

Language of the Pandemic: The #LexiCOVID Project

*Divine Angeli Endrigo
Vincent Christopher Santiago
Noah Cruz
Jurekah Chene Abrigo
James Dominic Manrique*

ABSTRACT

The unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic has wrought a lot of changes in our lives and in our use of language. Scientific and technical terms have become part of our daily conversations. Words like *coronavirus*, *self-quarantine*, *incubation period*, while common to those in the medical field, were used perhaps infrequently by the general population, until recently. Tony Thorne called it the “medicalisation” of everyday language. (King’s College London, 2020). The #LexiCOVID Project was an online initiative carried out during the month of August 2020. The main goal was to look into words and concepts that Filipinos associated with the pandemic. The results of the project were then disseminated through a series of online posters on the UP Department of Linguistics Facebook page (shorturl.at/itIMR) and Instagram account (shorturl.at/yDL18). Responses to our survey featured words already in use, whether in a local or foreign language, but only

recently gained usage outside their technical fields e.g., *flatten(ing) the curve*. Some have undergone shifts in meaning due to how they were being used in mass and social media e.g., *social distancing*. Some describe our new work arrangements and modes of interaction: *WFH (work from home)*, and *contactless delivery*. Some neologisms in the year 2020 were also documented, e.g., *Zoomustahan*. All in all, what emerged from our results is a record of our lives in lockdown describing our collective experience and sense-making.

Keywords: medicalization, semantic shift, corpus linguistics

ISO 639-3 language codes: tgl, fil, eng, ita, ilo, spa, war, loc, ceb, deu, hil, pam

Social Change as Linguistic Change: The Impetus for #LexiCOVID

The unprecedented nature of the pandemic brought a lot of changes in our lives. It limited movement and social interaction, halted normal routines, transformed the academic landscape, and altered our workspaces and work arrangements.

COVID-19 has also shaped our use of language. Quoting Bernadette Paton, Executive Editor at the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), “great social change brings great linguistic change” (Paton, 2020). We had to grapple with words that were previously unknown or uncommon to us. Scientific and technical terms have become part of our daily conversations. Words like *coronavirus*, *self-quarantine*, *incubation period*, while common to those in the medical field, were used infrequently by the general population, until recently. Tony Thorne calls it the “medicalisation of everyday language” (King’s College London, 2020).

Our vocabulary expands in order to make sense of our current reality. Some words we use are already in existence, whether in local or foreign languages, but only recently gained usage outside of their technical fields. Some have gained new meanings, e.g., *social distancing*, or the preference to distance from others socially, is now used to mean keeping a physical distance from others. Some describe our new work arrangements and interactions: *WFH (work from home)* and *contactless delivery*. Some are neologisms or newly-coined words, e.g., *Zoomustahan*. Some of these words may remain in our vocabulary even when the pandemic is long over; others may not.

In commemoration of its 98th year, the UP Department of Linguistics launched the #LexiCOVID project last August 2020. It aims to track and record the language associated with the pandemic, how we make sense of the circumstances we find ourselves in, and how we describe our collective experience.

The #LexiCOVID Survey

The first call for participation in the #LexiCOVID survey was issued on 8 August 2020 through the UP Department of Linguistics’ social media channels. The original Tagalog/Filipino subtitle of the project was *Wika ng Pandemya* “Language of the Pandemic”.



Figure 1. #LexiCOVID First Call for Respondents

The only personal details solicited from the participants were their email addresses and ages. Table 1 below lists each of the questions they answered and how many items they could supply as part of their response:

Table 1. #LexiCOVID Survey Questions

Question	Number of Items Permitted in Response
<i>In one (1) word/phrase, how would you describe the current circumstances in which we find ourselves in (pandemic)?</i>	1

What are the words/phrases you commonly hear/see/use that can be associated with the pandemic?	10
What are the emotions you associate with the pandemic?	3
Are there words/phrases your community (barangay, municipality, city, province, region) specifically used in regard to the pandemic that is not commonly mentioned in national media?	3
Among your social groups (social media groups, family, friends, co-workers, peers, etc.), what are the words/phrases you commonly use?	5

From 8 August to 4 September 2020, there were 89 respondents. Figure 2 below displays the age ranges of the 89 respondents:

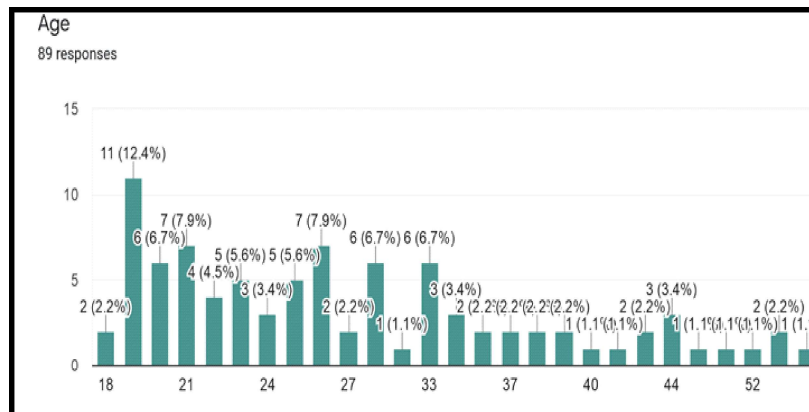


Figure 2. Age Distribution of #LexiCOVID Survey Respondents

The #LexiCOVID Project team observed that most of the respondents were aged 19 at the time of data gathering. Thus, the authors acknowledge that the findings to be discussed in the succeeding sections of this paper may be skewed toward this age contingent, who are more inclined to participate in a social media-based survey from the start.

The initial results of the survey were exhibited in a series of online publicity materials (posters and videos) from 19-25 August 2020 on Facebook

(facebook.com/UPLinguistics) and Instagram (instagram.com/upd_linguistics).

Top 5 Words/ Phrases Associated with the Pandemic

Our first batch of publicity materials went up on 19 August 2020. These corresponded to responses to the question: *What are the words/phrases you commonly hear/see/use that can be associated with the pandemic?*



Figure 3. First Online Poster for Survey Results

“Quarantine” (72 responses)

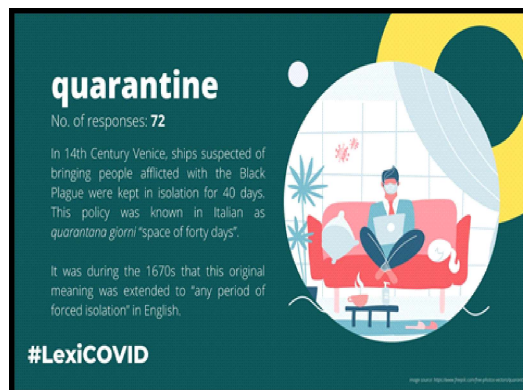


Figure 4. Online Poster for the Word Quarantine

The leading response for this survey question was the word *quarantine*.

Tracing the etymology of this response leads us first to the Italian phrase *quaranta giorni* 'forty days'. Related to this phrase is *quarantina* 'a space of forty days' from *quaranta* 'forty' with the suffix *-ina* which is used to form collective numerals. It is this latter form that served as the etymon to the English word *quarantine* dating to the mid-17th Century (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionaries, 2020).

Translations and alternate spellings of this entry were also found in the data, e.g., *kuwarantina*, *Kuwarantin*. Blends involving this entry were also noted, e.g., *Quaranfling/Kwaranfling*, a period of online dating initiated during the period of lockdowns associated with the pandemic, *quarantunes*, *quarant-eats*, and *Quarantthings*.

Particularly salient in the minds and experiences of many Filipinos is how different *levels* and variations of quarantine were introduced and implemented by the Department of Health and the government's Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for COVID-19.

From *self-quarantine* affecting individual travelers and small groups of returnees from Asian countries already months into their own outbreaks, to *enhanced community quarantine* which was declared by President Rodrigo R. Duterte on 16 March 2020 affecting the whole of Luzon, to *modified enhanced community quarantine*, to *general enhanced community quarantine* (Department of Health, 2020), Filipinos have had to grapple with these taxonomies and classifications affecting their lives in no small way.

“COVID” (50 responses)

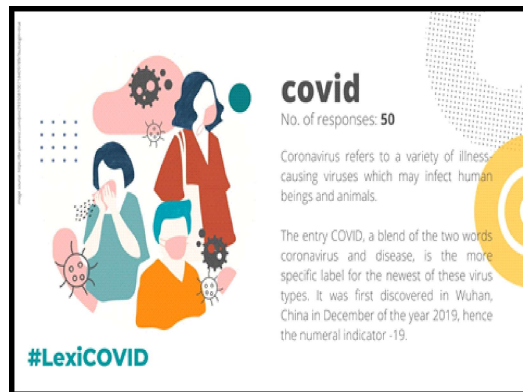


Figure 5. Online Poster for the Word COVID

Coronavirus refers to a variety of illness-causing viruses which may infect human beings and animals (World Health Organization, 2020).

The entry *COVID*, a blend of the two words *coronavirus* and *disease*, is the more specific label for the newest of these virus types. It was first discovered in Wuhan, China in December of the year 2019, hence the numeral indicator -19.

Various pronunciations for this blend have been observed: [ˈkɔw.vɪd], [kɔː.bid] typed as <cobid> in our survey, [ku:.bid], and even [kɑ.vɪd] as exemplified by some local radio announcers.

Other blends involving *COVID* in the data are: *Covidcation*, *Covidiot*, *COVIDDS*, *covidrupsyun*, *covidligasyun*, and *Covidubidapdap*, blending *COVID* with game show host Willie Revillame’s hit novelty song *Beep Beep Beep Ang Sabi ng Jeep* (Camo, 2004).

Phrases describing *COVID* were also noted such as *COVID-19 ka ghorl?* ‘Are you COVID-19, girl?’, *Nakabutbuteng ti covid* ‘COVID is scary’ (Ilokano), and *COVID ka* ‘Are you COVID? (lit.)’ or ‘Do you have COVID?’ (concluded rather hastily when someone sneezes at home).

Using the word COVID itself with verbal morphology also appeared in the survey results: *Na-covid ka na?* 'Have you ever had COVID?' and *nagkacovid* 'Was infected with COVID'.

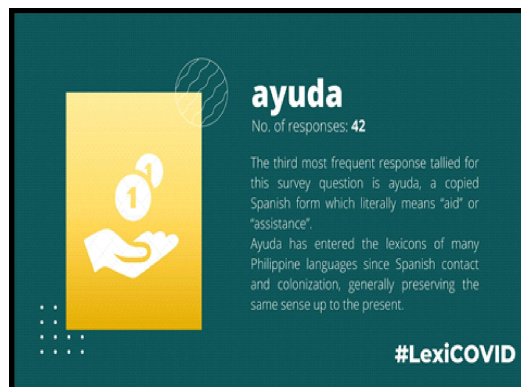


Figure 6. Online Poster for the Word *Ayuda*

The third most frequent response tallied for this survey question is *ayuda*, a copied Spanish form which literally means 'aid or assistance' (Solá, 1981, 6). *Ayuda* has entered the lexicon of many Philippine languages since Spanish contact and colonization, generally preserving the same sense up to the present.

However, upon the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the national government's delayed response to it, pressure to come up with solutions to livelihood and jobs grinding to a virtual standstill has largely been shifted to individual agencies, Local Government Units (LGUs), and on-the-ground initiatives.

Ayuda has now taken on the more specialized, narrowed meaning of cash aid or aid in kind such as canned goods, noodles, and rice given by certain government agencies and local government officials to provide the basic needs of millions of Filipinos who have been forced to stay at home.

“Lockdown” (30 responses)

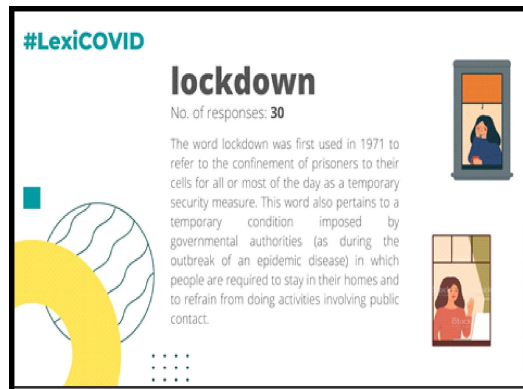


Figure 7. Online Poster for the Word Lockdown

The word *lockdown* was first used in 1971 to refer to the confinement of prisoners to their cells for all or most of the day as a temporary security measure. This word also pertains to a temporary condition imposed by governmental authorities (as during the outbreak of an epidemic disease) in which people are required to stay in their homes and to refrain from doing activities involving public contact (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

In the Philippines, modifiers, such as *granulized*, *localized* and *total*, are commonly attached to this word to describe the scope and severity of lockdowns that are imposed in several areas.

These days, Filipinos create new words by connecting affixes used in Philippine-type languages to the word *lockdown*. One example is the term *na-lockdown* ‘placed under lockdown, affected by a lockdown’.

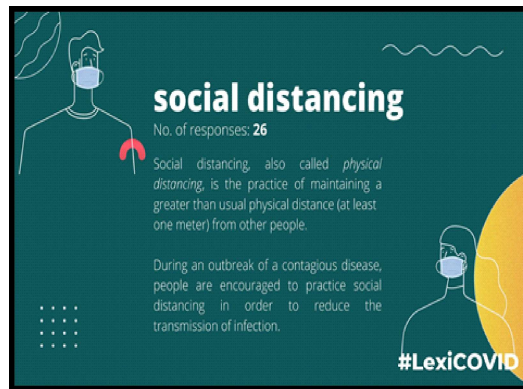
“Social distancing” (26 responses)

Figure 8. Online Poster for the Word Social Distancing

Social distancing, also called *physical distancing*, is the practice of maintaining a greater than usual physical distance (at least one meter) from other people. During an outbreak of a contagious disease, people are encouraged to practice social distancing in order to reduce the transmission of infection (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

The term *social distancing* was first used in 1957 by a sociologist named Karl Mannheim. He used the term *social distancing* to describe how the higher ranks of a society could distinguish themselves from the plebs. It was only in the mid-2000s that the term *social distancing* was used in an epidemiological sense (Poole, 2020).

In the Philippines, Filipinos are urged to observe social distancing as part of the minimum health standards. These minimum health standards also include wearing of face masks and frequent washing of hands (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020).

Top 5 Emotions Associated with the Pandemic

The emotional and mental toll that the COVID-19 pandemic has exerted and continues to exert on individuals and communities must not be downplayed. The second question in our survey, *What are the emotions you*

associate with the pandemic?, was able to elicit answers from English, Tagalog/Filipino (the two most dominant sources of responses), Waray, Onhan, Cebuano, and even German.

Phrase responses such as *Walang kasiguraduhan* 'no certainty', *lost opportunity*, *AYOKO NA NITO* 'I don't like this anymore', and *Doubt sa mga news* 'doubt in the news' are more prevalent in the below-30 years old contingents. Meanwhile, the 30-and-aboves tended to stick to single word responses.

The publicity materials for this theme were posted on 20 August 2020. A video was posted on Facebook (fb.watch/3kuKhM_odn) while still images were posted on Instagram (instagram.com/p/CEHOe47hgn_).



Figure 9. Second Online Poster for Survey Results

The top 5 emotions associated by our respondents with the pandemic were the following:

anxiety/ anxiety attack/ anxious (14 responses)

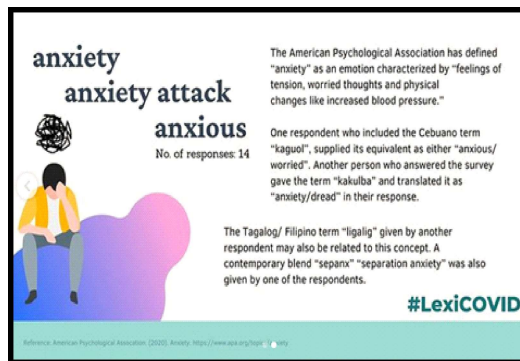


Figure 10. Online Poster for Responses Related to Anxiety

Anxiety as an emotion is characterized by “feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure.” (American Psychological Association, 2020)

One respondent who included the Cebuano term *kaguol*, supplied its equivalent as either “anxious/worried”. Another person who answered the survey gave the term *kakulba* and translated it as “anxiety/dread” in their response.

The Tagalog/ Filipino term *ligalig* given by another respondent may also be related to this concept. A contemporary blend *sepanx* ‘separation anxiety’ was also given by one of the respondents.

fear (12 responses) & takot (9 responses)



Figure 11. Online Poster for Responses Related to Fear

The English *fear* and Tagalog/ Filipino *takot* had 12 and 9 responses, respectively. Other responses which may be related to these are *pangamba*, *despair*, *dread*, and *scared*.

The Cebuano term *hadlok* was also given as a translation of these words.

Other English responses which may be related to these concepts are *aprehensive* [sic], *alarming and scary*, *terror bill*, and *uncertainty*.

frustrated/ frustration (8 responses)

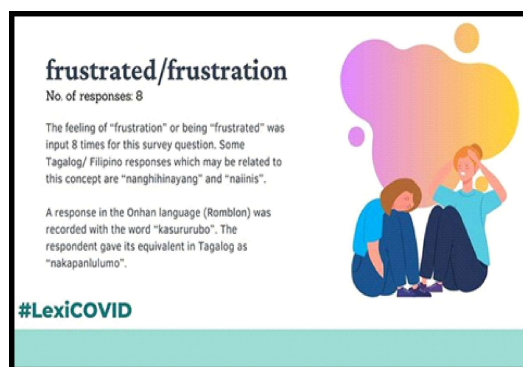


Figure 12. Online Poster for Responses Related to Frustration

The feeling of *frustration* or being *frustrated* was input 8 times for this survey question. Some Tagalog/ Filipino responses which may be related to this concept are *nanghihinayang* and *naiinis*. A response in the Onhan language (Romblon) was recorded with the word *kasururubo*. The respondent gave its equivalent in Tagalog as *nakapanlulumo*.

galit (7 responses)

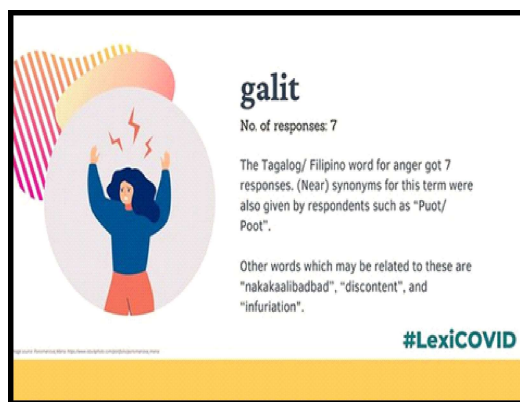


Figure 13. Online Poster for Responses Related to Galit (“Anger”)

The Tagalog/Filipino word for “anger” got 7 responses. (Near) synonyms for this term were also given by respondents such as *Puot/Poot*. Other words which may be related to these are *nakakaalibbad*, *discontent*, and *infuriation*.

lungkot (7 responses)



Figure 14. Online Poster for Responses Related to Lungkot (“Sadness”)

A common sentiment that also surfaced in the responses was *lungkot* or *sadness*. One respondent expressed *disappointment in government response*. A respondent also gave *lonely* as a response. There was also a response recorded in German with the word *traurig* which literally translates to *sad*.

hope/ hopeful (7 responses)

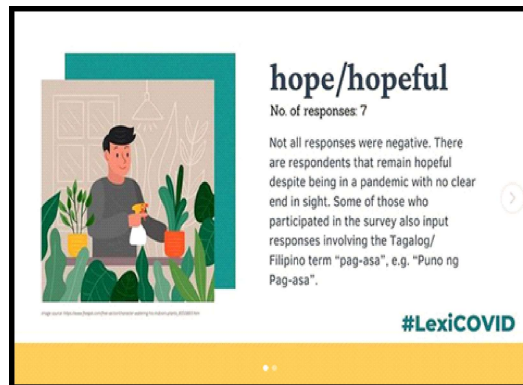


Figure 15. Online Poster for Responses Related to Hope/(Being) Hopeful

Not all responses were negative. There are respondents that remain hopeful despite being in a pandemic with no clear end in sight. Some of

those who participated in the survey also input responses involving the Tagalog/Filipino term *pag-asa*, e.g., *Puno ng Pag-asa*, 'full of hope'.

5 Words Not Commonly Heard on National Media

For the longest time, Filipino and English have been the primary languages of national media in the Philippines. As expected, most survey responses come from either of these two. Thus, terminologies from other languages of the country are not commonly mentioned in national news. These are what we have featured in the following section.

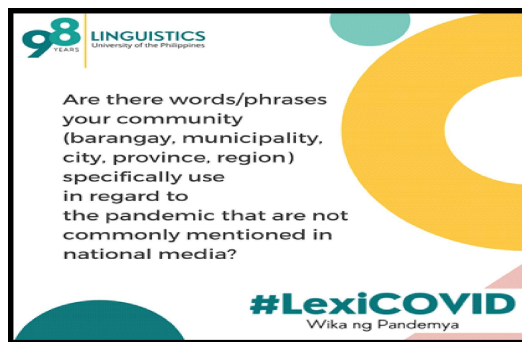


Figure 16. Online Poster for Five Words in Different Philippine Languages

For the posting on 21 August 2020, we featured five words that are not commonly heard in the national media. These terms are specifically used in some areas in the country in regard to the pandemic.

amping

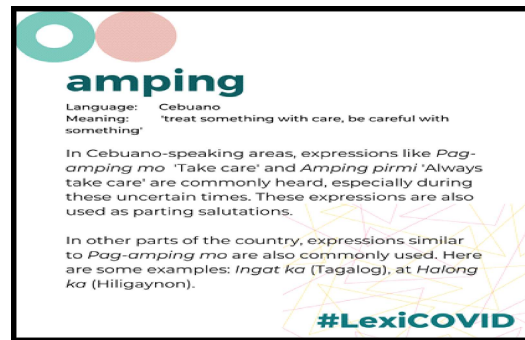


Figure 17. Online Poster for the Word Amping

The word *amping* is a Cebuano word, which means 'treat something with care, be careful with something' (Wolff, 1982, 37). In Cebuano-speaking areas, expressions like *Pag-amping mo* 'Take care' and *Amping pirmi* 'Always take care' are commonly heard, especially during these uncertain times. These expressions are also used as parting salutations.

In other parts of the country, expressions similar to *Pag-amping mo* are also commonly used. Here are some examples: *Ingat ka* (Tagalog), at *Halong ka* (Hiligaynon) (Motus, 1971, 110).

baro a kadawyan

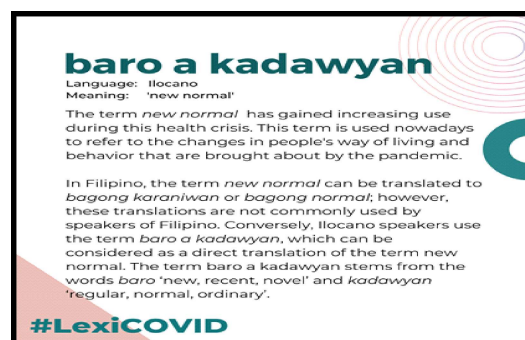


Figure 18. Online Poster for Baro a Kadawyan

The term *new normal* has gained increasing use during this health crisis. This term is used nowadays to refer to the changes in people's way of living and behavior that are brought about by the pandemic.

In Filipino, the term *new normal* can be translated to *bagong karaniwan* or *bagong normal*; however, these translations are not commonly used by speakers of Filipino. Conversely, Ilocano speakers use the term *baro a kadawyan*, which can be considered as a direct translation of the term *new normal*. The term *baro a kadawyan* stems from the words *baro* 'new, recent, novel' (Constantino, 1971, 92) and *kadawyan* 'regular, normal, ordinary' (Constantino, 1971, 217), with the linker *a*.

miyambunan

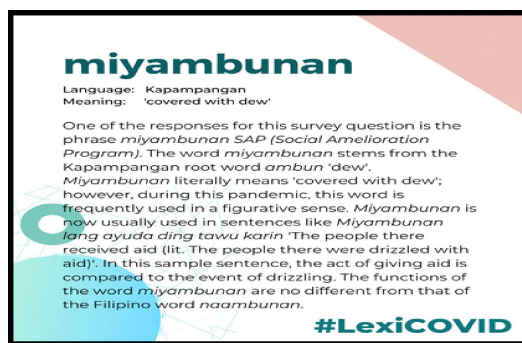


Figure 19. Online Poster for Miyambunan

One of the responses for this survey question is the phrase *miyambunan SAP* (Social Amelioration Program). The word *miyambunan* stems from the Kapampangan root word *ambun* 'dew' (Forman, 1971, 8). *Miyambunan* literally means 'covered with dew' (Forman, 1971, 8); however, during this pandemic, this word is frequently used in a figurative sense. *Miyambunan* is now usually used in sentences like *Miyambunan lang ayuda ding tawu karin* 'The people the received aid' (lit. 'The people there were drizzled with aid'). In this sample sentence, the act of giving aid is compared to the event of drizzling. The functions of the word *miyambunan* are no different from that of the Filipino word *naambunan*.

katap

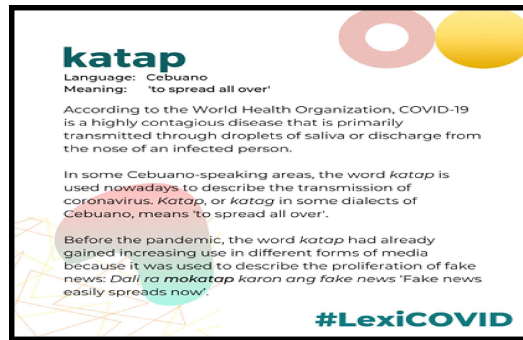


Figure 20. Online Poster for Katap

According to the World Health Organization, COVID-19 is a highly contagious disease that is primarily transmitted through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose of an infected person.

In some Cebuano-speaking areas, the word *katap* is used nowadays to describe the transmission of coronavirus. *Katap*, or *katag* in some dialects of Cebuano, means 'to spread all over' (Wolff, 1982, 454).

Before the pandemic, the word *katap* had already gained increasing use in different forms of media because it was used to describe the proliferation of fake news: *Dali ra mokatap karon ang fake news* 'Fake news easily spreads now'.

pink pass

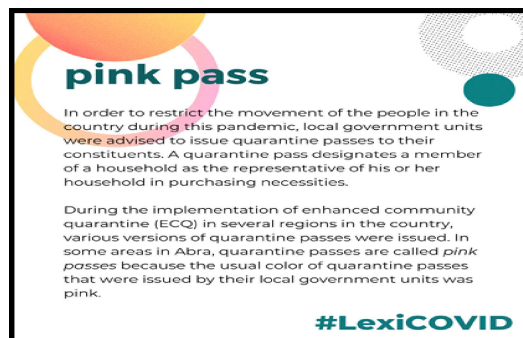


Figure 21. Online Poster for Pink Pass

In order to restrict the movement of the people in the country during this pandemic, local government units were advised to issue quarantine passes to their constituents. A quarantine pass designates a member of a household as the representative of his or her household in purchasing necessities (Cabico, 2020, n.p.).

During the implementation of enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) in several regions in the country, various versions of quarantine passes were issued. In some areas in the Province of Abra, quarantine passes are called pink passes because the usual color of quarantine passes that were issued by their local government units was pink.

Social Behavior and the Pandemic

The next set of responses we featured were for the question: *Among your social groups (social media groups, family, friends, co-workers, peers, etc.), what are the words/phrases you commonly use?* These posters went up on Facebook and Instagram on 24 August 2020.



Figure 22. Online Poster for Social Behavior

The COVID-19 pandemic brought a lot of changes to how we conduct our lives. Due to the need for physical distancing, work, education, and social interaction mostly moved to the online sphere. People work from home, attend or prepare for online classes, shop, celebrate special occasions, and catch up or play with friends through different online platforms, e.g., Zoom, Google

Meet, Skype, Facebook, Jitsi, Webex, Discord, and other chat and gaming applications.

Being online allowed us to continue working, to study or teach, to shop for needs when going out is not possible, and to keep in touch with people who are important to us. Online technology made it possible for us to engage with other people and to connect socially, albeit virtually.

Here are some words and expressions we have gathered in the survey which are indicative of the changes in our social behavior in these times. Some of them have been in use before the pandemic but their use is more prevalent now.

Work

Work from Home (WFH)

This is an arrangement in which employees work in their own homes, rather than in an office. During the pandemic, work-related activities, with the exception of certain businesses allowed to operate in their workplaces, have mostly been conducted at home (Cambridge University Press, 2020).

Vidcall

This word, a blend of *video call*, refers to communication with (one or more people) by using a smartphone, computer, etc. to transmit and receive audio and video. Communication with co-workers is mostly made through vidcalls through various platforms and programs (Dictionary.com, LLC, 2020).

Virtual meeting

A *virtual meeting* is when people, regardless of their location, use video, audio, and text to link up online. Virtual meetings allow people to share information and data in real-time without being physically located together. In a WFH setting, planning, updates, assessments etc. are all coordinated via virtual meetings (Study.com, 2020).

War Zoom

In a traditional work set-up, so-called *war rooms* are dedicated to business planning and strategizing. These activities are now conducted virtually, mainly through Zoom, hence the formation of the term *War Zoom*. Figure 23 below shows the online poster we developed for these first 4 words:



Figure 23. Online Poster for Work from Home (WFH), Vidcall, Virtual Meeting, and War Zoom

Education

Online classes

This refers to classes conducted via the internet. They can be synchronous sessions where the teacher and the students log on at the same time or asynchronous, self-paced classes.

Webinar

This word is a blend of *web* and *seminar*, an event held virtually which is attended exclusively by an online audience (Webinar.nl, 2011-2020).

Teacher-broadcaster

Public school teachers who will help in the production of DepEd TV, DepED Radio, and DepEd Teleradyo episodes by taping their lectures that will be broadcasted nationwide when classes for School Year (SY) 2020-2021 starts (Hernando-Malipot, 2020, n.p.). Figure 24 below shows the online poster we created for these three words:



Figure 24. Online Poster for Online Classes, Webinar, and Teacher-broadcaster

Social Life and Events

E-mass

This refers to attending mass streamed virtually, usually through Facebook or Youtube.

E-numan

This is a formation from inuman with the prefix e- referring to 'electronic', virtual drinking session with friends while in a group video call.

Zoomustahan/online kumustahan

These entries refer to checking up on how people are via online platforms, the prominent one being Zoom, thus the blend *Zoomustahan* from *Zoom* and *kumustahan* 'asking each other how they are'.

Zoom Party

This refers to celebrating events virtually, e.g., birthday, wedding. It also means 'having a non-work-related Zoom session for catching up with friends.'

Zoom Game Night

This is a kind of Zoom Party where participants play games virtually. Examples of which are trivia quiz games, virtual escape rooms, and various drinking games. Figure 25 below shows the online poster created for these 4 words:



Figure 25. Online Poster for E-mass, E-numan, Online Kumustahan, Zoom Party/ Game Night

Shopping

Alay

This is the person who will go out of the house to go to the grocery, market, or run errands. It has the connotation of “sacrifice,” as the person who goes out faces risk but does so in order for other members of the household to remain safe at home.

It is also a result of the implementation of the Quarantine Pass where only one member of the household, usually between ages 21-59, is allowed to go out.

Add to cart

This phrase refers to putting items in an online “shopping cart” for buying. “Add to cart na ‘yan!” is an expression encouraging anyone hesitant to buy a product to purchase it and add it to their cart.

Online palengke

This involves buying produce and products online which used to be bought from wet markets pre-pandemic. There are many platforms and applications where one can buy their supply of meat, fruits, vegetables, dairy, eggs, etc and have them delivered to their doorstep. Examples are Agribusiness’ Online Palengke, ForestHarvestPH, FreshdealsPH, PalengkeGo and various Facebook Groups and Instagram stores.

Pasabuy

This blend is from the word *pasabay*, which means to ask a favor from someone to buy something on one's behalf. With *pasabuy*, you are paying someone to do the shopping for you, e.g., groceries or food, and have the items delivered to you.

This also applies to items bought overseas where a seller, based usually abroad, collects all orders, buys them, and ships the items collectively in cargo boxes.

Plantito/Plantita

A play on words *plant* and *tito/tita*, these words refer to a person who has avid interest in tending to plants or gardening. The lockdown and having to spend almost all of the time at home led to a surge of interest in gardening and shopping for plants, be it for aesthetic purposes or as a food source.

Lazada/ Shopee

These are two of the most common online shopping or e-commerce platforms in the country. Both offer a wide range of goods from local and international suppliers, e.g., electronics, household necessities, food, fashion, and many more, which are delivered to consumers' doorsteps by their logistics partners. They also routinely hold sales, usually on dates that feature the same number, e.g., 7.7 (July 7) or 8.8 (August 8). Figure 26 shows the online poster made for these words:



Figure 26. Online Poster for Alay, Pasabuy, Online Palengke, Add to Cart, and Plantito/Plantita

Messages

We also featured common sentiments expressed in messages to social groups in the poster in Figure 27:



Figure 27. Online Poster for Messages to Social Groups

Messages are mostly of concern and caution, e.g., *mag-ingat palagi* ‘always take care’, *stay home*, *huwag ka muna lumabas* ‘don’t go out for now’, well-wishes, e.g., *miss you*, *take care*, *stay safe*, *always pray*, *God bless*, and looking forward to when things will be better, e.g., *see you soon*, *when this is all over*, *we* (planned activity), and *kapag okay na ang lahat* ‘when everything gets okay.’

Neologisms of the Pandemic

Throughout history, challenging circumstances have given rise to new ways of expressing those situations. The COVID-19 pandemic is no different.

With many words coined to refer to or in relation to the pandemic, Robert Lawson, a sociolinguist at the University of Birmingham, attributes the speed of linguistic change to multiple factors: the dizzying pace at which the virus has spread and its dominance in the media and global interconnectivity at a time when social media and remote contact are so important (Lawson, 2020).

People have created many words which bring humor to this challenging period in history and reflects the role of language as a coping mechanism. English was the most prevalent source of linguistic material for these newly coined terms, with Tagalog/Filipino coming in only second.

Here are some of the words which exhibit the creativity of Filipinos in using language to cope with and make sense of the circumstances. The online posters for these survey responses went up on Facebook and Instagram on 25 August 2020.

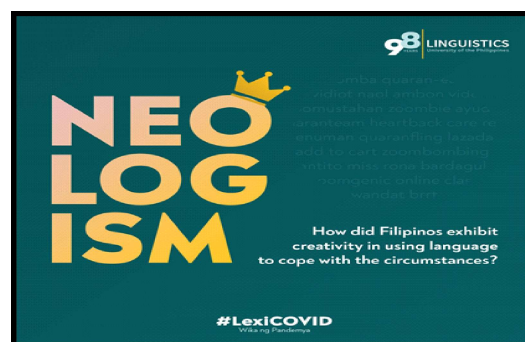


Figure 28. Online Poster for Neologisms

Coronavirus

Rona, Miss Rona, Big Rona, The Rona

These are slang terms shortening *coronavirus*.

Miss Universe

This plays on the concept of a beauty pageant where a winner is crowned (*korona*), referred to in the expression *Wag mo munang iuwi ang 'corona!* Figure 29 shows the online poster created for these items:



Figure 29. Online Poster for Slang Terms Shortening Coronavirus

Zoom

The video conferencing application Zoom has enjoyed widespread use during the pandemic, evident in the many coinages rooted in its brand name.

Zoomba

This refers to exercising or doing Zumba via Zoom.

Zoombie

This is associated with looking tired or fatigued in a Zoom call, like a zombie, or feeling tired due to many consecutive Zoom calls.

Zoombombing

Like *photobombing*, this word means being seen on someone's Zoom call. Also, showing shocking/inappropriate images during a (supposedly serious/calm) video call.

Zoom bombing or *zoom raiding* can also refer to an unwanted, disruptive intrusion, generally by Internet trolls and hackers, into a video conference call (video hijacking) (Lorenz & Alba, 2020, n.p.).

Zoomgenic

A blend of *Zoom* and *photogenic*, this refers to someone who looks attractive on Zoom.

Zoomustahan

This word is derived from *kumustahan* or catching up with friends via Zoom.

Zoommate

This is a play on *Zoom* + *classmate* and means someone attending the same webinar as you.

Zoom fatigue

This means feeling tired or exhausted due to many Zoom or video calls.

Being on so many video conferences is exhausting. That’s because many of the nonverbal cues that we typically rely upon during in-person conversations—eye contact, subtle shifts that indicate someone is about to speak—are out the window, says Laura Dudley, a behavior analyst at Northeastern University (Callahan, 2020).

Fastok

This is holding a short online meeting using the free 40-minute session of Zoom (The platform closes after 40 minutes for those with no subscription). Zoom-related neologisms were summarized in the online poster in Figure 30 below:

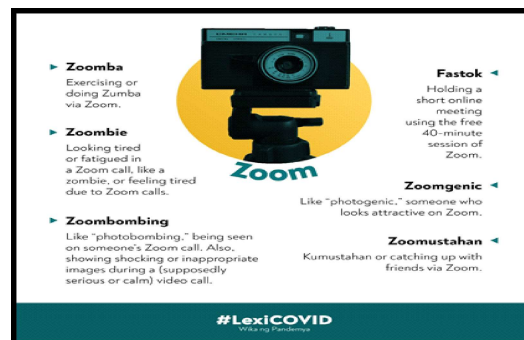


Figure 30. Online Poster for Zoom-related Neologisms

Quarantine

These terms are associated with various levels of Quarantine that had to be implemented to mitigate the spread of the virus:

Quaranfling/Quaranting

These words refer to a romantic interest developed or an online dating encounter that begins during quarantine, used as a means to fill the dating void, and (may) end before quarantine (daydiver, 2020).

Quaranteam

This is a group living together during quarantine, e.g., family, friends, etc.

Quarandines

These are canned sardines that were mostly given during the first two months of community quarantine.

Quirthday

This is a combination of *quarantine*, *quirk*, and *birthday* and refers to a birthday celebration celebrated at home with only a few immediate family members, especially during ECQ.

Quarantinvestment

These are things bought due to necessity during the quarantine period, e.g., gadgets for online classes.

Quarant-eats

This is daily food during quarantine. It also applies to food cravings or food that had become trendy during this period, e.g., ube cheese pandesal, baked sushi, etc. These neologisms based on the word *quarantine* were all featured in the poster in Figure 31:

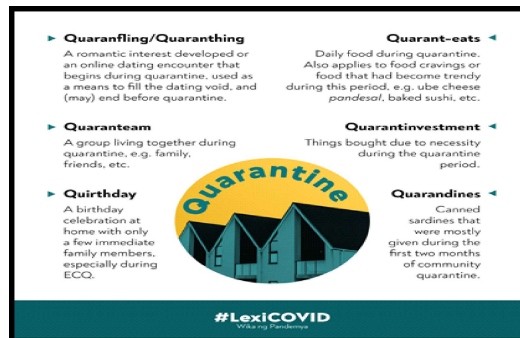


Figure 31. Online Poster for Neologisms from the Word Quarantine

COVID

Finally, neologisms based on the blend *COVID* were also featured.

Covidcation

COVID & *vacation*. With classes and work cancelled, the order to remain at home has been treated by some people as an opportunity for a “vacation” or a break, especially in the first months of the quarantine.

Covidiot

COVID & *idiot*. This is someone who ignores the warnings regarding public health or safety related to the pandemic, e.g., not wearing masks properly, hoarding, etc. (you’reandidiot, 2020).

Covidubidapdap

This is a combination of *COVID* and Willie Revillame’s song “Beep ang sabi ng jeep,” with the lyrics “Dubi dubi dap dap.”

The neologisms previously discussed above were also featured in the online poster in Figure 32:

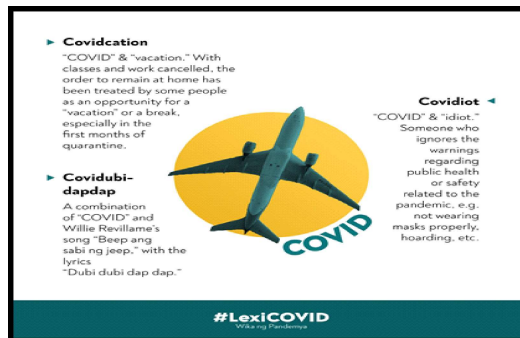


Figure 32. Online Poster for COVID-based Neologisms

Clips, Initialisms, and Compound Words

Various clips, initialisms, and compound words were also part of the responses for this question.

Naol

Sana all, a popular expression that means wishing for an individual's success or luck to spread to other people or hoping to experience or have what others have (renlepgs, 2020).

Pande

This is a clip for *pandemic* or *pandemya*

HB

This abbreviation stands for *heartback*, when someone reacts to your social media message/post with a "heart," it means you also react with a "heart" on that person's post.

OLB

This is an abbreviation for *online bertdeyan*, referring to celebrating a birthday online.

VC/VM

These abbreviations stand for *video call* and *video message*, respectively.

Kapitbahay

This word is a play on *kapitbahay*. It means ‘kumapit lang, laban lang para mabuhay’ or ‘just hold on, just fight to survive’ in English. The online poster for these clips, initialisms, and compound words is featured in Figure 33 below:

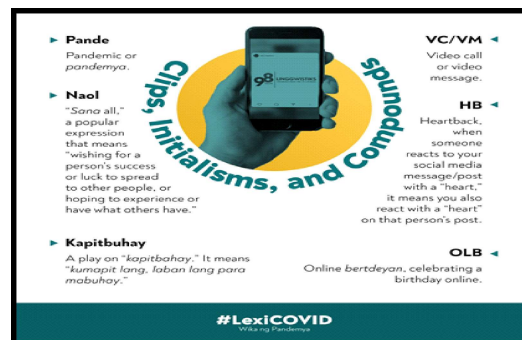


Figure 33. Online Poster for Clips, Initialisms, and Compound Words

Conclusion

The #LexiCOVID project aimed to capture a part of the linguistic creativity we, as Filipinos, exhibited during the initial stages of the pandemic. What emerged from the results of our survey is a preliminary record of our lives in lockdown, describing our collective experience and sense-making. As the international community continues to struggle with the pandemic, despite reports of a decreasing number of active cases in the country, but a number of surges in cases of COVID-19 happening in neighboring Asian countries, we would also expect more linguistic changes to be seen in the future.

The members of the #LexiCOVID Project team certainly believe that communication and information dissemination systems are part of what the Department of Health, the government, and all Filipino citizens need to work together to strengthen and enhance; equipped with the hard lessons (and mistakes) made during this pandemic.

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