

THE OBJECTIVE ETHNOLINGUISTIC VITALITY OF ISNAG, ISNEG YAPAYAO, AND ITNEG TINGGUIAN IN ILOCOS NORTE: DETERMINING FACTORS OF LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the objective ethnolinguistic vitality (OEV) of three indigenous languages spoken in Ilocos Norte, Philippines—Isnag, Isneg Yapayao, and Itneg Tingguian. It also examined the factors that contribute to such OEV levels in terms of demographics, institutional support and control factors, and status factors. Quantitative and qualitative analyses of responses of 90 respondents were employed. Results revealed that the demographics of L1 speakers are essential elements towards maintenance of their L1. As found in the three L1 communities, a majority of them (57%) speak their native language. Though these communities exist amidst a more dominant community, intergenerational transmission of their language likely takes place. Birth rate is higher than death rate which implies that more speakers of the L1 are expected thus enabling them to survive in the next generations to come. Various institutions provide support to them in terms of education, government services, economy, politics, religion, and socio-cultural support. Media and religious institutions were found to have less support given towards language vitality. Status factors, likewise, need reinforcement. Owing to Giles et al.'s (1977) OEV model, the vitality level of the three L1 is *medium*.

Keywords: *objective ethnolinguistic vitality, language maintenance, indigenous languages, indigenous communities*

INTRODUCTION

Objective ethnolinguistic vitality (OEV), as defined by Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977), is the vitality of an ethnolinguistic group which makes them behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in intergroup situations. For Bourhis, Giles and Rosenthal (1981 in Yagmur & Ehala, 2011), a group's strengths and weaknesses can be assessed to provide a rough classification of ethnolinguistic groups as having low, medium or high vitality. By objectively measuring these strengths and weaknesses, one can predict the likelihood of low vitality groups to go through linguistic assimilation while the high vitality groups are likely to maintain their language and distinctive cultural repertoire even in multilingual settings. In some language contact contexts, however, a minority group may resort to collective strategy for the survival of the group only if the group members identify strongly with their community (Bourhis, 1984; Johnson, Giles, & Bourhis, 1983; Saint-Blancat, 1985).

Studies on OEV over the years have been closely related to language attitudes (Dube-Simard 1983; Giles & Johnson 1981; Johnson et al., 1983; McNamara, 1987; Ryan, Giles, & Sebastian 1982), intergroup relations (Allard & Landry 1986; Bourhis, 1984; Bourhis & Sachdev 1984; Dube-Simard, 1983; Sachdev et al. 1987; Saint-Blancat, 1985), language maintenance and shift (Clement, 1987; Gibbons & Ashcroft, 1995; Giles & Johnson, 1987; Taft & Cahill, 1989; Yagmur, 2004; Yagmur, 2009; Yagmur & Akinci, 2003; Yagmur, de Bot, & Korzilius 1999), language choice (Lewin, 1987; McNamara, 1987) and language revitalisation (Yagmur & Kroon, 2003, 2006).

In the aforementioned studies, it has been found that there is a two-way relationship between social identity and language behaviour given the socio-structural variables in a given society and how these variables interact in shaping the groups' EVs. Saint-Blancat's (1985) study has shown how socio-structural variables directly influence the minority's vitality. Leets and Giles' (1995) argument supports Saint-Blancat's that "sociological factors not only directly affect a language's survival but also shape individuals' socio-psychological and interactional climates" (p. 38). Sachdev et al. (1987) suggested that group survival and language maintenance are dependent on the perceptions and behaviour of succeeding generations of ethnolinguistic groups.

In northern Philippines, major ethnolinguistic groups are divided into the Isnag and/or Isnag of Apayao, Itneg Tingguian of Abra, Kalinga, Bontok, Ifugao, Kankana-ey, and Ibaloy. Other groups asserting their ethnic identities include the Kalanguya (Ikalahan, Ikadasan), Ikarao, and Bago. These have developed independent communities, which are politically and economically autonomous from any other (Prill-Brett, 1988). The three minority groups under study, namely: Isnag, Isnag Yapayao, and Itneg Tingguian in Ilocos Norte are not among those included in the ethnolinguistic map of northern Philippines and those which have been studied ethnolinguistically. Hence, this study attempted to determine factors influencing objective vitality towards maintenance of their language or its eventual shift or attrition. The review that follows provides the conceptual basis of the study at hand.

Literature Review

Language is often closely linked with ethnicity, and as Swilla (2005) argues, "language choice, maintenance and shift concern the issue of identity" (p. 25). If language is an important symbol of group identity and group members recognize and value their membership in that particular group, they will strive to maintain the language. It is therefore essential to identify influential factors that bring about either maintenance or loss of a language. One thing that an indigenous language hopes to embrace is its community of speakers that can withstand socio-political causes that may result in language loss such as a country's language policy, urbanization, industrialization and contact with other cultures. Landweer (2002) extends this list with several factors: (1) relative position on the urban-rural continuum; (2) domains in which the language is used; (3) frequency and type of code switching; (3) population and group dynamics; (4) distribution of speakers within their own social networks; (5) social outlook within the speech community; (6) language prestige; and (7) access to a stable and acceptable economic base. The degree of language vitality depends on how many of these factors are operational and at what level.

In the Philippines, there have been limited EV studies conducted. Peña (2010) assessed the ethnolinguistic vitality of Manide language, a minority language spoken in Camarines Sur, Bicol Province. It particularly described the opportunities available to the Manide people for contact with other speakers that affect the EV of Manide, determined the indications of actual use of Manide language in particular domains (home, community, and school) on EV, and ascertained whether the attitudes of insiders and outsiders toward the Manide people and language threaten or support the EV of Manide. Using Landweer's (2006) Indicators of Ethnolinguistic Vitality, the researcher found that Manide is overwhelmingly the language of choice of Manide people. They use it in their daily interactions with fellow Manide particularly when talking to parents, children, siblings, and friends. Additionally, there is an economic base supportive of the vernacular among the Manide through engagement in land-related labor where a Manide person is required to work with a Manide core group of supporters. Manide people mix Manide with other languages, particularly Tagalog, even when interlocutors are all Manide. Instead, there is unbounded code-switching, though such code-switching was found infrequent.

Non-Manide people have a negative attitude toward the Manide language. This, apparently, was in part due to the general condescension toward Negrito people. Despite this, Manide people still want their children to learn the Manide language. Government and non-government organizations working among the Manide advise them to preserve their language.

Lomboy's (2011) survey on the status of the Pangasinan language also delved into the attitudes of speakers and domains of use. Specifically, it identified the domains where Pangasinan language is used, the attitudes of native speakers toward the Pangasinan language, and the impact of intergenerational variance on the domains and attitudes on Pangasinan language maintenance. Alongside EV, Fishman's (1991) Reversing Language Shift Theory was used in designing the survey instrument used among 419 permanent residents of Pangasinan-speaking localities. Findings showed that the third generation uses less Pangasinan than their parents, while the second generation was found to use less Pangasinan than the grandparent generation. This is true in all domains of Pangasinan use. Factors influencing the lesser use of Pangasinan were found to be the distance between and location of interlocutors, the intervention of technology like text messaging, the age of informant, and school's 'English zone' policy. In government, Pangasinan was reported to be used more with political authorities especially when talking or listening to a local official. There was much less use of Pangasinan in print than in broadcast media. In terms of attitudes towards maintaining the use of Pangasinan, the informants were generally found to see the need to develop, promote, and preserve Pangasinan through language maintenance procedures. Most of them were found to be resistant to language maintenance measures that involved the reading and writing of Pangasinan in school, in electronic communications, in publications, and in mass media. In terms of language maintenance, informants showed strongest reluctance to attitude statements about reversing language shift activities falling within the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) stages of 5 and 4, the formal and informal teaching of the Pangasinan language. Pangasinan is primarily used in offices and in transactions; if not Pangasinan, then Filipino. Eventually, informants still believed that Pangasinan is useful toward provincial progress.

Similarly, Tajolosa (2012) attempted to measure the ethnolinguistic vitality of three Batak communities (Kalakuanan, Riyandakan, and Mangapin) in Palawan and to predict whether language maintenance and shift prevail in the said communities. Using Bourhis et al.'s (1977) EV as the main framework, Tajolosa (2012) concluded that demographic factors were most influential on speakers' language behaviour which include the absolute number of speakers, endogamy and migration, L1 intergenerational transmission, and proportion of ingroup versus outgroup speakers. The vitality of Batak in Kalakuanan was found to be *high*. Sociological factors which are not favourable for language maintenance were identified such as small population, low birth rate, little institutional support, relatively weak social network, low group status and poor economic status. Positive factors such as high concentration of speakers, high rate of endogamy, low migration rate, medium support from religious and charitable institutions, and marginal access of the area during rainy days, and more domains for Batak language use balance the effects of the negative factors. Moreover, Riyandakan and Mangapin had *weak* vitality since there were more sociological factors not favouring language maintenance. Demographic factors and institutional support contribute to this weak vitality. Among these factors, it was the high rates of migration and exogamy that pose the greatest threats to language maintenance. According to Tajolosa (2012), such situation was due to destruction of their rivers resulted in relocation of the inhabitants. In like manner, the *high* classification of the Kalakuanan objective vitality contradicted the *weak* vitality classification of the Riyandakan and Mangapin. All three areas demonstrated positive language attitude and very high ethnic identity.

Isnag

In the present study, Isnag communities are located in Carasi, Ilocos Norte. Carasi is situated at the top of a forested mountain 18 kilometers east of the poblacion of Piddig and 30 kilometers northeast of Laoag City. It is bounded on the north, on the west, on the south by the towns of Vintar, Piddig, and Solsona, respectively; and on the east by the town of Kalanasan, Kalinga-Apayao. It consists of three barangays, namely; Barbaquezo, Birbira, and Angset. The one-barangay poblacion, Barbaquezo, has a rolling terrain. Only one concrete road goes around it. As of December 2011, a total of 1,354 Isnag are occupying two of three barangays. They speak Isnag as their L1 along with Ilocano.

Isnag Yapayao

Isnag Yapayao, as the term used by speakers from Dumalneg, Ilocos Norte, is classified as an Austronesian and Malayo-Polynesian language (Ethnologue, 2014). It is alternatively known as Addasen, Addasen Tingguian, and Itneg Addasen. In the accounts of Awatin (2012) and Sapanza (2009), the Isnag are the indigenous people that are interchangeably referred to as Yapayao. Etymologically, the term "Isnag" was derived from a combination of "is" meaning "recede" and "neg" meaning "interior". Thus, it means people who have gone into the interior. The Isnag people inhabit the river valleys and plains and most migrated into the Kalinga province in the last fifty years. For Sapanza (2009), the Isnag, also Isnag or Apayao, live at the north-western end of northern Luzon, in the upper half of the Cordillera province known as Kalinga-Apayao. In the present study, Isnag Yapayao is a language spoken by a tribe in Dumalneg, Ilocos Norte. Dumalneg is located at the northwestern portion of Ilocos Norte. It is about four kilometers east of the national highway going to the Cagayan valley; about five kilometers northeast of Bangui; and about 80 kilometers northeast of Laoag City. It is bounded on the north by Pagudpud, on the east by Adams, on the south by Vintar, and on the west by Bangui. Dumalneg was formerly a municipal district of Ilocos Norte. However, it became a regular municipality on May 16, 1983 by virtue of the provision of Batas Pambansa No. 337, section 136. It consists of only one barangay with nine *sitios*, namely; Dumalneg, Cristalina, Siracang, Cabauitan, Masamuyao, Sisilangan, Banauang, Malames, and Bobog. As of December 2010, a total of 1,420 Isnag are occupying one *sitio* and five *puroks* of the barangay. Their L1 is called Isnag Yapayao or Isnag.

Itneg Tingguian

Based on Ethnologue (2014), Itneg Tingguian is also an Austronesian and Malayo-Polynesian language which has alternate names as Banao, Itneg, Tinggian, and Banao Itneg. Speakers are located in the provinces of Kalinga and Abra. Its language status is vigorous, which means that it is used for face-to-face communication by all generations and its linguistic situation is sustainable. In the present study, Itneg Tingguian tribes are located in Nueva Era, Ilocos Norte which is situated in a hilly and mountainous area 46 kilometers southeast of Laoag City. It is bounded on the south and southeast by the province of Abra, on the southwest by the province of Ilocos Sur and on the northwest by the towns of Badoc, Pinili, Espiritu, Marcos, Dingras, and Solsona. As of censuses from 2008 to 2012, a total of 3,541 Itneg Tingguians are occupying all eight barrios of the town (NCIP-INPO, 2013). They speak their L1 which is Itneg Tingguian.

METHODS

Research Design

The quantitative-qualitative research design was utilized in assessing the ethnolinguistic vitality of Isnag in Carasi, Isnag Yapayao in Dumalneg, and Itneg Tingguian in Nueva Era,

Ilocos Norte. Determinant factors of language maintenance and shift were identified through descriptive surveys, semi-structured interviews, and community observation. Community observation was used to validate the participants' responses on the factors influencing their objective EV, particularly on demographic factors as well as institutional support and control factors.

The Participants

Each indigenous community has its own IP leader or what they call, the “*panglakayen*” (elder). To establish ease of access to the target participants, the NCIP-INPO identified respective tribe leaders and/or council of elders (Tribal Council) from each group who served as the key informants and preliminary source of data for the semi-structured interviews and initial surveys. However, members of each tribe of different age groups regardless of the rank or position in the tribe were purposively identified as participants in the descriptive surveys. Hence, participants from each of the three IP communities were chosen based on three age groups: (1) Young-aged group (30 years and below), (2) Middle-aged group (31-59 years old), and (3) Old-aged group (60 years and above). At the initial stage of the study, it was decided upon by the researchers that each age group should be composed of ten (10) representatives, or a total of 30 participants from each of the three research sites, thereby, having a total of 90 respondents. Such an attempt to have ten (10) representatives per age group was made to check if intergenerational transmission of the language is present in each of the indigenous communities. However, due to non-availability of the demographic details of the tribe members by the IP leaders, adjustments in the number of respondents per age group were done, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Distribution of participants per IP community according to age group*

IP COMMUNITY	AGE GROUP			TOTAL
	Young-aged (30 years and below)	Middle-aged (31-59 years)	Old-aged (60 years and above)	
Isnag	16	12	2	30
Isnag Yapayao	7	18	5	30
Itneg Tingguian	12	14	4	30
TOTAL	35	44	11	90

It can be seen in the above table that all age groups were represented. However, the intended number of respondents per age group which is ten (10) was not achieved. This did not, however, affect the result of the study.

Research Instruments

To measure the objective vitality of the L1 communities and to suit the respondents' context, the Semi-structured Interview Questionnaire on Objective Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Objective Ethnolinguistic Vitality Questionnaire adapted from Giles et al.'s (1977) Objective Ethnolinguistic Vitality Model were utilized. These were written in English, though translation into Ilocano and Filipino was made during the course of the interview. Responses to the interview questions were transcribed lexically. Preponderance of each of these factors as mentioned by the respondents was then accounted for to come up with a rough classification of the Objective Vitality of the three communities as having *Low, Medium, or High*. Further questions and additional responses during informal interviews, however, were supplementary to those responses during the semi-structured interview sessions. Observation logs were also helpful in this area of inquiry. Frequency counts and percentages of the responses were computed except

for some sections where responses were not readily available (on mortality rate) and discrete such as those on government services, media, socio-cultural factors, and religion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Factors Influencing Objective Ethnolinguistic Vitality

According to Giles, et al. (1977), demographic variables refer to the number and distributional patterns of ethnolinguistic group members throughout a particular region or national territory. In the present study, such variables include the absolute number of speakers, fertility and mortality rate, endogamy and exogamy, and emigration/immigration patterns; as well as the distribution of L1 speakers which covers L1 intergenerational transmission and proportion of ingroup versus outgroup speakers in territory.

Absolute number of L1 speakers. The demographic strength of an ethnolinguistic group and its geolinguistic distribution determine the degree of language maintenance and shift. The absolute number of speakers of a certain minority language in relation to the speakers of the language of the majority could be regarded as an indicator of the health of that particular language (Jamai, 2008). Any decrease in the number of speakers of a language would put more pressure on it and encourage its speakers to shift towards the language of the majority.

Based on the results, more than 50 percent of the total population of the three municipalities (11,124) where the three IP communities are situated constitute the absolute number of L1 speakers as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Absolute number of L1 speakers

L1 Community	Number of Population in the Municipality (N)	Number of Speakers (n)	L1 Percentage (%)
Isnag	1,473	1,354	92
Isnag Yapayao	1,814	1,420	78
Itneg Tingguian	7,837	3,541	45
TOTAL	N=11,124	n=6,315	57

In Carasi, a total of 1,354 Isnag (ISA) speakers are occupying two of three barangays (PSA, 2012). Dumalneg, on the other hand, has a total of 1,420 Isnag Yapayao (ISE) speakers occupying one *sitio* 'barrio' and five *puroks* 'clusters' of the barangay. Nueva Era has a total of 3,541 Itneg Tingguian (ITE) speakers who are occupying eight barangays of the town. Based on the data in Table 2, it can be inferred that the ISA had the most number of speakers (92%) in relation to the total population of the municipality. This fact places the ISA community on a level of certainty that their L1 is widely spoken amidst the presence of another L1 which is Ilocano. During the site visit, it was observed that ISA families are concentrated in different *sitios* 'barrios' in a barangay, which enables ISA speakers to communicate with their fellow Isnag using their native language. Most of them have been settling in the said community with their grandparents and great grandparents. It was also observed that most of the municipal employees are ISA speakers. In fact, the municipal mayor himself speaks Isnag because his wife, the municipal vice-mayor, is also an Isnag. Such a high number of speakers manifests that the present vitality of ISA and the likelihood of language maintenance is high.

Meanwhile, the Isnag Yapayao people, 78 percent of the total population of the municipality of Dumalneg, were found to be the most modern among the three L1 communities

in terms of exposure to technology, education, and mass media though they live in a third class municipality. Most of the families have ISE-speaking parents and children. During the interview, they reported that they learned to speak ISE through their parents and grandparents. Children who attend classes within the municipality speak ISE among themselves, even though some of their classmates and teachers speak Ilocano. Additionally, teenagers and young adults who seek higher education and employment outside the community lead to the increasing threat to shift of their ISE language to a more dominant language, Ilocano or Filipino. Nevertheless, they were confident in claiming that ISE will remain alive as long as their community exists.

On the other hand, the Itneg Tingguian, having the most number of community members compared to ISA and ISE, which is 3,541, reported that they have been occupying a majority of the barangays in Nueva Era since time immemorial. Their ancestors passed on to them their residences and farmlands. They are highly aware of their historical past and have strong family ties since a majority of them marry their fellow Itneg Tingguian. This contributes to the preservation of their culture and of their native language.

In terms of the absolute number of speakers in the L1 communities, it can be said that a majority of the total population of the three L1 communities (57%) speak the three languages, ISA, ISE, and ITE. This is in view of the total population of the three municipalities which is 11,124. This sociological factor of vitality is essential in determining the possibility for a minority language to survive. As what Gonzalez (1998) asserted that in some cases where the number of native speakers of a specific language has declined (for example, among many of the minor languages of the Mountain Province area in the Cordilleras of Northern Luzon), language death is occurring, at least in part because of the much reduced number of speakers. In like manner, Tajolosa (2012) described Batak vitality in Kalakawasan to be high because of the high concentration of speakers, while Riyandakan and Mangapin can both be classified as having 'weak' vitality at the time of study due to small population and low birth rate.

Fertility and mortality rate. During the time of the conduct of the study, the NCIP-INPO did not have any record of the birth rate and number of deaths in the three research sites. No records were also found at the Municipal Development Officer and the National Statistics Office-Provincial Office. According to these agencies, they were on the process of updating their records due to transition of office brought about by the recently held municipal elections. Nevertheless, the respondents from each L1 community generously answered queries on fertility and death rate in their respective communities. The data is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Fertility and mortality rate across L1 communities

L1 Community	Average Fertility Rate	Average Mortality Rate
Isnag	4-6 children	1-2 per year
Isnag Yapayao	2-3 children	1-2 per year
Itneg Tingguian	4-6 children	2 per year

According to the ISA and ITE speakers, a majority of women in their tribe got married in their teenage years. This is due to the fact that most of them belong to relatively poor families, whose spouses are generally farm laborers, and have limited access to education. As expected, these young women bear children with inadequate knowledge on family planning methods. It was also found that ISA and ITE families have four to six children at an average. This observation was not noted among the ISE. Most of the married ISE women were already in their late 20s or early 30s. As one of the participants narrated:

“Karamihan sa mga teenagers dito sa amin ay pinapag-aral ng mga magulang. Yung iba lumuluwas ng Maynila para mag-aral sa kolehiyo.” (Most teenagers are sent by their parents to school. Some of them have left their hometown to pursue college education in Manila).

This is why only seven ISE respondents aged 30 years and below were able to participate in the study. The municipal development officer also revealed that an ISE family has an average of two to three children. ISA and ITE having a relatively larger number of family members somehow help their language to survive through intergenerational language transmission. ISE, on one hand, is threatened by the decreasing number of family members.

Respondents across three tribes also revealed that common causes of death include old age, pneumonia, and accidents. Since they eat backyard-grown vegetables more than commercially available foods, the ISE reported that elders could reach even a life span of 95 to 100 years. Due to this, they feel more fortunate than the younger generation since the latter are already more exposed to processed and commercially-prepared foods. As a matter of fact, four of the five ISE respondents were aged 60 years and above. During the interview with the *panglakayen* ‘tribe leader’, most death incidents in their community are due to pneumonia and severe fever which ranged from 1 to 2 per year. This, in a way, could help the ISE language to survive through intergenerational transmission. Longer life span of speakers means a higher possibility for a language to survive and be maintained. This observation supports Tajolosa’s (2012) finding that the improvement in the life span of the Batak gives more assurance that the speakers of the language would live long enough to transmit Batak to the next generation of speakers. It was recommended by Tajolosa (2012), though, that more support from the government is needed to ensure the health of the population to encourage more child bearing among Batak women in the future.

For the ISA speakers, their predicament stems from limited access to healthcare facilities. They maintain a rural health unit in their town, but medicines and other medical equipment are lacking. First-aid medication in times of accidents and illnesses could hardly be addressed. Some of them even reported that they resort to the use of alternative medicines, which at times leads to untimely deaths. However, an average of 1-2 deaths per year has been reported by the ISA. The ITE speakers, though they receive medical attention from the local government, commonly resort to self-help medical practice.

Based on the data above, birth rate is essentially higher than death rate across L1 communities. This could mean that there is a possibility that more speakers of the L1 are expected, thus, helping the community to survive in the future. In contrast, Quakenbush (2011) found that, in terms of vitality, Agutaynen is at risk because of its relatively low number of speakers. At the same time, the population of surrounding language groups in Palawan has increased even more rapidly due to immigration, making Agutaynens an even smaller minority in their own province. Gonzalez (1998), in his summary on the language situation in the Philippines, found that, in some cases, where the number of native speakers of a specific language has dwindled, language death is occurring, due to reduced number of speakers. With continued medical support from the provincial and municipal government, the ISA, ISE, and ITE communities are hoped to exist given the high birth rate over mortality rate.

Endogamy and exogamy. The maintenance of a language can also be influenced by inter-ethnolinguistic marriages. In such marriages, the language that has a higher prestige and a socio-economic value stands more chance to survive as home language (Clyne, 2003; Jamai, 2008).

Ingroup and intermarriage patterns among the L1 communities were predominant. Of the three tribes, the ISA practice exogamy more than endogamy, while ITE prefer their wife or husband to be of their own tribal group. The ISE were found to be the most lenient in terms of marriage pattern. The data on the practices of endogamy and exogamy is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4 . Endogamy and exogamy practices across L1 communities

L1 Community	Endogamy		Exogamy	
	Frequency N=	Percentage (%)	Frequency N=	Percentage (%)
Isnag	5	3	172	97
Isnag Yapayao	117	44	149	56
Itneg Tingguian	631	99	14	1

Source: NCIP-INPO (2013)

Out of 177 families, almost all ISA couples have an Ilocano, Itneg, or Isnag partner. This was an estimation made by the tribal leader of ISA people who also happened to be the appointed *Sangguniang Bayan* “municipal board” member. In an interview with him, he revealed that the mayor himself is an ITE. It was also noted that a number of male ISA had married an Ilocana or even Tagalog whom they meet within their town or nearby towns. However, the ISA couple, if they prefer to settle in Carasi, tend to speak ISA and teach their children to speak in ISA. The non-Isnag partner has the tendency to accommodate the ISA language in addition to his or her first language. Such situation would shed light to Giles, et al.’s (1977) theory of speech accommodation, which purports that members of a speech community constantly adjust their speech with others to reduce or emphasize the linguistic differences between them. In such a case, the non-Isnag speaking partner shifts his or her speech style toward the speech style of the other partner. This specifically illustrates convergence to the speech community, ISA, but divergence from his mother language, Ilocano or Tagalog, or any other language. This could be used by a minority group as a language tactic, for instance, in search of a positive social identity or cultural distinctiveness.

The ITE, on the other hand, generally choose a life partner who speaks their language and who belongs to their own group. This was disclosed particularly by their tribal leader who is married to an Itneg Indaya. In an interview, the tribal leader confessed:

“Dakami nga Itneg, nagtaud kami manipud ti Itneg Indaya wenno Inlaud. Nu kunam nga Indaya, dakami dagitay tagabanbantay ken dumna ti Abra; nu Inlaud met, dakami dagitay agindeg ti baba ken dumna ti Nueva Era”. (We, Itneg, can either be a descendant of Itneg Indaya or Itneg Inlaud. Itneg Indaya tribesmen are those that reside in the mountains or south-eastern borders of Nueva Era from Abra, while the Itneg Inlaud people are those that have chosen to settle in lowlands, along the suburbs of Nueva Era in the mid-west).

The tribal leader himself came from an Itneg Inlaud lineage as he mentioned. He further revealed that his parents were both Itneg Inlaud and his grandparents Itneg Indaya. In their community, at the time of study, a majority of the families consist of Itneg Inlaud parents. These parents, in the same way, wanted their children to marry either an Itneg Indaya or Itneg Inlaud.

There are also instances, although very rare, where an Itneg Inlaud would marry an Ilocano, Isnag, or Tagalog. In this way, their L1 is maintained and preserved for the next generation to come.

In terms of marriage patterns, the ISE speakers are very flexible. They reported that they do not have strict rules in choosing their life partner. In fact, many of them have an Ilocano-speaking spouse. Looking at the number of speakers, ISE maintains its prestige in Dumalneg, a very small town with only one barangay. During the researcher's visit to the site, most of the Isnag Yapayaos use their own language when talking to their spouse, children, and neighbours. Schoolchildren also speak ISE among themselves, but not with their teachers who happen to be Ilocanos. However, there are ILO-speaking spouses who can understand and speak ISE at home. A very small town as it is, Dumalneg also houses another minority group called, the Kankanaey, who, according to one respondent, came all the way from the Cordilleras. Bounded by Cagayan in the north-east, Dumalneg may have become a settlement for those migrants from the Cordilleran region. These Kankanaey tribesmen speak another language from that of the Isnag Yapayaos. One of the respondents affirmed:

“Mabalin nga matay daytoy pagsasao mi nga Isnag nu agtultuloy ti pannakiassawa mi kadagiti karruba nga saan nga miembro ti tribu mi. Ken mabalin met nga agbalin kami nga napeklan nga Ilocano kadagitoy sumarsaruno nga aldaw. “ (ISE could suffer attrition if they continue to practice exogamy rather than endogamy. We could be assimilated Ilocanos in the near future).

This situation continues to alarm the tribal leaders seeing the exodus of the youth in search of higher education and employment.

Based on the data in the above table, it is clear that the practice of exogamy among the Isnag and Isnag Yapayao could be an indicator of a gradual language shift, especially in the case of the Isnag Yapayao where they can freely choose their partner who speaks another L1. Endogamy among the Itneg Tingguian, on the other hand, could help save their language from the brink of attrition. As Landweer (2006) concluded that an easily measurable social variable that most closely correlates with indicators of Ethnolinguistic Vitality is marriage patterns, she likewise summarizes that the greater the percentage of endogamous unions found within the core settlements of the speech community, as well as within the community as a whole, the better are the chances for potential language vitality.

Emigration/immigration patterns. Paulston's (1994) social mobilization theory purports that voluntary migration, especially of individuals and families will result in faster rates of language and ethnic shifts than in the case of annexation or colonization, where entire groups are brought into a nation with their social institutions and value systems still in place. In the present study, it was found that only the ISE practice emigration. The data is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Emigration and immigration patterns across L1 communities

L1 Community	Emigration		Immigration	
	Frequency N=	Percentage (%)	Frequency N=	Percentage (%)
Isnag	1	7	24	41
Isnag Yapayao	12	80	2	4
Itneg Tingguian	2	13	33	55
TOTAL	15	100	59	100

Of the three tribes, the ISE bear the most cases of emigration (80%), particularly among teenagers and young adults. At times, ISE speakers leave their community for good. Although Dumalneg is 80 kilometers away from Laoag City, this town has become accessible due to its neighboring towns, Bangui and Sanchez Mira, Cagayan. Bangui, a 10-minute drive away from Dumalneg, offers its wide connecting roads to residents and tourists alike. This is one of the reasons why many ISE speakers have the luxury of establishing contact with outgroups and eventually settling there for good.

Unlike Dumalneg, Carasi is situated on top of a mountain range, a 20-kilometer stretch of a rough and bumpy road. Having experienced going there, the researchers had to start the journey early in the morning to be able to pass through the same route back to Laoag City safely. Public utility jeepneys, however, are available for one roundtrip in a day, but the time of travel is fixed so as to ensure safety among commuters having to pass through a long road of rock stones. This could be one of the reasons why ISA communities remained intact. Some ISA speakers confirmed that much of their cultural repertoire, including migration patterns, have been preserved because of the geographical location of their community. Instances of immigration are much higher than emigration. Migrants from nearby towns such as Piddig and Adams sometimes choose to settle in suburbs and eventually become residents of Carasi. Additionally, non-Isnag couples and their children generally choose to stay in Carasi rather than migrating to the non-Isnag spouse's territory. This pattern of migration could lessen the threat to the vitality of ISA.

The ITE-speaking communities in Nueva Era are assured of the maintenance of their language which they ascribe to high practice of endogamy. Like the Isnag-speaking young men and women, these ITE speakers do have limited access to education prompting them to marry at an earlier age. Occupying eight barangays of Nueva Era, these ITE communities remained intact due to immigration. Itneg Inlaud, the participants in the study, reported that the number of community members keeps on increasing because of ingroup marriage. Whenever an Itneg Inlaud marries an Itneg Indaya, the latter would follow the former to settle in the lowlands. This is due to the fact that ITE-speaking communities rely on lowland farming for males and domestic services for females as their major source of income. The Itneg Indaya communities, on the contrary, rely heavily on hunting, farming, and *kaingin* 'deforestation' to support their families, which prompts the ITE couple to settle in lowlands instead. Such practice of migration would help ITE to maintain its vitality.

L1 intergenerational transmission. More families would mean more children and grandchildren to maintain the vitality of the language. This holds true to Swilla's (2005) view that language maintenance concerns the issue of identity, that is, if the group members recognize and value their membership in that particular group, then they will strive to maintain the language. Likewise, Fishman (1991, in Tajolosa 2012) contends that the most commonly used factor in evaluating the vitality of a certain language is whether or not it is being transmitted from one generation to the next. This goes to show that the health of a language is put at risk when speakers cease to pass on the language to the next generation. From the group of young respondents to middle-aged to old-aged, it can be said that the intergenerational transmission of the three L1 is ensured as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Number of respondents who can speak their L1

L1 COMMUNITY	AGE GROUP					
	Young- aged (30 years and below)	Percentag e (%)	Middle- aged (31-59 years)	Percentage (%)	Old- aged (60 years and above)	Percentag e (%)
Isnag	16	100	12	100	2	100
Isnag Yapayao	6	86	18	100	5	100
Itneg Tingguian	12	100	12	86	4	100
TOTAL	34		42		11	90

Interview data implies that elders from across communities teach their L1 to children, thus making these children fluent in using the language. Elders include grandparents, parents, and older siblings in the family. Almost all of the ISA respondents use their L1 when speaking with sister or brother at home, neighbours, and to the community leader. However, 70percent of them speak in Ilocano when speaking with the barangay chairman and a teacher in the community mainly because the latter do not speak ISA. For them, ISA is the most preferred language to use, followed by Ilocano. One interesting fact is that the ISA speakers prefer to use Ilocano when initiating conversation with a stranger in their community, when giving written complaints to the community leader, and the language, apart from Isnag, which they can speak well the most. This implies that the Isnag speakers can speak Ilocano and Isnag as well. Given this situation, Kroon (1990) argued that when two different L1 communities opt for integration rather than segregation, then members of the minority group almost unavoidably shift towards using the dominant language in most of their contacts with the dominant group. In other words, the extent of language shift among the Isnag speakers depends on the extent of the interethnic communication that is established. It is, therefore, foreseen that Isnag could survive amidst pressure from the use of Ilocano language if the language situation within the community evolves towards a form of stable bilingualism, especially among younger generations.

For the ISE, it was noted that most of them (83%) use their L1 when speaking with sister or brother at home, with neighbours, and an elder or community leader. However, most of them use Ilocano when speaking with a teacher in the community and the barangay chairperson. Similar with the ISA speakers' situation, school teachers from the elementary and high school, including the town mayor and the barangay chairman are Ilocano. Children generally speak ISE among themselves in school. One respondent claimed:

“Dagiti Ilocano mailako dagiti Isnag.” (Ilocanos cannot understand or speak Isnag, but the Isnag Yapayaos can understand or speak Ilocano.)

Unlike the ISA speakers, the ISE speak their language when initiating conversation with a stranger in the community, yet they codeswitch when necessary. This implies that they tend to adjust with their language when prompted with contacts with the dominant group. Yet, most of them affirmed that they speak ISE at home at all times. Despite the fact that they pursue their studies in nearby towns and in the city, the young adults asserted that they use ISE when communicating with their relatives through snail mail, email, text messages, or phone calls. However, the elders revealed during the interviews that young children start to feel disinterested in learning ISE especially so that homework and school activities are given in Ilocano or Filipino.

The elders opined that such negative attitude towards learning ISE could be the effect of the continuing emergence of new knowledge through multi-media.

The ITE also prefer their language when prompted with language situations as those with the ISA and ISE. Seventy-two percent of them like to teach and speak ITE to their children at home. Children, in return, talk to their elders and other members of the community using ITE. A great determinant for the ITE to survive, then, is the gradual increase in the number of its speakers due to intergroup marriages. This finding contradicts Lomboy's (2011) survey on the status of the Pangasinan language where the impact of intergenerational variance on the domains and attitudes on Pangasinan language maintenance was high. In terms of intergenerational transmission, the third generation was found to use less Pangasinan than their parents, while the second generation was found to use less Pangasinan than the grandparent generation.

Across L1 communities under study, it can be deduced that intergenerational transmission is basically uninterrupted, though there are some families that speak other languages in the home in the case of mixed marriages.

Proportion of in-group versus out group speakers in territory. Among the three L1 communities studied, the ITE speakers were found to be the most widespread occupying eight barangays of the town of Nueva Era, followed by the ISE, having settlements in the five *puroks* 'clusters' of the town of Dumalneg, and the least were the ISA occupying only two barangays of Carasi town. Based on the censuses conducted by NCIP-INPO (2013) from 2008 to 2012, 45 percent of the total population of Nueva Era are ITE, and the most number of them (815 from 104 families) reside in Barangay Poblacion (town proper). Other settlements could be found in Barangay Barangobong, Bugayong, Ganaden, Naguilian, Sto. Nino, Uguis, and Cabittauran. In all of these settlements, there were at least 645 ITE families. Such number and distributional patterns of the ITE throughout the town and the province as a whole would somehow determine the status of the Itneg language. As mentioned earlier, the ITE speakers remain intact so much so that they practice intergroup marriage.

The ISE communities came second in terms of the number of population. In this study, out of 1,814 population of Dumalneg, 1,420 of them were ISE from 266 families (NCIP-INPO, 2013). Their settlements include Sitio Cristalina, Purok Dangayan, Purok Namnama, Purok Regta, Purok Saniata, and Purok Timpuyog. It was found, however, that other towns in Ilocos Norte are inhabited by ISE including Pagudpud, Adams, Bangui, Dingras, Marcos, Solsona, and Vintar. But such settlements, compared to Dumalneg, are by far outnumbered by Ilocano communities. Nevertheless, such finding could somehow shed light to the maintenance of ISE not only as a minority group but as a culture as well. Having found to be the most accessible research site, the ISE communities in Dumalneg constantly face emigration and immigration issues. They enjoy the luxury of getting contact with outgroup speakers due to accessibility of the town for locals and tourists alike. In fact, the towns of Bangui where the famous giant windmills lie, and Pagudpud which is tagged as the Boracay of the North, pose a big threat to the inclusivity of the L1 community. This was opined by one of the respondents representing the middle-aged group, who, at the time of study, was one of the municipal councilors. She explained further that this scenario on emigration of Isneg Yapayaos and entering of outgroup speakers due to the eco-tourism project initiated by the municipal government of Dumalneg could even heighten the possibility of language shift among Isneg Yapayao speakers.

The foregoing discussion on the demographic characteristics of the three tribes shows that there are a lot of factors that contribute to the vitality of their language, i.e., the practice of

endogamy, the present number of L1 speakers in the community, fertility rate, immigration practices, and intergenerational transmission of the language.

It can be said, therefore, that in terms of demographics, the three L1 communities have a *medium vitality*.

Institutional Support and Control Factors Influencing OEV

Other sets of variables that could account for the OEV of the three languages in question are institutional support and control factors. According to Giles, et al. (1977), institutional support factors refer to the extent to which a language group maintains formal and informal representation in the different institutions in the society. Adapting Allard and Landry’s (1992) taxonomy of institutional factors affecting the vitality of a language community in contact with other language communities, this study considered education, government services, economy, access to media and technology, socio-cultural involvement, socio-political factors, and religion.

Education. Educational attainment, as given in the survey questionnaire, ranged from elementary level, elementary graduate, high school level, high school graduate, college level, college graduate, post-graduate, technical-vocational graduate, and others. However, only the three entries below (Table 7) were ticked by the respondents representing their educational attainment.

Table 7. Distribution of respondents in terms of educational attainment

Educational Attainment	L1 Community						Total	
	Isnag		Isnag Yapayao		Itneg Tingguian		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Elementary graduate	8	26.7	10	33.3	22	73.3	40	44.4
High School graduate	14	46.7	17	56.7	6	20.0	37	41.1
College graduate	8	26.7	3	10.0	2	6.7	13	14.4
Total	30	100.0	30	100.0	30	100.0	90	100.0

Among the three ethnolinguistic groups, the ISA community had eight members (27 %) who are college graduates; ISE had three (10%); and ITE, two (7%). On the other hand, there were 17 (57%) ISE who finished high school, while only 14 and 7 ISA and ITE, respectively. A majority of the ITE (73%) were elementary graduates. Findings imply (as supported by the interview data) that pursuing tertiary education is not quite the priority of parents across tribes. This was due to the present economic status of the tribes. Parents can afford to send their children to elementary and high school but not in college, though some of them wished that their children had obtained a college degree. Local government units in the three IP communities, however, offer scholarships and tuition assistance to deserving students. They even provide educational opportunities and employment among the L1 community members which could help them and their language to survive. As Fishman (1991) put it:

“Tribal leaders choose or not to promote the tribal language and accommodate its speakers in government functions, social services, and community schools. The encroachment of such thinking has a great deal to do with language shift in native communities (p.23).”

Government services. Government services include health and social work services, transportation and communication, and judicial services. Generally, all tribal communities are provided with a rural health unit (RHU) with one resident doctor, a midwife, and service personnel. Service personnel include one clerk, one janitor/janitress, and one ambulance driver. Such provision of the RHU in the entire province of Ilocos Norte, according to the DILG officer of Carasi, is initiated by the provincial governor.

In Carasi, the rural health office is located within the municipal hall, where the ISA people and the townsfolk generally visit during Wednesdays. According to the RHU officer, the resident doctor and the midwife are both Ilocanos, while the janitor and the clerk are ISA speakers. The ambulance driver is Ilocano but married to an ISA. Additionally, ISA people receive free medical consultations and basic medicines like analgesic and anti-diarrhea but of limited amount. Also, they may request for the use of ambulance in case of emergencies, but they have to shoulder the gasoline expenses. Social services enjoyed by the ISA include processing of documents for senior citizens, free use of the hallway of the town hall for the display and selling of their native products such as mats, baskets, and other handicrafts, and provision of a public attorney in case of land disputes and IPRA (Indigenous People Rights Act)-related issues. Public transportation is rather limited in the town, considering the rough and bumpy road trails connecting them to nearby towns. Remote as it may be, the town of Carasi provides services to the ISA in the best way it can in view of the IPRA.

Government services received by the ISE are almost in parallel with those received by the ISA. One distinct project of the municipality of Dumalneg for the ISE is an Eco-tourism Village where all their products are exclusively being displayed for sale. Some ISE folks also perform their dance rituals before an audience to promote their cultural heritage.

The local government of Nueva Era, on the other hand, focuses its social services through language preservation and cultural development of the ITE folks. This could be seen in its effort to publish a reading guide for young ITE and those non-Itneg speakers who want to learn the ITE language. Aside from that, the local government makes way for the institutionalization of the ITE language so much so that a resolution for the inclusion of ITE language and culture in the elementary and high school curricula in 2015 had been signed and approved by the *Sangguniang Bayan* 'Municipal Board'. For the ITE, as one respondent opined, this could be one of the best legacies of the present municipal administration, that is, to give voice to their tribe not only in their community, but also in the entire province as a whole. Apart from this though, land disputes and other legal matters are being handled by the municipal attorney's office for free. Senior citizens also enjoy free medical check-ups and medicines. Rural health workers do home visits especially to those who are bed-ridden and cannot afford to go personally to the doctor. Non-government organizations through the local government of Nueva Era also donated *Balay ti Tribu* 'Tribal House' in each barrio or sitio where ITE are located. This *Balay ti Tribu* 'Tribal House' is used for the holding of meetings among tribal leaders and councils, for the reception of outgroup visitors, and for the settlements of disputes. Expenses for electricity and water facilities incurred by the use of these tribal houses are being shouldered by the local government as part of their social services to the ITE. Public transport and communication channels are quite limited for use among the ITE. It was observed during the visit to Barangay Santo Nino that only one tribal leader owns a tricycle as a means of transport. Generally, those who sell their farm produce in downtown markets would rent a public utility tricycle for PhP200 roundtrip. However, some of these folks said that the local government had been planning to provide a multi-cab for them to transport their crops from farm to market.

Social services like these could be one of the bases for these L1 communities to grapple with the demands of the society they are in. Despite the fact that they belong to the minority, the local government through the NCIP is trying to extend their arms for the welfare of these minority groups. This could somehow help these tribal groups maintain and preserve their language and culture.

Economic and political factors. Prill-Brett (2007) noted that in northern Philippines, several ethnolinguistic groups including the Isnag Yapayao, Isnag, Kankanaey, Ibaloy, and Itneg Tingguian have inhabited the Cordillera region for more than five centuries. These people have developed independent communities, which are politically and economically autonomous. Historical accounts show that these mountain people resisted Spanish colonization for more than three centuries, and many continued to enjoy their relative autonomy in managing their local community resources through their socio-economic and political institutions under American colonial rule, and into the Philippine Republic (Prill-Brett, 2007).

The Isnag people of Carasi, according to Cadiz, et al. (1988), were the first settlers of Piddig, a town which Carasi used to be part of. Through the leadership of Juan Milad, the Isnag people petitioned the provincial governor for the separation of the place from Piddig. In 1913, Carasi became a municipal district of Ilocos Norte. The Isnag cleared the forest areas that became the *poblacion* 'town proper'. However, the place was later occupied by Christians, which propelled the Isnag people to clear other forest areas in the place. The Isnag did not retaliate; instead, they learned to live peacefully with the Christians. Up to this time, Isnag communities are intergrated with Christians through intermarriages. The native Isnag depend on deer hunting, farming, and fishing. Deer abound in Carasi; farmers grow rice, corn, and vegetables, while others go to forests for rattan, lumber, firewood, and *gugo* bark.

At present, however, the source of livelihood of these L1 communities has been partly altered. Based on the survey questionnaire, the item that calls for the respondents' occupation was open-ended. In the end, there were five categories of responses arrived at. These include student, government employee, farmer, self-employed, and others as shown in Table 8. Meanwhile, the data on monthly earnings of the respondents are shown in Table 9. Those whose occupation is student indicated Php4,999 and below as their monthly income instead of indicating that they were not earning anything.

Table 8. Distribution of respondents in terms of occupation

Occupation	L1 Community						Total	
	Isnag		Isnag Yapayao		Itneg Tingguian		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Student	6	20.0	4	13.3	6	20.0	16	17.8
Government Employee	8	26.7	7	23.3	4	13.3	19	21.1
Farmer	9	30.0	12	40.0	7	23.3	28	31.1
Self-employed	6	20.0	4	13.3	2	6.7	12	13.3
Others	1	3.3	3	10.0	11	36.7	15	16.7
Total	30	100.0	30	100.0	30	100.0	90	100.0

Table 9. Distribution of respondents in terms of monthly income

Monthly Income	L1 Community						Total	
	Isnag		Isnag Yapayao		Itneg Tinguian		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
PhP 4,999 and below	20	66.7	19	63.3	22	73.3	61	67.8
PhP5,000 to 9,999	6	20.0	3	10.0	2	6.7	11	12.2
PhP10,000 and above	4	13.3	8	26.7	6	20.0	18	20.0
Total	30	100.0	30	100.0	30	100.0	90	100.0

Based on the survey, nine (30%) out of the 30 ISA respondents were farmers; and 20 (67%) of them had a monthly income of PhP4,999 and below. When the researcher asked these 20 respondents how they earn such amount, they explained that it was not actually their income on a monthly basis. According to them, there were times that they receive such amount in exchange for their local crops like *tugi* 'native yam', *ube*(yam), *kamangeg* 'native root crop', rice, corn, and vegetables. Carasi, an agricultural third class municipality, offers vast grasslands to animals like deer, cows, carabaos, and goats. Basically, the Isnag communities plant rice and seasonal vegetable crops along hillsides, in their backyards, or on top of a hill. Some of them have a small piggery at home. One middle-aged respondent revealed that she owns a sari-sari store where the neighbours would buy basic needs such as cooking oil, sugar, and coffee, among others. At times, the barter system is still practised by some. There are no trading posts or a public market in the town where they can sell their crops by bulk; instead, they transport them immediately from Carasi to Piddig or Laoag City. They reported, however, that they do this by batch due to lack of public utility vehicle and the problem on the rough road during dry season and muddy trail during rainy season. They added that they would usually hire a jeepney or truck to deliver their goods in other towns. As of this writing, there were no commercial centers near the Isnag communities. The municipal vice-mayor reported, however, that commercial buildings have been planned to be made available soon. During the site visit, it was noted that there are at least two sari-sari stores owned by Isnag. One interesting observation was that there were those Isnag speakers who sell *tapa nga ugsa* or sundried deer meat. According to one respondent, they either cook deer meat for personal consumption or sell it by PhP200 per kilo. When asked if eating or selling deer meat is legal in their place, the respondent gave an affirmative response, explaining that deer abound in their place. Politically, the ISA communities are said to be solid and intact. They occupy two of the three barangays in Carasi, and each barangay has a barangay chairman, one of which is an ITE married to an ISA. In each barangay, there is one *panglakayen* or tribe leader who serves as the overseer of that particular group within that barangay. Whenever there are important gatherings or meetings, the *panglakayen* 'tribe leader' is the representative of the group. Above all these *panglakayen* 'tribe leader', the local government of Carasi calls for a Sangguniang Bayan (SB) member appointed by the Isnag Tribal Council. This SB member bears the same duties and accountabilities of a duly-elected SB member. He also enjoys the rights and privileges enjoyed by other SB members. In the municipal hall, a number of contractual employees are Isnag speakers, some of which were office clerks, janitress, and social work staff or volunteer.

Forty percent (12 out of 30) of the ISE surveyed were farmers. They commonly grow in their backyards root crops like *tugi* 'native yam', sweet potato, *gabi* 'taro', and cassava. Unlike the ITE, a great majority of the ISE own farmlands located along hillsides and foot of the mountains. They generally grow upland rice variety called *maliket* 'sticky rice'. Some of them

also engage in hunting deer and pigs, and fishing. The ISE elders hunt deer and wild boar for their families. Based on observations, the ISE communities are surrounded by rattan, *nito*, and bamboo trees, which are common sources of their handicrafts. Since the town is accessible to other towns, the ISE farmers bring their crops directly to trading posts or markets. Beside the municipal hall is a multi-purpose cooperative where some ISE are also members and are encouraged to display their crafts and other products for sale. Aside from this, the local government of Dumalneg likewise built an Eco-tourism Garden for the ISE tribes to display their handicrafts and traditional costumes (G-string or *Baog* for men, and *tapis* 'long cloth' for women) as well as perform their ritual dance (*Tadek*) and songs whenever there are excursionists, local and foreign alike. Though this Eco-tourism Garden is manned by the municipal government, the fees collected from visitors are used for the maintenance of the park and a portion of it would go back to the ISE tribes in the form of social services. This was reported by the SB member representing the ISE communities in Dumalneg. In an interview with her, she disclosed that part of the proceeds goes to the Scholarship Fund for interested ISE applicants. Around the town proper, it was observed that there is one commercial complex where basic goods are sold, and small scale canteens are found. Unlike in Carasi, a sari-sari store could be found in every block and public transportation is available for commuters from five o'clock in the morning to five o'clock in the afternoon. There were also tricycles for hire around the town. According to the DILG officer, the ISE tribes immerse with Ilocanos during fiestas and other town gatherings.

Like the ISA and ISE, a majority (73%) of the ITE had a monthly income of PhP4,999 and below, while 11 (37%) of them were into occupations other than a student, a government employee, a farmer, and unemployed. These 11 respondents expounded that some of them accept laundry services from Ilocano neighbours, do construction work, and farm labourers. Farm labourers refer to the *katalunan* or those who do not own the land they are tilling, those who weed out others' farm, or those who offer their services during planting and harvest season. Only a few own a farm where they can grow rice, garlic, and tobacco. Some of them reported that they go to the hills and mountains to look for *bikal*, a slim variety of bamboo known to be abundant in the place, and is normally used for fencing and other crafts. Likewise, there were those ITE who would gather dried woods from the forest for home use or for selling. Likewise, few are hunters, fishermen, manufacturers, lumbermen, and own a small business. Home industries like mat weaving and basketry are done by women. The ITE were found to be widespread in Nueva Era occupying its eight barangays. One tribe actually occupies Barangay Poblacion (town proper), where Ilocanos also abound. In fact, the municipal mayor and his wife are both ITE. There were commercial establishments found near the ITE communities within the *poblacion* 'town proper'. There was also a public market which is open every Saturday, and a town plaza where small businesses like sari-sari stores, canteens, electronic gadget store, and small private offices could be found. The local government also put up an Eco-tourism Park which, at the time of this writing, was recently made open to the public. In this park, one can find the great cultural treasures of the ITE tribes like dances, costumes, religious rites, and handicrafts. It was observed that those ITE located within the *poblacion* 'town proper' are more Ilocano-like in terms of lifestyle. Those from Barangay Santo Nino are more laid back in terms of way of living. Politically, the ITE are said to be well-represented considering that the mayor himself and three of his SB members are ITE. This is why the learning of ITE language had been given a place in the elementary and high school curriculum in the entire town.

Taking all these factors into consideration, the ISA, ISE, and ITE languages will survive and continue to be spoken by these tribal communities. Such positive moves and continuing support from local institutions ensure vitality of these languages. As what Bourhis, et al. (1981) pointed out, the higher the incidence ascribed by the L1 communities to these factors, the more vitality their language is likely to possess. This, in return, indicates maintenance of their language.

Media. In Ilocos region, media institutions, both broadcast and print, use Ilocano, Tagalog, or English. Regional radio stations, AM and FM alike, oftentimes use Ilocano in commercial advertisements, news reports, and commentaries. Songs played over the radio are at times written in Ilocano. Local magazines, tabloids, and broadsheets are written in Ilocano. In other words, there was never an instance where the ISA, ISE, or ITE language was used in print and broadcast media. Among the ISE and ITE, schoolchildren are discouraged by their teachers to speak their native language. The ITE, however, have seen a spark of hope that their language will be given a voice through its inclusion in the elementary and high school curriculum. A language guide has also been published by the local government of Nueva Era for ITE and non-ITE speakers' use. For ISA and ISE, there was no publication of any sort using their language. This factor reflects Stage 2 endangerment level of a language where language is not used by local government and the mass media in the community based on Fishman's (1991) scale for threatened languages.

Socio-cultural Factors. The L1 communities actively participate in community affairs, organize rallies, and practise their own rituals as ethnic groups. The *Kalinawa Foundation*, in cooperation with the provincial government of Ilocos Norte, organizes an annual indigenous peoples' cultural art exhibit where they can showcase their dances, folk songs, short verses, and other works of art. Each of the tribal groups from the entire province is given a kiosk at the Provincial Capitol Auditorium where visitors may buy their products like traditional costume, woven linens, and handicrafts. The three tribes also enjoy a "Cultural Night" during town fiestas where selected tribe members perform their tribal dance and rituals. Folk songs and *daniw* or short verses are also performed by elders. As mentioned earlier, the local governments of Dumalneg and Nueva Era put up an Eco-tourism Park for the ISE and ITE, respectively. In like manner, having been recognized and directly supervised by the NCIP-INPO, the ISA, ISE, and ITE tribes are given due respect in terms of their rights and privileges as cultural minorities. The Community Development Officer likewise reported that the NCIP and the respective local government units go hand in hand in the implementation of the IPRA particularly those governing the L1 communities' resource management practices. Periodically, they review how the customary law governing the rules and regulations in the management of community natural resources is affecting these tribal communities, particularly on land mining along the mountains surrounding Adams and Carasi. The NCIP-INPO also provides legal support to concerned individuals with problems and issues on ancestral lands and ancestral domain claims. These collective efforts shown by the local institutions are a great contribution towards the integrity of these L1 communities along with the vitality or maintenance of their native language.

Religion. When asked if religion is a basis of being an ISA, ISE, or ITE, all of the respondents answered "No". Historically, these L1 communities were once pagans until the Spanish missionaries converted them into Christians. Based on the interview data, 25 (83%) of the ISE are Aglipay; three are Born Again Christians; and two are Jehovah's Witnesses (*Saksi ni Jehovah*). In Dumalneg, there is one chapel situated in the town proper. Religious mass is often conducted in Ilocano. For the Born Again Christians, most of the members are Ilocano; only a few are ISE. At times, ISE is used during their worship service especially when someone makes a testimony. The pastor, who is an Ilocano, however, speaks in Ilocano in giving sermon. For the Jehovah's Witnesses, they never use ISE during worship service. The ISA, on the other hand, have different religious affiliations. Sixteen (53%) of them belonged to the Bible Baptist Church; four (13%) are Catholic; four (13%) are *Iglesia ni Cristo*; three (10%) are Seventh Day Adventist; and three (10%) are Born Again Christians. Here, the ISA members do not use their language during worship service mainly because a majority of the churchgoers are not ISA. Twenty-seven (90%) of the ITE are Roman Catholic; the remaining 10 percent are non-Christians. The three ITE who are non-Christians explained that their grandparents did not

introduce to them the value of religion. It was later found out that these three non-Christians were Itneg Indaya migrants. Like the ISE, a Catholic Church can be found within the town proper of Nueva Era where the ITE usually attend Sunday mass. ITE is often the medium of religious mass. This goes to show that except for ITE, only minimal support from religious institutions is being received by these L1 communities in terms of language use and prestige.

Based on the discussion above, it can be drawn to a close that, in terms of institutional support and control factors, the three L1 communities have a *medium vitality*. This further means that there are a lot to work out on how media and religious institutions can get more involved towards the vitality of these L1 communities.

Status Factors

Social status variables that may bring about ethnolinguistic minority to survive as a group include the economic, social, socio-historical and language status of a group within or outside the majority community (Giles, et al., 1977). In addition, Crystal (2000) claims that a threatened language will progress and possibly recover if its speakers increase their prestige within the dominant community, increase their wealth, increase their legitimate power in the eyes of the dominant community, have a strong presence in the educational system, can write down their language, and can make use of electronic technology. In this study, status variables include social prestige of ISA, ISE, and ITE communities in relation to Ilocano community at the municipal and regional levels, and socio-economic status of these communities in relation to Ilocano communities.

Social prestige of ISA, ISE, and ITE communities relative to Ilocano community.

The L1 communities, as shown in the preceding discussion, have relatively less prestige compared to the Ilocano community. This is mainly because, from the very beginning, these minority groups were believed to have migrated from nearby provinces like Apayao, Cagayan, and Abra. It was only when the NCIP recognized these migrant communities and eventually became integrated into the majority community in the province of Ilocos Norte. But then, these L1 communities gradually gained social prestige amidst the Ilocano community. These L1 communities choose to speak their native language at home and teach it to their children and grandchildren. Tribal leaders and representatives promote their language and culture in government functions, community schools (integration of ITE in school curriculum), and socio-cultural affairs. In the municipal level, the three L1 communities are said to be well-represented in a way that an SB member representing these communities is appointed. At the regional and national levels, these L1 communities are duly recognized in light of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act, where cultural minorities like the ISA, ISE, and ITE have an absolute right to ancestral land ownership and ancestral domain claims. These L1 communities, likewise, are rather governed by their tribal norms and mores so much so that they are somewhat adamant to modern societal demands particularly on education and use of online media.

Through the years, the ISA, ISE, and ITE communities are gradually gaining higher social reputation despite their limited geo-distribution in the province of Ilocos Norte.

Socio-economic status of ISA, ISE, and ITE communities relative to Ilocano community. According to Lenk (2007), economic factors are determined from the degree of group members' representation in and control of commercial and industrial institutions, and from the presence of their language in advertising, as much as by economic situation of group members.

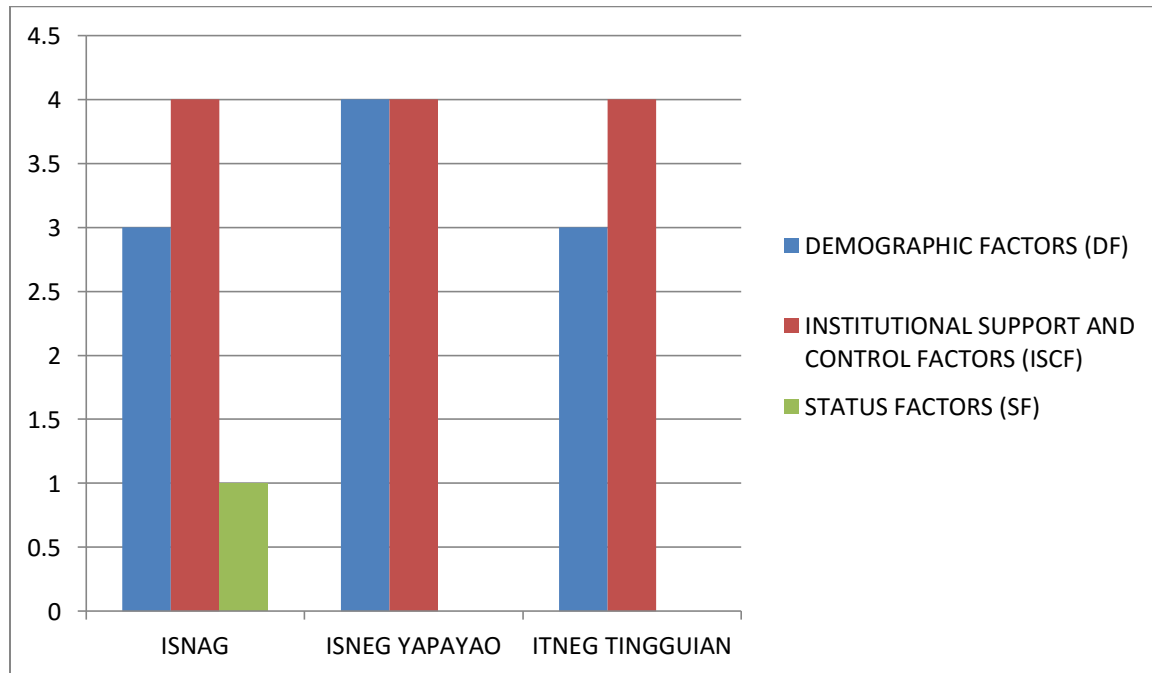
It is of no doubt that the three L1 communities studied have relatively lower socio-economic status compared to the Ilocano community. Based on the summary report of the

Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office, which was provided by the Community Development Officer, 60 percent of the total households from the ITE community lie below the poverty line; 48 percent of those from the ISA community lie slightly higher than the poverty line; while 53 percent of those from the ISE community were found to be moderately economically stable. Compared to Ilocano communities, these minority communities can be said to be economically-disadvantaged due to limited access to education, less exposure to livelihood training and services, and inadequate natural resources. Though they have an access to national roads and commercial posts, the ISA community members are somewhat hampered in their flight to better living by limited economic resources and experiences. This socio-economic condition supports Quakenbush's (2011) finding on the vitality of Agutaynen that one factor that worked against its vitality in the 1980s was the lack of local economic opportunities. Lack of employment opportunities meant that as young Agutaynens graduated from high school, they also "graduated" out of the Agutaynen communities. The only ones who moved back to their home communities were teachers who found employment through the Department of Education in local schools.

CONCLUSION

Generally, it can be said that in terms of objective factors determining the vitality of ISA, ISE, and ITE, the demographics of the L1 speakers, particularly on the number of L1 speakers and their distribution, are essential elements toward maintenance of their L1. As found in the three L1 communities, a majority of the total population (57%) speak their native language. Though these communities are situated amidst a more dominant community, intergenerational transmission of their language likely takes place. As earlier mentioned, this sociological factor of vitality is essential in determining the possibility for a minority language to survive. As what Gonzalez (1998) asserted that in some cases where the number of native speakers of a specific language has declined (for example, among many of the minor languages of the Mountain Province area in the Cordilleras of Northern Luzon), language death is occurring, at least in part because of the much reduced number of speakers. Likewise, the finding that the birth rate among these L1 communities is higher than death rate could mean that more speakers of the L1 are expected, which enables the community to survive in the next generations to come. In addition, the various institutions located in the L1 communities provide support to them in terms of education, government services, economy, politics, religion, and socio-cultural support. Educational support given to the L1 communities includes scholarship grants to deserving youths, financial assistance, and employment after graduation. Commercial centers and infrastructure projects of the local government units also benefit these tribe members. They are also given equal opportunity to run for and occupy government offices. They also actively participate in community affairs, organize rallies, and practise their own rituals as ethnic groups. To ensure that their customary rights are monitored, the NCIP and the respective local government units go hand in hand in the implementation of the IPRA particularly those governing the L1 communities' resource management practices. The NCIP-INPO also provides legal support to concerned individuals with problems and issues on ancestral lands and ancestral domain claims. These joint efforts shown by the local institutions are a great contribution towards the integrity of these L1 communities, which in turn, partly ensures the vitality or maintenance of their native language. Among these institutional factors, however, media and religious institutions were found to have less support given towards language vitality. This is shown in the medium used both in religious ceremonies and in print and broadcast media which is Ilocano. Status factors, likewise, need reinforcement. Compared to Ilocano communities, these minority communities were found to be economically-disadvantaged due to limited access to education, less opportunity and exposure to livelihood training and services, and inadequate natural resources.

The summary on the objective EV levels of the three languages is shown in Figure 1.



Legend:

Score Range		Verbal Interpretation	
DF	1.0-1.67	Low	ISCF 1-2
	1.68-3.34	Medium	3-4
	3.35- 5.0	High	5-6
			Low
			Medium
			High
		SF	0
			1
			2
			Low
			Medium
			High

Figure 1. The objective vitality level of the three L1

Overall, *ISA* gained medium level of OEV in all of the factors, while *ISE* gained high level in terms of demographic factors, medium level for institutional factors, but low level for status factors. This makes *ISE* having medium vitality. *ITE*, on the other hand, had medium vitality in terms of demographics and institutional support, and low in terms of status. This is why *medium level of OEV* was ascribed to *ITE*.

In summary, it can be said that, in terms of **objective ethnolinguistic vitality**, the status of the three languages is relatively **medium**.

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