlight traditional customs, songs, and dances; and use these events to promote and practice local languages.

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