



PRAGMATIC TRANSLATION OF THE QUARANTINE/LOCKDOWN CLASSIFICATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES: AN ATTEMPT TO TRANSLATE PANDEMIC WORDS AND MEANINGS

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Ever since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic begins, countries from around the world have implemented quarantine or lockdown restrictions to prevent the spread of Corona Virus and its variants. The Philippine government started to announce the enforcement of quarantine/lockdown restrictions last March 16, 2020. Because of the increasing cases of infection and increasing death statistics, quarantine/lockdown has been specified and categorized using several terms. These terms, all of which are written in the English language are highly technical. The study, therefore, will attempt to translate these different quarantine classifications into Filipino and show how these translations may become more effective and communicative. Pragmatic translation will serve as the methodology to translate these quarantine/lockdown classifications. The analysis of the procedure will lead to the idea that pragmatic translation is about being communicative. This translation may give a clearer picture of local quarantine/lockdown specifications that eventually leads to a better comprehension of the said regulations.

Keywords: *Quarantine/Lockdown, Pragmatic Translation, Pandemic Translation, Translatability, Communicative Translation*

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Since the pandemic started during the first quarter of 2020, people from around the world have been instructed to remain in the safety of their homes. This seemingly drastic step is deemed necessary to eradicate the spread of the deadly virus Covid-19. Governments all over the world are trying their best to implement health protocols and long-term solutions for the catastrophic effect of the pandemic. In the Philippines, quarantine/lockdown started on March 16, 2020, with the aim of preventing the imminent spread of the virus forcing people to remain at their residences, and industrial sectors were forced to close. This is the heaviest quarantine/lockdown of this generation in the country and is considered by some as the longest. Government officials used to label quarantine/lockdown instructions in a more technical way describing specific pros and cons and selecting industries needed to operate for the provisions of necessities. This labeling however entails different coined terms to describe the level and density of restrictions.

In Europe, *quarantine* was considered archaic until 2019 and for some countries, for instance, the categorical expression *lockdown* was replaced by somehow gentler *confinement* like that of French *confinement*.¹ It is in the Philippines that different terminologies are used to specifically define the coverage and effectiveness of COVID-19 prevention by intensifying the precautions per category and per classification of the urgency needed. The implementation is periodic (*that is, every two weeks*) according to the recommendation of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease (IATF), a special body focusing on the monitoring of pandemic under the supervision of the Department of Health which in turn directly reports to the office of the

President. The table below shows the different quarantine/lockdown terms released and implemented by IATF since March 2020 with their corresponding regulations and restrictions.²

Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ)	Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ)	General Community Quarantine (GCQ)	Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCQ)
No movement regardless of age and health status	Limited movement within the containment zone for obtaining essential services and work	Limited movement to services and work within Buffer Zone (BZ) and Outside Buffer Zone (OBZ)	Permissive socio-economic activities with minimal public health standards
Minimal economic activity except for utility services (food, power and water, and the critical economic sectors)	Operations of selected manufacturing and processing plants up to a maximum of 50% workforce	Operation of government offices and industries up to a maximum of 75% workforce	
No transportation activity except for utility services	Limited transportation services for essential goods and services	Limited transportation services to support government and private operations	
Suspension of physical classes	Suspension of physical classes	Flexible learning arrangements; operation at limited capacities to cater to students	

These four quarantine/lockdown terms are the most common and generalized that are used for the entire country; however, there are other terms coined after the implementation of General Community Quarantine last May 2020. These terms are localized and are used in accordance with the demand of safety protocol of a certain area. These additional quarantine/lockdown restrictions are as follows:

¹ Massimo Leone, "The New Words of Covid" in https://www.academia.edu/44112154/2020_The_New_Words_of_COVID (2020): 1.

² Maingat, Trisha Alexis. "Know the Difference: ECQ, MECQ, GCQ, MGCQ, Sectors Allowed to Operate and Other Implemented Measures". From the Public Announcement of Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque cited in <https://carpolaw.com/know-the-difference-ecq-mecq-gcq-mgcq/>. Published May 14, 2020.



<p>1. Extreme ECQ Mandated home quarantine, suspension of quarantine pass, no one can go out within the barangay, all establishments are temporarily closed. Curfew the whole day.³</p>
<p>2. Hard ECQ/Soft ECQ/Soft MECQ It is the same status as that of GCQ though it has limitations as far as business establishments are concerned. There are mobility restrictions.⁴</p>
<p>3. Hard Lockdown Non-employees are prohibited from entering a district building, whether it is a school or district office until whatever incident that warranted the hard lockdown is resolved. Oftentimes, the hard lockdown will not be lifted until the local police department gives the district the 'all-clear' sign. Police often ask the district to hold off on informing our parents regarding our the process for dismissal until they feel the situation is under control.⁵</p>
<p>4. Local Lockdown Lockdown on a specific area of concern.</p>
<p>5. Granular Lockdown Scientific-based lockdown. Implementation of lockdown pertaining to the data.⁶</p>
<p>6. Circuit Breakers It was a tight set of restrictions meant to reverse the tide of the epidemic and curb the infections.⁷</p>
<p>7. Special Concern Lockdown Lockdown in some areas as pronounced by the local government unit.</p>
<p>8. Surgical Lockdown Lockdown in a target place with confirmed cases of the virus, allowing other economic activities in adjacent low-risk areas.⁸</p>
<p>9. NCR (National Capital Region) + Bubble A bubble setup applies to a cluster of people restricted from going in and out of a covered area unless they are authorized to do so. This covers the area of Metro Manila, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal.⁹</p>

³ Bravo, April M. "Village in Sta. Cruz town now under extreme ECQ". <https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1043590>. Published June 02, 2020.

⁴ Mercado, Neil Arwin. "OCTA Proposes Hard GCQ or Soft MECQ to contain COVID-19 surge". <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1408879/octa-proposes-hard-gcq-or-soft-mecq-to-contain-covid-19-surge>. Published April 12, 2021.

⁵ <https://www.npd117.net/site/default.aspx?PageType=3&DomainID=4&ModuleInstanceID=4048&ViewID=6446EE88-D30C-497E-9316-3F8874B3E108&RenderLoc=0&FlexDataID=2796&PageID=1>. Uploaded April 12, 2021.

⁶ Austriaco Jr., Nicanor. "Implementing a Science-Based Granular Lockdown for NCR". <https://www.rappler.com/voices/thought-leaders/opinion-implementing-science-based-granular-lockdown-ncr>. Published March 18, 2021.

⁷ Magsambol, Bonz. "Experts propose 'Circuit Breaker' Lockdown to curb COVID-19 spread in Metro Manila". <https://www.rappler.com/nation/octa-research-proposes-circuit-breaker-lockdown-curb-coronavirus-spread>. March 19, 2021.

⁸ Doromal, Carla. Malay LGU implements 'surgical lockdown' in Boracay until April 10. <https://cnnphilippines.com/regional/2021/3/28/surgical-lockdown-malay-boracay.html>. March 28, 2021.

⁹ Jalea, Glee. EXPLAINER: What you need to know about the NCR Plus Bubble. https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/3/22/Explainer-GCQ-bubble-NCR-plus.html?fbclid=IwAR0kJSswj8ESRoLjqSaMtrmDI1_PbMhtaW10Njq3bZhZgKJPvSRXcbGLjDc. March 22, 2021.

Implementation of lockdown/quarantine in the Philippines has an array of terminologies used. They may be confusing, but their scope is to emphasize specifications and heightened cautions. These words and terms are made communicable as possible, to remind the public about their safety from the danger of acquiring Covid-19.

The study will deal with the details and scope of the different quarantine classifications and their translation to the Filipino language, i.e., a language that the people can easily understand. In this technique, the framework chosen to serve as the basis for its explanation is the pragmatic principle of translation which is purely applied through this attempt of translating quarantine terms from English into Filipino. The applicability of its usage will be reflected through its usage in different media news articles/presentations. As media is the primary source of information in the middle of lockdown/quarantine implementations. The translation itself will be explained as well on how it is to be more communicative or pragmatic.

PRAGMATICS IN TRANSLATION, PRAGMATICS AND TRANSLATION

Generally, the notion of translation procedure consists of three equivalences that help to achieve competence: *semiotic equivalence*, *semantic equivalence*, and *pragmatic equivalence*. Semiotic translation deals with the translation of signs and symbols and their meaning comprehension. When we deal with signs and symbols, we are also dealing with the meaning for interpretation in a culture. Culture is the symbolical mechanism to determine the content of the source text going to the target text. Cultural variations are significant factors that affect the comprehension of the text being translated. These variations



have an underlying degree that needs to be explored since each culture has *standardized* and *unstandardized* reception.¹⁰ Standardized culture includes factors that are common to both the source language and the target language but may still differ in their execution linguistically. Unstandardized culture is a type of culture that cannot be translated since it has no equivalence within the target language. These distinctions clearly show that in the field of translation, culture is not absolute and cannot be instantly equated. Semiotics, then, is an understanding of culture - it becomes a critical, unmasking discipline and, therefore, is an effective one.¹¹ Signs and symbols are translated once there is a manifestation of meaning to be understood. In the pandemic setup, there is a semiotic interaction. The virus itself is non-symbolical and as per experts are concerned *i.e.*, not visible to the naked eye. It is not seen nor felt. But the primary way to prevent it is through symbolical actions, such as wearing face masks or face shields, washing hands, and following health protocols. These may be considered as a standardized culture since the pandemic is a global phenomenon.

Semantics, the second equivalence, has something to do with language in dealing with its significance and meaning comprehension. It dissects the content of the word usage. Considering J. C Catford's (1965) translation study, he mentioned two types of *untranslatability*. The first one is *linguistic untranslatability* wherein there is no lexical or syntactical equivalence from the source language going to the target language. Equivalence is always a main problem in the procedure of translation, and it is natural to comprehend words, meanings, and their significance that has no exact or at least the same

principle as that of the target language. In dealing with the translation of highly technical wordings of quarantine/lockdown in the Philippine setting, the principle of linguistic untranslatability might be considered since an exact equivalence for the word quarantine/lockdown, and its other classifications are difficult to understand. Linguistic untranslatability may be an issue in finding an exact translation of the given quarantine/lockdown classification implemented in the Philippines that may be connected to the discussion of pragmatic translation. The second type of untranslatability is *cultural*. In this case, there is an absence of a relevant situational feature in the target language. These features are those factors that comprise cultural meanings or manifestations from the source language going to the target language. Considering the vague scope of culture, it is complicated to detect an exact concept of the same cultural meaning from other languages. In the translation procedure, encoding or conveying a message derived from the source language going to the target language happens while decoding a message of the source language to the target language. In this regard, since there is no equal culture that can be perceived from two or more different cultures, the translation of culture using any of the three equivalences seems unattainable.

Pragmatic equivalence is the third significant equivalence and the main framework of this study. Pragmatics, in the simplest understanding, aims to communicate and relay a message in the most common and simple way. It deals with the notion of social understanding and the process of how a message has been intervened for understanding. **Ideally, pragmatic in translation focuses on the concern of the target reader/audience.** In addition, it serves as a communication act wherein equivalence is about the influence of understanding the relationship of language, its symbol, and its

¹⁰ Peña, Elizabeth D. "Lost in Translation: Methodological Considerations in Cross-Cultural Research", in *Society for Research in Child Development* 78 (2007), 1258.

¹¹ Losusso, Anna Maria. *Interpretation and Culture: Umberto Eco's Theory*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 118.



significance. Pragmatic translation manifests in the understanding of the situation of the source text depending on the interpretation of the reader/translator. One factor that is being considered in its interpretation is the situation of the source text and the target text through which the problem of untranslatability surfaces. From language, its symbolism, the background such as the culture, the technicalities from the style, grammar, and form, the communicative factor remains evident and thus resulting in a relayed message from which translation progresses.

Translation, as a communicative act, involves interpretation made by the translator, which takes the context of the target text reader and his knowledge into consideration. The translator's interpretation is made in such a way which is deemed relevant to the target reader in the sense that the target reader can understand something from the utterance translated by the translator in accordance with relevance theory.¹²

The pragmatic translation is a way for the target language audience to understand better the content and message of the source language. The issue is how this message will be conveyed for the sake of understanding its meaning. In pragmatic translation, the language that will be translated is considered natural. Its naturalness is an indication that the terms and words to be used for translation should be communicative. There might be an issue of untranslatability, but the understandability of the message is the most significant approach for pragmatics in translation.

There were three features in pragmatic translation.¹³ These features further explain pragmatics in translation. The first feature is *situationality*. This is the actualization of the present utterances from the source language that

can be translated into the target language. These utterances are through linguistic expression based on the usage and context of the text being translated. This can be understood by the knowledge of the source language and then be connected to the content of the target language. Don Kiraly (2013) emphasized the situational and communicative feature of translation that includes the monitoring ability concerning cognitive and meta-cognitive mobility.¹⁴ The second feature is *intentionality*- the purpose or message of the source language should coincide with the interpretation of the target language. This is subjective but the success to send the intention or meaning of the source language must be recognized by the target language. In this regard, translation may be a discipline of mediation where language, culture, and other situations and utterances are considered to understand better the sense of the source language. The third feature is *acceptability*. This is the encapsulated step for the translator to receive and comprehend the entire situation of the text being translated. This is an affirmation that the target text, including the language and culture, has been acknowledged and the association of the utterances became evident. The entire nature of the source text may fit the nature of the target language. There will be no question as regards the reliability of the translation procedure because what is important in this operation is the communicability or the understandability of the output. At this point, translators are required to convey the implicit meaning of the original that resorts to modifications, additions, deletions, and other strategies.¹⁵ These strategies may define pragmatics as the ultimate purpose of having it as a tool for equivalence. The method may meet certain issues or concerns upon reaching the

¹² Baker, Mona. *In Other Words: A Course Book in Translation*, 2nd edition. (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), 234.

¹³ Abulhassan Hassan, Bahaa-eddin. *Literary Translation: Aspects of Pragmatic Meaning*. (New Castle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2011), 14.

¹⁴ Kiraly, Don. *Translation Education, in Pathways to Translation: Pedagogy and Process*. (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1995), 16.

¹⁵ Abulhassan Hassan. *Literary Translation: Aspects of Pragmatic Meaning*. (New Castle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2011), 20.



point of translatability, but it will still lead to the idea of accepting what is supposed to be accepted as part of acknowledging or comprehending it in the pragmatic sense. This method of translating may use language ability effectively to achieve a specific purpose and to understand language in context.¹⁶ The direction, therefore, is to make the process of translation from the pragmatic point of view look or sound like the source language, source text, and the source culture.

From the three perspectives of equivalences, there will be a translatable output. They are interconnected to each other, and they may reach the same message or medium justifying the procedure of translation. The communicability aspect is distinguishable, and any complexities from the source language may still be understood. In the context of the study, pragmatics will determine the translatability and the attempt to contextualize the meaning of the source language that underlies the entire procedure of translation. It will serve as a significant factor in further understanding the point of translating it, especially if the content of the source language is critical, just as in the case of attempting to translate the technical quarantine/lockdown classifications in the Philippines. Translating it may lead to raising some queries, such as considering the terms used in the Filipino language. Quarantine/Lockdown classifications may be considered *unusual* since most of the commonly used terms are in English. Nevertheless, the implementation of quarantine/lockdown restrictions is imperative to be the basis for how Filipinos can move amid the uncertainties brought about by the pandemic. All sectors from economic to religious, to the academe to business, and to the ordinary household, rely on the stature of quarantine/lockdown classification. This is an indication that

quarantine/lockdown restrictions and guidelines must be understood by an ordinary citizen. The terms used here are considered as *technical*. As the spread of the virus occurred and when the World Health Organization announced that there was already a pandemic, government agencies in the Philippines, particularly the Department of Health released information materials for awareness. These were publicized in different languages.¹⁷ There are also some independent agencies, particularly media which are using their platforms for the proliferation of information. They gave basic guidelines on the prevention of the virus and safety tips for survival. Media used English and Filipino as mediums of information and dissemination regarding the virus/pandemic.¹⁸ **Also, one of the main government agencies, the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), still must decide whether they will translate the specific guidelines of the most extreme lockdown in the Philippines, which is the ECQ into Filipino.**¹⁹ **Understanding lockdown terms is important but not all can fully understand English. Since the government is implementing quarantine/lockdown in English, there might be a probability of its lesser understanding, confusion, or worse, misunderstanding of the series of directives written in highly technical terms, which are crucial in a pandemic setup. The pragmatic approach of translating henceforth may be used in this, regard since it aims to have a target text or target language that is communicative or can easily be known.**

¹⁷ The following link is the official website of the Department of Health that explains basic things regarding the emerging Corona Virus. https://doh.gov.ph/COVID-19/FAQs?gclid=EA1aIQobChMI4YLHqN-L8AIVwUNgCh2w9AZaEAAAYASAAEgJr_fD_BwE.

¹⁸ The following links are sample of this statement; <https://news.abs-cbn.com/covid19-watch> and <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/covid-19/>.

¹⁹ Reyes, Dempsey. "DILG mulls translating ECQ Guidelines in Tagalog" in *The Manila Times* (April 05, 2021), Manila. <https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/04/05/news/national/dilg-mulls-translating-ecq-guidelines-into-tagalog/860115/>.

¹⁶ Thomas, Jenny. "Cross-Cultural Pragmatic Failure" in *World Englishes: Critical Concepts in Linguistics* (1983): 243.



THE ATTEMPT TO TRANSLATE QUARANTINE/ LOCKDOWN CLASSIFICATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES

The National Artist for Literature Virgilio Almario coined the word *quarantine* into Filipino as *Kwarantena*²⁰ that became a compilation of his poems that emerged during the first period of quarantine/lockdown implementation in the Philippines last 2020. Etymologically, quarantine originated from Italian *quaranta*, which means 40-day seclusion. If one will follow the etymological principle of the word quarantine, it should only be a 40-day isolation. In the current setup, quarantine/lockdown is a preventive measure against acquiring a contagious disease. The strategy of the Philippine government in the implementation of quarantine/lockdown against Covid-19 is *classified* or *ladderized* depending on the situation or urgency of the virus spread. Thus, they formulated several terms according to the lightness or severity of the situation. **The following may be a suggestive/recommendatory approach to translate quarantine/lockdown terms in Filipino.**

Government Implemented Quarantine/Lockdown terms	Attempt Translation
1. Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ)	<i>Pinalawak na Pagsasara ng Bayan</i>
2. Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ)	<i>Tukoy na Pinalawak na Pagsasara ng Bayan</i>
3. General Community Quarantine (GCQ)	<i>Pangkalabatang Pinalawak na Pagsasara ng Bayan</i>
4. Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCQ)	<i>Tukoy na Pangkalabatang Pinalawak na Pagsasara ng Bayan</i>
5. Extreme ECQ	<i>Pinaigting na Pinalawak na Pagsasara ng Bayan</i>
6. Hard ECQ/Soft MECQ	<i>Matinding Pinalawak na Pagsasara ng Bayan/ Banayad na Pinalawak na Pagsasara ng Bayan/ Banayad na Tukoy na Pinalawak na Pagsasara ng Bayan</i>
7. Hard Lockdown	<i>Matindibang Pagsasara ng Bayan</i>
8. Local Lockdown	<i>Lokal na Pagsasara ng Bayan</i>
9. Granular Lockdown	<i>Daban-dabang Pagsasara ng Bayan</i>
10. Circuit Breakers	<i>Mabigpit na Pagsasara ng Bayan</i>

²⁰ Almario, Virgilio. *Kwarantena*. (Quezon City: Adarna House, 2020), 1-140.

11. Special Concern Lockdown	<i>Mahalagang Pagtututok sa Pagsasara ng Bayan</i>
12. Surgical Lockdown	<i>Tiyak na Bahagi na Pagsasara ng Bayan</i>
13. NCR + Bubble	<i>Pagkukulob sa NCR +</i>

These translated Philippine quarantine/lockdown terms will be assessed in the light of a pragmatic approach. The translation procedure considered the following factors. First is the term's meaning in accordance with the content of its implementation as mandated and defined by the government, second is the situationality of the terms, and lastly, the effectiveness of the Filipino terms being the target language/target source.

The term's meaning in accordance with the content of its implementation as mandated and defined by the government

The source language of the quarantine/lockdown terms may be the result of the research done by the IATF upon the recommendation of the experts. Apparently, this was formulated in the English language, and looking into its usage, quarantine/lockdown classifications are highly technical per construction and formulation. When this was implemented last March 2020 through a nationwide pronouncement by the President, the terms became a precautionary signal telling the people that there is a pandemic, a virus that should be eluded, and a quarantine that should be strictly followed. Media platforms relayed the details of this quarantine/lockdown classifications to the people. The term usage may be difficult to understand based on the technical terms used though it contains a message that has a detailed utterance. **The phrase *community quarantine* is common to all quarantine/lockdown classifications released by the government. This was translated as *pagsasara ng bayan*. Initially, community quarantine was used as a warning in Conakry, Guinea.**²¹ In

²¹ Acceptability of community quarantine in contexts of communicable disease epidemics: perspectives of literate lay people living in Conakry, Guinea from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6805739/>.



this regard, a certain place, the entire region, or a specific district will be temporarily closed to prevent the spread of the virus. *Pagsasara* or closure may be defined in many forms and meanings. However, the use of this word was in accordance with the situation of the pandemic, wherein a place should be secluded for the safety of the people against a spreading virus. *Closure* is the same as quarantine/lockdown. This method is called *stylistic informativity*. The underlying meanings are helpful factors to extract the essence of the target language and to make the source language easy to understand. There is a mutual factor that became significant on the part of the target language.

This notion concerns the extent to which a communicative occurrence might be expected or unexpected, known or unknown, certain or uncertain and so on. Here too, the notion of 'communicative occurrence' and the idea of *knownness* may be seen at a global and a local level. On the one hand, an occurrence, expected or unexpected.²²

Community may be translated as *bayan*, then connecting *pagsasara* as the idea of closure as quarantine/lockdown. The connection of these common words to all quarantine/lockdown classifications summarized the exact concept of what quarantine/lockdown is all about. Though *pagsasara* in Filipino may connote other meaning or interpretation, *pagsasara* as regard the translation of the quarantine classification equates to the idea of what quarantine/lockdown is during a pandemic, particularly in the Philippine setting. This may be seen in the DOH website regarding quarantine classifications.²³ There are evident utterances from the source language that may occur to the target language that can be reflected through *intertextuality*. In this

²² Hatim, Basil & Mason, Ian. *The Translator as Communicator*. (New York: Routledge, 1997), 35.

²³ <https://caro.doh.gov.ph/types-of-community-quarantine-in-the-philippines/>

regard, *intertextuality* is seen as a mechanism that regulates the way we do things with texts, genres, and discourses.²⁴ The same procedure is also done to other levels of quarantine/lockdown that were implemented. The generic translation of quarantine/lockdown (*pagsasara*) became the basis of other additional technical terms on the different quarantine/lockdown classifications that make them communicative.

SITUATIONALITY OF THE TERMS

Since it may be considered that the translation of *community quarantine* is *pagsasara ng bayan*, due to the emergence of Covid cases, other terms were formulated as a form of warning or restriction. After two months of experiencing Enhance Community Quarantine last 2020, the Philippine government derailed its classification and thus made other variations. **From the propose translation above, specific quarantine terms have evolved and translated as; enhance (*pinalawak*), modified (*tukoy*), general (*pangkalabatan*), extreme (*pinaigting*), hard (*matindi*), soft (*banayad*), hard lockdown (*matindihan*), local (*lokal*), granular (*dahan-dahan*), circuit breaker (*mahigpit na*), special concern (*mahalagang pagtutok*), surgical (*tiyak na bahagi*) and bubble (*pagkulob*).** This was done based on the original term for quarantine/lockdown, and at the same time, contextualizing the urgency of the situation. In reference to the definition of the variations of quarantine/lockdown, it was noted that some of these are established from a certain area, locale, district, barangay, or island. It depends on the situation regarding the monitoring of the spread of the virus or the result of the initial quarantine/lockdown implemented. In this regard, the situation of the context of the target language

²⁴ Hatim & Mason. *The Translator as Communicator*. (New York: Routledge, 1997), 22.



plays a significant role or serves as an aid to think of a probable term that will suffice the meaning of the source language. This procedure is called the *referential level of translating*.

Referential level is an aid that is a hint of compromise between the text and the facts. Referential works on two levels, the real and the linguistic, life and language, reference, and sense wherein the purpose is to achieve the greatest possible correspondence, referentially and pragmatically, with the words and sentences of the SL text. However, tempting it is to remain on that simpler, usually simplified layman's level of reality (the message and its function) you have to force yourself back, in as far as the readership can stand it, into the particularities of the source language meaning.²⁵

The translation of the variation of quarantine/lockdown was qualified because of what happened after the first implemented quarantine/lockdown. From thereon, many places, particularly in Luzon experienced different effects of the pandemic, thus, different quarantine/lockdown procedures happened. The target language used was in accordance with the prior experience of using it to the same degree but in a different situation. The reality in this regard is the current situation that each place or area is experiencing after the ECQ. The reality here is the restrictions of the area for quarantine/lockdown, the cases that are arising or decreasing, the necessity of the people for their basic needs, the reopening of the economic portal, and the emergence of the essentials needed by the society. **These realities are considered to define and conceptualize the idea of the quarantine/lockdown classifications. The target language should be considered in all of these, as Filipino is the most common language of the target audience. The principle here is the simpler the better, the most common, the easiest way to understand it, and the best way to raise awareness and precautions. The IATF uploaded the details of**

these new classifications. However, this was all written in English.²⁶

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FILIPINO TERM BEING USED AS THE TARGET LANGUAGE

Filipino words are vague as far as translation is concerned. Unlike English, which has specific styles and forms just like the use of pronouns in determining gender for an expression, Filipino words must have a clear indicator first to know their usage. In the translation of quarantine/lockdown terms, the simplest word has been chosen to define, explain and determine the message of a quarantine/lockdown classification. The use of Spanish as translated by the National Artist Almarino might be the best alternative since some of the Filipino words that was being used today are products of Spanish influence, diction, and lexicography. There are certain common grounds between the Spanish and Filipino languages. **The Filipino words used in the translation are the next best alternative if the intention is to really localize the concept of the quarantine/lockdown classification. However, in the pandemic setup, terms are considered as they may be understood only once some specifications or details described their function. Reading and understanding quarantine/lockdown terms and their classifications may start from understanding their content, purpose, and function.** What lies in this methodology of translation is the establishment of *invariants*. Invariants are factors such as cultural, linguistic, social, meanings, styles, and the likes that may define initially the content of the source language and define eventually the composition of the target language. These are vital to choose the right content to become a target language.

²⁵ Newmark, Peter. *A Textbook of Translation*. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1988), 22-23.

²⁶ <https://iatf.doh.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/20220604-IATF-GUIDELINES-1.pdf>





The idea here is that the source text, its source language, and the source meaning behind it contain invariant factors that are helpful to attune the target source, its target language, and the target meaning behind it in accordance with its real purpose. The key to communicate its content and function is to establish the realities that underlie the procedure of translation.

The source message is always interpreted and reinvented, especially in cultural forms open to interpretation, such as literary texts, philosophical treatises, film subtitling, advertising copy, conference papers, legal testimony. There is an exploration of an equivalence between the translation and the foreign text and instead focused on the acceptability of the translation in the target culture.²⁷

Another invariant factor that may be considered in this procedure is the use of *speech act* that is common in the pragmatic approach of translating.

Speech acts are the acts a human makes for some reasons such as to complain about a situation, to request someone to do something, to apologize, and to pay someone a complaint. Pragmatics analyses speech acts in terms of a dual function. This means that each utterance has two functions: *uttering words* and *doing something different*.²⁸

Speech acts may be the tone of the content or message of the source text. This may be understood through direct analysis of the function and capability of the message or utterances that the source text/language/meaning would like to imply. In the context of translating these quarantine/lockdown classifications, speech acts may be considered as those that give cautions, detail the necessary movements within an emergency situation like the pandemic, and establish the content as the prior guide of the people for health safety.

²⁷ Venuti, Lawrence. "Translation, Community, Utopia", in *The Translation Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 470.

²⁸ Hatim & Mason., *Discourse and the Translator* (Longman, Edinburg Gate: Harlow, 1990), 179-183.

It is noticeable that no publication or uploaded infographic materials from the government or an ordinary citizen to use any Filipino terms of the quarantine/lockdown classifications. These were evident in the following: regarding the explanation of the difference between an ECQ and MECQ,²⁹ on the implementation of other quarantine classifications,³⁰ the enactment of the ECQ anew,³¹ and to extend the use of NCR + bubble classification.³² The translated terms in Filipino may be just an alternative to establish more academic sound wordings of the quarantine status, but in terms of its functionality, the source language, i.e., English may be the preferred choice. Thus, there is a practicality in the usage of the target language. The terms may be in the source language English, but the way they were being understood, was in the context of their situationality. The term used for the source language tries to convey its understandability and translatability.

Any communication through translating, then, will involve the release of a domestic remainder, especially in the case of literature. The foreign text is rewritten in domestic dialects and discourses, registers and styles, and this results in the production of textual effects that signify only in the history of the domestic language and culture. The translator may produce these effects to communicate the foreign text, trying to invent domestic analogues for foreign forms and themes. But the result will always go beyond any communication to release target-oriented possibilities of meaning.³³

The main aim of pragmatism as a form of translation is to determine the communicability

²⁹ From the official website of the IATF dated April 20, 2020, <https://iatf.doh.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Comparative-Matrix-ECQ-vs-MECQ.pdf>. Uploaded April 23, 2021.

³⁰ From DZMM Teleradyo, May 13, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXz_3EP0Veg. Uploaded April 23, 2021.

³¹ From GMA Network 24 Oras, March 30, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yY04JHeU5HE>. Uploaded April 23, 2021.

³² From ABS-CBN News Channel, March 20, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1p2bv4MBEYg>. Uploaded April 23, 2021.

³³ Venuti., "Translation, Community, Utopia", in *The Translation Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 471.





of what you are translating. The attempt to translate the different quarantine/lockdown classifications in the Philippines may be technical, and still can be translated, as far as the understanding of the translator is concerned. However, the proposed translation of this quarantine/lockdown classification is to magnify that there is still another target language that can be used for the sake of translating it with regard to its technicality, formality, communicability, and usage. In addition, because of the language understanding that the source language has been suggesting, the translatability and comprehensibility of the source language is not a good decision to use since people are not particular with the terms rather, they are more on the content and message that it tries to establish. A clear and keen message of the source text, particularly in the context of translating the different quarantine/lockdown classifications in the Philippines, is already enough to understand the source language, and yet it is still considered as translation. This procedure may bring along another idea of translating, which is the *cognitive factor*. In this procedure, reading and understanding the entirety of the source language of the source text will give a huge idea of translation based on the meaning of the text and comprehension of the translator.

The linguistic component needs to be understood by reference not only to explicit but also to implicit meaning in an attempt to recover the authorial intention. The world knowledge we have, according to Lederer, is deverbilized, theoretical, general, encyclopedic and cultural and activated differently in different translators and by different texts: 'Translators are privileged readers called on to understand the facts in a text and to feel its emotional connotations.'³⁴

The comprehension of an idea or meaning is a natural step that may result in the natural

understanding of its context. Pragmatic translation's purpose is to easily understand the content, meaning, and approach in simpler terms and methods.

The result of the attempt presents several perspectives. First, this may serve as another option for other translators who want to understand quarantine/lockdown classifications in the locale or native understanding, using the native language. The terms may only be considered as a *label* to understand important factors that lie in them, particularly the message of warning and precautions against the effect of the pandemic, medically and economically speaking. Second, this may also serve as a technical or scholarly alternative if considering a more academic translation of these terms. The Filipinas Institute of Translation chose *Pandemic* as the word of the year for 2020. This word can be technically translated as *Pandemya*, and it is the easiest translation to be understood. **Amid quarantine/lockdown, community pantries emerged in different areas of the country as a response to lessen poverty, especially for those who have not received enough help from the government. Some netizens translated it as *paminggalang bayan or hapag ng bayan*.**³⁵ These words were coined to establish a more Filipino concept of helping a community in need, which was called as *bayanihan* (community effort of extending help). In reality, the translated words were not that useful. English words are still considered as the most practical term for input gathering and dissemination. Filipino words may be considered as an academic option to nativize their content. Third, this may also serve as another method to consider if the people from the authority would like to establish a more Filipino type of information dissemination. However, it is apparent that most of the government websites are more

³⁴ Munday, Jeremy., *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 101.

³⁵ <https://twitter.com/dmmsanjuan/status/1383651126038302725>



into English as the medium for dissemination. Even though some translated parts are not only expressed in Tagalog but also in other Filipino languages, such as those that can be found on different government websites or bulletins, English remains as the primary medium. This is the result of translating it through the message that it conveys and the practicality that it brings.

CONCLUSION

Pragmatic translation may be one among the so many techniques of translation that attempt to project a clear meaning, particularly to the target audience through the target source and its target language. It became an aid to better understand any technical or non-technical source language. The attempt to translate the different quarantine/lockdown classifications in the Philippines gives an understanding of how to deal with pandemic words and expressions. **The way it was being translated may present an impression that the quarantine/lockdown may be highly-technical but may still be understood because of the specifications or utterances that it contains.** The attempt to translate it, whether on the given translation or any other recommendations for future translations, may be considered as a form of labeling. The most important thing in the pragmatic translation is that the source language of the source text conveys a communicable act and remains a practical approach to understand very significant, highly technical terms, particularly in a crucial situation such as the response and movement like that of the pandemic.

As the restrictions loosened, the government has just implemented another quarantine classification to simplify its scope. The quarantine/lockdown is classified into Alert Levels 1-4.

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