

The Case of *Ano*: Language in the Formation of *Kapwa*

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ABSTRACT

This essay delves into the multifaceted nature of the Tagalog word *ano*, examining its usage in various contexts and its impact on communication within Tagalog-speaking communities. Three cases of *ano* are discussed in the essay. The first case pertains to *ano* accompanied by ostension; the second, pertains to *ano* accompanied by context clues; and the third, pertains to *ano* without any ostension or context. In Tagalog communities, *ano*, despite the lack of ostension or context, is sometimes still used in everyday conversations, presenting the problem of how meaning or understanding of the word *ano* is still possible. The third case of *ano* will be further divided into two: IT-*ano* (*ibang tao-ano*) and HIT-*ano* (*hindi ibang tao-ano*) providing the difference between strangers and acquaintances. By relying on Ludwig Wittgenstein's idea of what it means to understand through language-game, this essay discusses how a vague word such as *ano* gives rise to meaning and understanding. This approach to clarify meaning will relate to the levels of social interaction found in Virgilio Enriquez's idea of *pakikipagkapwa*. The analysis will proceed by referring to hypothetical scenarios involving the use of the term *ano* situated in the everyday conversational use of language by Filipinos. The mode of analysis takes the perspective of the author, who is a native speaker of Tagalog.

Keywords: language-game, *ano*, *pakikipagkapwa*, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Virgilio Enriquez

This essay will examine the multifaceted usage of the Tagalog word *ano*, encompassing interrogative, filler, and referential contexts. In colloquial discourse, *ano* serves as a versatile placeholder, substituting for uncertain words or thoughts. Grasping the intricacies of *ano* enriches comprehension in Tagalog communication.

Tagalog belongs to the Central Philippine subgroup of Philippine languages. It is a component of the Western-Malayo-Polynesian cluster of Austronesian languages. Based on the 2020 Census of Population and Housing by the Philippine Statistics Authority, "10,522,507 households or about 39.9% of the of the total 26,388,654 households" in the Philippines speak Tagalog (Mapa 1).

Ano's basic translation in English is "what" (Ramos 15; Panganiban 141) and the word is conventionally used for its interrogative functions (Sioson 48). *Ano ang pangalan mo?* can be literally translated into "What is your name?" with *ano* translated as "what" and *pangalan*, as "name." *Mo* is a pronoun which pertains to second-person ownership and can thus translate to "your." *Ano* also has non-interrogative functions. As cited by Japanese linguist Naonori Nagaya (92), "[a]no is also used as an indefinite substitute for a word the speaker cannot remember, equivalent to the English 'thingamabob,' 'thingamajig,' 'whatsisname,' etc." *Ano* also "occurs as an exclamation of mild surprise, mild annoyance, etc., similar in meaning to certain uses of 'well'" (Schachter and Otnes 509). Speakers of Tagalog commonly use the word *ano* for various non-interrogative purposes, including rhetorical questioning, expressing assertions, and serving as a placeholder or filler (Nagaya 108). The 2001 edition of *UP Diksiyonaryong Filipino* aside from noting that *ano* has interrogative uses, also adds that *ano* is equivalent to *kwan*. *Kwan* is a Hiligaynon/Ilonggo word, diffused into Tagalog, that is also a 'catch-all,' a 'whatchamacallit,' or a 'placeholder word' (Salas 1).

Ano as a placeholder bears different meanings in different scenarios. In the next section, three cases of *ano* will be discussed: 1) *ano* with ostensive context, which pertains to the process of showing or exhibiting, such as finger-pointing; 2) *ano* with context clues; and 3) *ano* without ostension and context clues. *Ano* as a word presents a multiplicity of meanings, which has been found in different cultures. As British linguist Robert Henry Robins points out, borrowing from the Stoic tradition, "word meanings do not exist in isolation, and they may differ according to the collocation in which they are used" (21). Dutch linguist Otto Panman calls this phenomenon of a word having more than one meaning as "polyvalency" (106), which has two types: polysemy and homonymy. Polysemy refers to a situation where two meanings of a word are interconnected, sharing common membership within a broader semantic classification while homonymy refers to a situation where two meanings of a given word (or derivation) are distinct. "Bat," as the airborne mammal, having a different meaning from "bat," as the implement in a baseball game, is a homonymy since the different meanings are not related. "Mouth," as part of the human body, having different meaning from "mouth," as the outlet of a river, is a polysemy since the different meanings are related—both describing an opening (Stokoe 403). *Ano* being a literal "what," while also being a placeholder—almost a universal one at that—could be challenging to group under polysemy or homonymy. At one point, *ano* can be considered a homonymy since it can be a filler or expression such as saying "uh" or "um" in English when someone is thinking or hesitating. In this context, *ano* takes on a different function, showcasing multiple meanings for the same word but without a direct semantic relationship between them. Nagaya also considered *ano* as polysemy stating that "the multifunctionality

of *ano* in Tagalog should be understood as a polysemy network with the placeholder use being basic” (108).

Another phenomenon can also be considered: indeterminacy. Polysemy denotes a phenomenon in which a single word encompasses multiple interconnected meanings, often sharing a common semantic classification. In contrast, indeterminacy signifies a deficiency in precision or clarity of meaning. It can manifest in various forms, including lexical ambiguity, syntactic ambiguity, semantic vagueness, or ambiguity in speech acts (Ravin and Leacock 2). *Ano* can also manifest in conversations without any context, no ostension or context clues. In this case, the meaning of *ano* can be considered indeterminate.

What is notable, however, is that despite the lack of any context in the use of *ano* in a conversation, it seems that those who use the indeterminate *ano* could still understand each other. How does one account for this?

The meaning or understanding that arises from conversations where *ano* is used without any context will be foregrounded in the discussion. In this regard, Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein’s philosophical concept of language-game will be utilized to elucidate how understanding arises out of conversations. A language-game is a structured activity involving the use of language for communication and learning, encompassing processes like naming objects and repeating words, akin to how children learn their native language. Later in this essay, Virgilio Enriquez’s work on *pakikipagkapwa* will also be used to provide context for language-games as they manifest in the Filipino experience. It will be proposed that the higher the level of *pakikipagkapwa* between interlocutors, the greater the understanding between them.

In this essay, it is essential to clarify that the discourse marker function of *ano* will not be addressed. Discourse markers are regarded “as syntactically optional in the sense that its removal does not alter the grammaticality of its host sentence” thereby functioning as adverbs or interjections (Shourup 231). In Japanese, *ano* (あの), equivalent to ‘that’, ‘the’ or ‘uhm’, is also prominently used in an interjectory manner (Wang 41; Cook 21). Instead, this essay will focus on instances where in Tagalog conversations, *ano* is used as word replacement.

Cases of *Ano*

C1

P1: “Saan po yung simbahan?” (“Where is the church?”; *my trans.*)

P2: “Dyan sa bandang ano.” –while finger-pointing near the tall McDo’s post. (“There [near x].”; *my trans.*)

Dyan will be used extensively in all three cases. It directly translates to “there.” In the first case, it is noticeable that the tourist (P1) is asking for directions or for the location of the church. In all three cases, P1 is asking the same question. The differences in each case will pertain to the answer of the tricycle driver (P2) and how the driver uses the word *ano*.

Banda is literally “side.” “*Sa bandang*” can then be roughly translated to “beside” or, in a more liberal sense, “nearby.”

P2’s answer here can be divided into:

Dyan | sa bandang | ano;

translated into,

there | nearby | x.

One important part of the context surrounding P2’s statement is his finger pointing to the tall McDo’s post. Finger-pointing alludes to what Wittgenstein regarded in his book, *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), as central to the ostensive teaching of words. In teaching a word to someone, finger-pointing to something can sometimes work. The idea is to “establish an associative connection between word and thing” (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* 7)¹. In the case of P2, with the use of finger-pointing, an associative connection between *ano* and the McDo’s post has been established. P1 can then just assume that the *ano*, which is a variable at that point, can be the McDo’s post, and P1 can thus imagine that the church is near the McDo’s post.

With ostensive clues, *ano* can be much easier to decipher, but it does not always work that way. For one, emotions or any other internal “thing” (e.g., consciousness) cannot be pointed at. At most, the finger-pointing will only be targeted at the self’s body. Pointing also brings forth ambiguity. What the finger-pointing does is to refocus an interlocutor’s attention to an area where the thing associated with the word can be. If someone asks me what a chair is, using ostensive teaching, I might point a finger at a certain chair in the room. In that case, I only assumed that the one who asked me noticed and understood that the word chair pertains to the actual chair to which I pointed. What is stopping the person who asked me to focus instead on the floor where the chair stands, or perhaps focus on the cat sitting on the chair? If the person who asked me had no idea about what a floor or a cat is, he could think that the floor or the cat is the “chair.” The use of ostensive definitions to connect language to reality stems from a fundamental error—confusing the object indicated when explaining a word with the actual meaning of the word (Harris 45).

While ostension in language bears such problems, the context it provides is more sufficient compared to the next cases that this essay will analyze. Let us consider **case two**:

C2

P1: “Saan po yung simbahan?” (“Where is the church?”; *my trans.*)

P2: “Dyan sa bandang ano ng McDo.” (“There [near x of McDo].”; *my trans.*)

Another rough translation for P2’s answer in case two can be: “There around McDo.” “Around McDo” is an implication of x being near McDo. In the second case, no finger-pointing happened; however, the notion of McDo is already included in the statement. Another aspect added to case two is the phrase “*ano ng McDo*.” *Ano*, in the second case, is not necessarily used in isolation. The phrase “*ng McDo*” translates to “of McDo,” implying that *ano* here is somewhat in relation to McDo. *Ano* here may be the replacement of words such as “side,” “front,” or perhaps, “statue” (of McDo).

P2’s answer, in the second case, can be divided into:

Dyan | sa bandang | ano | ng McDo;

translated into,

there | near | x | of McDo.

Despite the lack of ostension in the second case, context clues are present. In the face of an indeterminate *ano*, every clue is helpful. The church P1 is looking for can be assumed to be in relation to McDo and since *sa bandang* was used, the church can be anywhere “near” McDo. As *ano* could be anything in relation to McDo, alongside P1’s guessing of such an x, she also must guess which sort of “near” the church is from x. Context clues have historically been regarded as contributory to understanding words that are unfamiliar (Dulin; McCullough). *Ano* bears the vagueness of being a variable, thus, *ano* as a word replacement is technically unfamiliar.

Context clues work best when the unfamiliar word is redundant within the rest of the context because these clues provide hints or information surrounding the unknown word, making it easier to infer its meaning (Graves et al. 342). When a word is redundant within its context, this means that other words or phrases nearby convey similar information or serve the same purpose. In that regard, the context clues serve as direct meaning or a description of an unfamiliar word, all while within the sentence. *Ano* in the second case unfortunately is not redundant. While it is arguable that *ano* in P2’s answer is just a dangling redundancy since “near McDo” can itself suffice, depending on the speaker, *ano* may bear significant addition to

the statement—albeit hidden. *Ano* here can give more context to the nearness of the church to McDo.

While educator Lee Deighton (1959) remarked that “context always determines the meanings of a word, it does not always reveal it,” education and language researchers Elinore Kress Schatz and R. Scott Baldwin considered such statements as overestimations. According to their study, “context clues do not reveal the meanings of low-frequency words in naturally occurring prose” (451). Despite Deighton’s assertion that context always determines word meanings, researchers like Schatz and Baldwin have found that context clues are not always sufficient, especially for low-frequency words. This suggests that understanding unfamiliar words often involves guesswork. In the case of *ano*, context clues are significantly helpful since without them, one starts from nothing. At least with context clues, the meaning of an unfamiliar word may be surmised.

This leads to the last case of *ano*, one where its use in a sentence is not supported by any sort of context nor ostension. Let us consider **case three**.

C3

P1: “Saan po yung simbahan?” (“Where is the church?”; *my trans.*)

P2: “Dyan sa ano.” (“There [in x].”; *my trans.*)

Sa translates to “in.” This implies that the church in the third case is in *x*. P2 here answered the question directly (without relying on *'banda'*). However, his answer is an indeterminate *ano*.

It is important to note that in the third case of *ano*, context clues are not entirely absent. In conversations, not only the text or gestures matter, but intonations too. Intonation refers to aspects akin to prosody or suprasegmentals. In English, for example, the manner of expression involves not only changes in pitch but also considerations like duration of tone, strength of emphasis, and various other elements, including voice quality (Levis 38). One sort of intonation could be characterized by sustained pitch, where the speaker assumes they are being understood. Usually regarded as declarative or falling intonation, in this pattern, the pitch generally starts higher and falls toward the end of the utterance. This intonation conveys a sense of completion or certainty in the speaker’s statement, indicating that the interlocutor expects agreement or acknowledgment. This is the possible intonation of P2 in the third case. Tagalogs are mostly aware that using the word *ano* can be quite confusing to the hearer. This is supported by discussions within the Tagalog language community. Reddit’s r/Tagalog forum has addressed this topic, acknowledging that hearing *ano* used habitually as placeholder can

be distracting (u/antisocialforkedup). In some cases, a Tagalog using *ano* usually expects that the hearer is aware or familiar with the *ano* he is trying to point out. If it was not understood, the hearer could then ask for clarification. As Filipino philosopher Jerwin Agpaoa describes, “Filipinos love to feel an air of certainty around them. Sometimes, they ask the obvious to make sure that they fully know what they are getting themselves into” (17). Without P1 asking for clarification, P2 might assume that P1 is familiar with the McDo statue.

While intonations can be a clue in trying to decipher *ano* in the third case, it is also important to note that cultural differences affect the use of intonations. Such differences can even sometimes lead to miscommunication and, therefore, conflict as American linguist John Gumperz explains (34). It is still important to consider that intonations encode meaning in a dialogical way (Prieto 378). The cultural differences factor into the difficulty in guessing what *ano* is in the third case. This is especially more problematic in the case of a foreign tourist being P1, since a foreign tourist could have a more difficult time entering into a dialogical interaction with a local tricycle driver.

Let us consider changing P2 to someone familiar with P1, such as a friend accompanying P1 to Silang. The same question is asked: *Saan yung simbahan?* with the same reply, this time coming from the long-time friend: *Dyan sa ano*. There is a possibility in this case that P1 may get the answer right away, despite *ano* being an indeterminate word replacement.

The wide use of the word *ano* can truly be confusing. But how is it such a normal occurrence in Tagalog conversations? The Tagalogs, seem to understand each other despite the presence of the hazy term, *ano*. This leads us to one of the mysteries in the philosophy of language: understanding. How do Tagalogs make sense of the ambiguous *ano*?

Establishing rules in language can be tricky. While there are actual grammar rules, when it comes to languages' syntax and semantics, understood meaning can still become convoluted. As Wittgenstein explains, there is no one general form of language, but only resemblances—between language schemas (*Philosophical Investigations* 36). Rules on interpretations may differ from one language to another, from one language system of a certain culture or place to another language system.

There is a difference between hearing the vague reply from a total stranger and hearing it from someone with whom one is familiar. What makes this difference? Is it because one trusted the person more than the stranger? Is it the experiences they shared? Perhaps, this is what Wittgenstein refers to when he claims that language is shared. The more experiences shared with other people, the more rules

may be established (*Philosophical Investigations* 88) which stems from learning and formulating the rules of the language ‘game’ (*Philosophical Investigations* 31). These languages, pushed by their own rules, are woven, overlapped and crisscrossed, thus, the concept of family resemblance in language (*Philosophical Investigations* 36). Words such as *erap*, *tol*, *kosa*, *pare*, *bay*, and so on are all words used by Tagalog speakers. They all look different, and have different origins but semantically they are very much related. *Erap* is a reversed word for *pare*. *Pare* means “buddy.” *Tol* is from the word *utol* which means brother or sister—which also may mean “buddy.” *Bay* is originally a Cebuano word, borrowed by the Tagalogs, and it may also mean “buddy.” *Kosa* means someone who is a jail mate, or an acquaintance in jail. As the word is also used by non-convicts, it also means “buddy” in ordinary conversations. Different Tagalog friend groups may use one or the other to refer to each other. In these cases, rules for using the word have been established.

As Wittgenstein remarks, “Language is a labyrinth of paths. You approach from one side and know your way about; you approach the same place from another side and no longer know your way about” (*Philosophical Investigations* 88). Language originates from many different “sides” creating a labyrinth-like path. These paths may cross, and in these intersections of paths, similarities can be seen. In these intersections, we may even see the term *ano* and its different uses. In one conversation, *ano* may mean one thing, while in another, it could mean entirely different. Finding *ano* in one conversation, looking at its context, knowing the interlocutors, possibly their attitudes and behaviors leading to their use of *ano*, we may start to realize what that word is or what it pertains to. We may realize that the use and the context of *ano* in a specific conversation is already familiar to us—a language schema we have already practiced. However, since it is from another path in the labyrinth, we are not yet sure about what the word is in relation to its origin. No matter how familiar we are with *ano*’s use in a conversation, its specific reference can still be unknown to us. At best, once understanding arises, only the interlocutors know the meaning of *ano* in their conversation. Outsiders are left to guess.

Another question can be raised: do the interlocutors really understand each other when one or more of them use vague, indeterminate words like *ano*? As Wittgenstein asks:

“But do you really explain to the other person what you yourself understand? Don’t you leave it to him to guess the essential thing? You give him examples, but he must guess their drift, to guess your intention.”
 --Every explanation which I can give myself I give to him too. “He guesses what I mean” would amount to: “various interpretations of my explanation come to his mind, and he picks one of them.” So, in this case he could ask; and I could and would answer him. (*Philosophical Investigations* 90)

Wittgenstein challenges the assumption that we can perfectly convey our understanding to others through language. When we explain something to someone, we often use examples or analogies. However, these examples may not fully capture our understanding. The listeners must interpret our examples and guess our intention. Their interpretation might not align precisely with what we intended. It is not often that interlocutors ask each other for clarification. People would just assume that their understanding or interpretation is correct. This is a complex aspect of language, something that happens to clarify understanding between communicators and recipients. The complexity lies in the gap between our mental concepts and the language we use to express them. Words and examples can only approximate our thoughts, leaving room for ambiguity.

The first case of *ano* is an ostensive one. When the word *ano* is used and it is accompanied by finger-pointing (or lip-pointing), it could easily be assumed that the substituted word for *ano* is the thing being pointed at. The second case is when there may be a clue in the sentence that may lead us to what that *ano* is. The third case is the difficult one since we are forced to know what *ano* is without any context clues or clues from ostension. This case can still be divided into two: one where P2 is a stranger, and another where P2 is an acquaintance. Let us call the former IT-*ano* (*ibang tao-ano* or *other-ano*) and the latter HIT-*ano* (*hindi ibang tao-ano* or *not other-ano*). *Ibang tao-ano* and *hindi ibang tao-ano* distinction is inspired by the *ibang tao* and *hindi ibang tao* in Enriquez's discussion of *kapwa*, which will be discussed later. In IT-*ano*, we can guess that there is little to no understanding of *ano* from the perspective of P1. However, in HIT-*ano*, we can guess that P1 may already have ideas or may already know what *ano* is in P2's context.

The distinction between IT-*ano* and HIT-*ano* emphasizes the role of interpersonal relationships in shaping our interpretation of vague terms. While strangers might grapple with the uncertainty of IT-*ano*, close acquaintances might effortlessly decode the meaning of HIT-*ano*, drawing from shared experiences and mutual understanding. This dynamic interplay between language, context, and relationship illuminates the broader philosophical questions surrounding communication, understanding, and the rules that govern our linguistic interactions.

Ano is a linguistic enigma, serving as a versatile placeholder in conversations, capable of assuming various meanings based on context, gesture, and the relationship between interlocutors. Its widespread use in the Filipino community underscores the intricate dynamics of understanding and interpretation that takes place in everyday communication. Through the three presented cases, we have explored the spectrum of clarity and ambiguity associated with *ano*. From the ostensive clarity of finger-pointing in the first case, to the reliance on contextual clues in the second,

and finally, to the profound ambiguity in the third, the term challenges both speaker and listener to navigate the labyrinth of language and shared understanding.

Ano and Language-Game

“Bababa ba?”

“Bababa.”

A listener would be dumbfounded by the idea that the sentences above actually comprise a conversation. The syllable “ba” is usually used as an ending to pose a question. Two syllables of “ba” as in *baba* refer closely to the phrase “go down.” The addition of the same syllable at the start of the word *baba* as in *bababa* pushes the verb *baba* into future tense; thus, it closely means going down. Roughly, if one is to translate it into English, the conversation would follow as: “Going down?” “Going down.” The sentences above would be easier to understand if intonations are accounted for. Since the first sentence is a question, its intonation goes up. As the second sentence is a declarative one, its intonation goes down. Note that intonations may differ in some situations such as when the speaker is sick or sad, thus causing the intonation to go down. Accounting for cultural differences, intonations may also vary.

The conversation above is easily understood if one is Tagalog. It usually occurs in elevator situations when a person asks someone whether the elevator is going down. Foreigners or Tagalog speakers unfamiliar with elevators may hardly understand this, if at all. With the conversation “*Bababa ba?*” “*Bababa*”, the underlying confusion may be: Who or what is going down at that moment?

The answer to such a question will vary depending on the community utilizing the same discourse. As described earlier, language is a labyrinth of paths. For one to get the unspoken established rules and meanings of language, one must be in it, stay in it, and participate in it. Communication encompasses more than just adherence to linguistic norms; it involves contextual understanding, cultural nuances, and individual interpretation. While grammar provides a framework for communication, language is dynamic and adaptable, allowing for creativity and flexibility in expression (Ellis 69). Thus, even when speakers veer away from conventional grammar, they can still successfully convey meaning through shared understanding and contextual cues. A group of friends living together may even reduce the conversation of “*Bababa ba?*” “*Bababa*.” to nods and raising of eyebrows. In this case, it is still possible for them to understand each other. Note that this reduction of sentences to mere nods and raising of brows is like the reduction of any word to the word *ano*.

Being a participant in such a labyrinth is being a participant in what Wittgenstein regards as language-games. He describes the method of language-games as follows:

One thing we always do when discussing a word is to ask how we were taught it. Doing this on the one hand destroys a variety of misconceptions, on the other hand [it] gives you a primitive language in which the word is used. Although this language is not what you talk when you are twenty, you get a rough approximation to what kind of language-game is going to be played. (*Lectures and Conversations* 1)

Understanding in language-games is not based solely on an objective or fixed meaning of words but emerges from the context and rules of a certain language-game being played. Participants in a language-game share a set of rules that gives meaning to their expressions within that specific activity. The meaning of language is intrinsically tied to its use in these social practices (Baker and Hacker, *Rules, Grammar and Necessity* 157). Each language-game has its own internal logic, and understanding arises from participating in the activity rather than relying on universal definitions. In language-games, individuals often engage in dialogues that mirror or repeat previous interactions, akin to how children learn through imitation and repetition. It may be something closer to an actual game where interlocutors try to figure out one another—perhaps, by guessing each other's thoughts or intentions. One definite thing is that some unwritten, sometimes unconscious, rules are being made in specific language-games (Peregrin 69). The dialogue: “Bababa ba?” “Bababa.” is easily understood by interlocutors since they must be familiar with what sort of language-game they already have. A group of people who are always together tend to create a language-game understood only by them. This is coming from multiple rules made—the longer a group of people stay together, the more rules are made catering to more complex language-games (*Philosophical Investigations* 83). Wittgenstein stressed that the purpose of describing language-games is not to systematically build a detailed representation of the actual processes of speaking or thinking but instead to provide only an object of comparison for a particular case (Baker and Hacker, *Understanding and Meaning* 58).

Wittgensteinian philosophers, Gordon Baker and Peter Hacker describe three different aspects of Wittgenstein's language-game method: primitive language-games, invented language-games, and imaginary language-games. Primitive language-games are language-games by means of which the child begins to master various fragments of our language. Wittgenstein employs these primitive language-games to shed light on mature language-games, considering them as a foundational core or a center of variation. This perspective provides insight into

the understanding that a child acquires language skills by associating them with experiences, such as using 'pain' as a partial substitute for natural cries of distress. Primitive language-games emphasize the basic, rudimentary languages employed by children as they begin to grasp linguistic concepts (*Understanding and Meaning* 59).

Invented language-games are like primitive language-games, except that the invented language-games are complete. The primitive language-games the child learns are fragments of larger wholes. In contrast, invented language-games are not fragments but complete. Invented language-games emphasize the diversity of linguistic practices (*Understanding and Meaning* 62). These are hypothetical scenarios or constructed situations in which language is used. The purpose of invented language-games is to illustrate the versatility and adaptability of language in various contexts. Wittgenstein presented some of his invented language-games in the early parts of his *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), but most are found in his *Brown Book* (1958).

Imaginary language-games serve a distinct purpose compared to constructing an enlightening and analogous point of comparison for a linguistic fragment. Their aim is to elucidate the shortcomings inherent in philosophical misconceptions (*Understanding and Meaning* 60). They serve as illustrative examples, allowing individuals to conceptualize how language operates in different contexts. For example, one might propose a scenario where people engage in a unique form of communication or establish linguistic rules in a fictional setting. By exploring these imaginary language-games, Wittgenstein aimed to highlight the diversity and flexibility inherent in language use, emphasizing that the meaning of words is closely tied to their contextual usage within specific language-games. Imaginary language-games involve creating imaginary situations where language is employed in unusual or creative ways. Unlike invented language-games, imaginary language-games are more whimsical and may involve playful or surreal elements.

The cases of *ano* described in this essay are more in line with Wittgenstein's invented language-games as the scenarios are literally invented and were only inspired by usual Tagalog conversations. The complexity arises when we are uncertain about the specific language-game being played by P1 and P2. At this juncture, it appears as if we were mere observers without insight into the rules guiding their interaction or how they achieve mutual understanding, assuming they exist. The cases of *ano* are also reminiscent of Wittgenstein's use of language-games when he pertains to language-game as it "designates fragments of our actual linguistic practices" (Baker and Hacker, *Understanding and Meaning* 63). This is what we can imagine to be natural language-games. As imaginary language-games isolate linguistic

elements, these isolated elements can apply to actual language-games. If the resemblances between the language-games invented and a particular fragment of language are notably significant and extensive, it is logical to broaden the use of the term “language-game” to encompass that specific fragment of language as well. Notice Wittgenstein’s explication of language-games below:

Language-games are the forms of language with which a child begins to make use of words. The study of language-games is the study of primitive forms of language or primitive languages. If we want to study the problems of truth and falsehood, of the agreement and disagreement of propositions with reality, of the nature of assertion, assumption, and question, we shall with great advantage look at primitive forms of language in which these forms of thinking appear without the confusing background of highly complicated processes of thought. When we look at such simple forms of language the mental mist which seems to enshroud our ordinary use of language disappears. We see activities, reactions, which are clear-cut and transparent. On the other hand, we recognize in these simple processes forms of language not separated by a break from our more complicated ones. We see that we can build up the complicated forms from the primitive ones by gradually adding new forms. (*Blue and Brown Books* 17)

It is helpful to look at the primitive aspects of language to understand a natural language’s hidden or overlooked nuances. Looking at *ano*, specifically the third case, it is helpful to examine the context, rules, meaning, family resemblance, and shared understanding or “form of life.”

Context provides the setting in which language operates. It determines how words and expressions are understood. Words and expressions gain their meaning from the context in which they are used. As Wittgenstein stated, “The meaning of a word is its use” (*Philosophical Investigations* 25).

Let us try to identify the context of *ano* in the third case. P1, is a tourist possibly new to the place. She asks about the church, which could be a famous one. The reason for the likely popularity of the church is P1 immediately asking P2 about it, indicating that P1 assumes most people in the place she visits are familiar with the church. It is common for tourists, especially in the Philippines, to ask drivers waiting for passengers. For one, drivers are willing to address questions when they are asked. Another reason is that drivers tend to know more about their town than the usual residents; the former’s job is mainly to take their passengers to specific

places. So P2 answers “*Dyan sa ano.*” which entails the use of an indeterminate *ano*. P2 is supposed to tell P1 the location of the church, but the location is hidden within *ano*. Assuming that P1 and P2 are complete strangers, there is a large possibility that P1 would not understand what P2 is referring to when he says *ano*. They have not participated in a language-game. Since another important factor in a language-game is the institution of rules that are subconsciously created with enough practice of a language-game, and as they are strangers, it is justifiable to assume that they have not established any.

Rules guide linguistic behavior and actions in language-games. They ensure that communication is coherent and that participants can understand one another. The rules dictate how words and expressions are used in different contexts. Rules emerge from specific language games, and each language game within distinct groups differs from one another (Moldoveanu 238). P2 may also have his own intonation. P1 is used to certain intonations coming from her own place and culture. As P1 is a tourist in Silang, there is a possibility that the intonations in Silang may be different from what she is familiar with.

Meaning is fluid and context dependent. It emerges from the way words are employed in language-games within contexts. Wittgenstein rejected the idea that words have fixed, essential meanings (Hymers 93). Instead, he proposed that meaning is derived from language-games and their use in various contexts. Words are meaningful due to their function in specific language-games. In the third case of *ano*, the meaning of the word *ano* is already practically indeterminate. It is just inherent in the word itself as it is a word replacement. With language-games, any word may have different meanings depending on which the participants of a certain language-game decide on. *Ano*, whether its meaning is determinate or not, will largely depend on the meaning established within a language-game. In a way, we can assume that any word in isolation can theoretically be indeterminate, following Wittgenstein.

Family resemblances emphasize that meaning is not based on strict definitions but on the commonalities, shared features, and usage patterns that connect language-games. Wittgenstein introduced the concept of “family resemblance” to illustrate that words within a language-game that may not share a single defining feature may have overlapping similarities (*Philosophical Investigations* 36). These resemblances connect various language-games. In this case, we can look at other instances where *ano* is used without ostension or context clues, pointing to other instances where resemblances to the third case of *ano* is present. Between strangers, using *ano* in conversations without context is rarely successful. Such success can occur when P1 replies with a guess, which for some reason is correct. Consider C3a.

C3a

P1: “Saan po yung simbahan?” (“Where is the church?”; *my trans.*)

P2: “Dyan sa ano.” (“There [in x].”; *my trans.*)

P1: “Sa kanto?” (“On the [street] corner?”; *my trans.*)

P2: “Oo!” (“Yes!”; *my trans.*)

In this case, P1 just guessed what *ano* was being referred to by P2. This is not completely random but informed by previous language-games P1 is familiar with.

In another example, if the distance of the place being asked by P1 is far, P2 would likely reply:

C3b

P2: *Sumakay ka na. Dyan yan sa ano.* (“Get on board. That is there [in x].”; *my trans.*)

The driver’s response of inviting the potential passenger to get on board (“*Sumakay ka na.*”) suggests a level of urgency, indicating a potentially significant distance to the destination. This implies that the driver is prepared to commence the journey promptly, which coincides with the idea of a distant location. P1 in C3a realized that the driver was not directly telling her to get on the tricycle. From her previous participation in language-games concerning tricycle drivers, she likely inferred that the church must be nearby. These are all possible assumptions from P1. The participation of an interlocutor in a language-game is a significant aspect for such a person to understand the said language used. For strangers, the meaning of *ano* in the third case could be almost impossible to determine.

Understanding arises not only out of mere participation. A participant in a language-game is participating in a “form of life,” which according to Wittgenstein, refers to language’s inseparability from the broader context of human existence (*Philosophical Investigations* 11). Shared understanding is fostered as individuals engage in language games and collectively embrace a common form of life. This shared understanding is cultivated through their mutual participation and adherence to the norms and conventions inherent in their shared form of life (Baker and Hacker, *Understanding and Meaning* 31; Mulhall, *Wittgenstein’s Private Language* 73). We observe that issues in comprehension arise, particularly in the third case of *ano*, more so if the participants are strangers to each other. Changing P2 to someone that is an acquaintance of P1 might contribute to better understanding between both.

A shared form of life can be helpful for one to understand an initially indeterminate word used in a sentence. As an interlocutor participates more in a language-game, the more sensitivities and responsiveness arise. Notably in certain instances, even among strangers, a good sense of sensitivity (Crary 140) and responsiveness (Mulhall, *Ethics in the Light* 296) can arise in P1 as seen in C3a where P1 correctly guessed what P2 was talking about. Still, increased participation results in increased chances of guessing correctly.

British philosopher Stephen Mulhall describes essential responsiveness as those expressions of natural reactions of approval and disapproval, rather than descriptions of objective properties or facts. They are not subject to independent resolution by appealing to agreed procedures or rules, but rather require a personal choice or commitment. The understanding here is responsive, because it involves recognizing and responding to the reasons that people have for acting as they do (*Ethics in the Light* 297). When someone talks to us with the use of an indeterminate *ano*, speaking with an affirmative sustained tone at the end, we are compelled to imagine that we know what that *ano* is supposed to mean. Like P1, we are then to guess what that *ano* is supposed to represent. At stranger-level or IT-*ano*, this can be quite difficult; not impossible, but difficult. At the acquaintance level or HIT-*ano*, guessing becomes easier due to prior linguistic activities shared among acquaintances, providing a background for informed guessing. We just think that we know that indeterminate *ano* and try guessing it no matter how difficult this may be. It is noticeable that with responsiveness accounted for, language-games are governed by natural reactions of approval and disapproval, rather than by rules or procedures.

Together with responsiveness, sensitivity also comes to the fore. Sensitivities are something we acquire as we master a language. As American philosopher Alice Crary explains, “It [sensitivity] calls on us, as we might put it, to use—and perhaps stretch—our imagination” (140). She argues that language-games are not arbitrary or conventional, but rather depend on our sensitivities to aspects of reality that are not themselves linguistic. She writes, “Our forms of responsiveness are criteria for our language-games in that they determine what counts as a correct application of a word” (128). For example, our sensitivity to pain determines what counts as a correct application of the word “pain.” Sensitivities are sources of meaning and value in our language-games because they enable us to express and appreciate what matters to us. For example, our sensitivity to beauty makes possible the expression and recognition of aesthetic qualities in our language-games. She further suggests that sensitivities are not fixed or innate, but rather open to criticism and improvement. As she remarked, “Our forms of responsiveness are open to criticism and improvement in that they can be shown to be inadequate or distorted by moral reflection or by exposure to alternative perspectives” (Crary 130).

Language, far from being a mere tool for conveying information, is deeply embedded in the cultural, social, and practical contexts of human existence. The case of *ano* in Tagalog conversations serves as a testament to the fluidity of meaning and the importance of shared understanding, sensitivity, and responsiveness in communication. While grammatical rules provide a foundation, it is the shared experiences, cultural nuances, and the form of life that truly breathe life into language. The dynamic nature of language-games, from primitive to invented and imaginary, showcases the adaptability and versatility of language in various contexts. In essence, language is not just about words and their definitions; it is also about the shared experiences, the unspoken rules, and the intricate web of social practices that give those words meaning. It is a reminder that to truly understand another, one must not only listen to the words spoken but also be attuned to the context, the nuances, and the unspoken rules of the language-game being played.

***Pakikipagkapwa* and Understandability**

There is a stark difference in language-games' understandability when P1 and P2 are at a stranger level as in IT-*ano*, and when P1 and P2 are at acquaintance level as in HIT-*ano*. The understandability in the former is lower while in the latter, possibly higher. Understandability in this context pertains to P1 and P2 aptly participating in the language-game where confusion arises. *Ano*, as a placeholder in conversations, embodies the shared understanding and empathy inherent in the concept of *kapwa*. The distinctiveness of *ano* lies in its flexibility and dependence on shared context, which mirrors the fluid and communal nature of *kapwa*.

With social interaction as a focus of analysis, Enriquez examined the concept of *kapwa*. This term, in a rough sense, pertains to the interconnected relationship between the self and others. A direct translation from Filipino to English connotes the meaning of 'both', 'fellow-being', or 'other'. For Enriquez, *kapwa* is different from these translations; rather it is the unity of the self and the others. Whereas in the English semantics, the self and the other are in opposition and thus separated, in Filipino, these two are joined. *Kapwa* is basically the shared identity of 'self' and the 'other' ("Kapwa" 11).

Enriquez also discussed several dimensions of *pakikipagkapwa* including *pag-aaruga* (pertaining to caring), *hiya* (pertaining to sense of shame), *bahala na* (pertaining to fatalistic orientation), and others. In this essay, *pakikiramdam*, a key aspect of Filipino culture, can provide valuable insights into human interactions, particularly those related to empathy and sensitivity. This aspect involves understanding and sharing the emotional experiences of one's fellow human being. *Pakikiramdam* goes beyond verbal communication. It involves shared inner perception, heightened sensitivity, and attunement to others (De-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino 57).

Crary's sensitivity to language involves paying attention to context, nuances, and the moral implications of words. *Pakikiramdam* is central to non-verbal and indirect communication common in Filipino socialization (De-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino 56; Mansukhani 187). Both Crary's sensitivity and *pakikiramdam* emphasize context-awareness and responsiveness. Just as Crary's language-games require understanding beyond words, *pakikiramdam* involves reading emotions, intentions, and shared experiences.

Sensitivity and responsiveness in language-games become more refined and thus more practiced by interlocutors as the level of *pakikipagkapwa* increases. Sensitivity and responsiveness are basically *pakikiramdam* in Filipino psychology, thus *pakikipagkapwa* and *pakikiramdam* are directly proportional. As Filipino psychologists Rogelia De-Pua and Elizabeth Protacio-Marcelino describe the word, *pakikiramdam* is "a request to feel or to be sensitive to. It is a shared feeling, a kind of 'emotional a priori'" (56). Recognizing non-verbal signals, caring about the emotions of others, and being honest without causing harm to their feelings are common aspects of Filipino socialization. For Filipinos, these behaviors are simply a given, ingrained from birth and reinforced throughout their upbringing (57).

While *kapwa* is a shared identity or the recognition of it, *pakikipagkapwa* is the act of building and nurturing such. *Pakikipagkapwa* as a social activity has several modes of social interaction. Consider the table below (Enriquez, *Colonial to Liberation* 49).

Table 1. *Ibang Tao* and *Hindi Ibang Tao*

Ibang Tao	Hindi Ibang Tao
<i>pakikitungo</i> (trans. as transaction or civility with)	<i>pakikipag-palagayang loob</i> (trans. as being in rapport)
<i>pakikisalamuha</i> (trans. as interacting with)	<i>pakikisangkot</i> (trans. as getting involved)
<i>pakikilahok</i> (trans. as joining or participating with/in)	<i>pakikiisa</i> (trans. as being one with)
<i>pakikibagay</i> (trans. as in conformity with/ in accord with)	
<i>pakikisama</i> (trans. as getting along with)	

The terms above pertain to the eight levels of social interaction as Enriquez describes in his book *From Colonial to Liberation Psychology* (1988). These eight levels are divided into two, between *ibang tao* (hence, IT) and *hindi ibang tao* (hence, HIT). This categorization is based on Carmen Santiago's research on the behavioral differences in various levels of interpersonal relations related to food sharing

(“Kapwa” 10). As described in the previous section, IT-ano is derived from the *ibang tao* category while HIT-ano is derived from the *hindi ibang tao* category. While the former pertains to stranger level, the latter pertains to acquaintance level. It is important to note, however, that the stranger-acquaintance distinction as how it is in its original sense in the English language may not be accurate and thus equal with how IT and HIT can be distinct from each other. In the Filipino context, two people who may be in one of the levels in the IT category may not necessarily be strangers. In Enriquez’s perspective, the distinction between IT and HIT lies in the level of rapport and trust between individuals. IT suggests a basic level of getting along or compatibility between two parties, while HIT denotes a deeper level of trust where one can fully rely on the other. Understanding or empathizing with the other person is implied in *pakikisama*, falling under the IT category, while the ability to fully trust the other person is implied in *pakikipag-palagayang loob*, which is included in the HIT category.

Consider the table below describing the various levels of Filipino social interaction. Three levels of understandability are also proposed here to show how different understandability is in various levels.

Table 2. Levels of Filipino Social Interaction

	Interaction Level	Translation	Root Word	Root Meaning	Understandability
<i>Ibang tao</i>	<i>Pakikitungo</i>	transaction/civility with	<i>tungo</i>	drift/direction	grammatical
	<i>Pakikisalamuha</i>	interaction with	<i>salamuha</i>	socialize; mingling/gathering	grammatical
	<i>Pakikilahok</i>	joining/participating with	<i>lahok</i>	entry/enjoin	grammatical/pragmatic
	<i>Pakikibagay</i>	in conformity/accordance with	<i>bagay</i>	suitable/agreeable	pragmatic
	<i>Pakikisama</i>	getting along with	<i>sama</i>	together/go along	pragmatic
<i>Hindi ibang tao</i>	<i>Pakikipag-palagayang loob</i>	being in rapport with	<i>lagay, loob; lagay ng loob</i>	put, inside/core; put the core (into another)	instinctive
	<i>Pakikisangkot</i>	getting involved in	<i>sangkot</i>	involved	instinctive
	<i>Pakikiisa</i>	being one with	<i>isa</i>	one	instinctive

I suggest here the ‘understandability’ column at the far-right illustrating how linguistic comprehension varies at different levels. The rest are derived from Enriquez’s (“Kapwa” 10) work. The grammatical level of understanding pertains to understanding on the grammar level. A person here would assume the meaning of a word depending on its definition in the dictionary. For example, *ano* here would mean ‘what’; and, in the event *ano* is used as a word replacement, grammatical level of understanding would not suffice and thus require elucidation from the other party. Grammar establishes the guidelines for how language is conveyed, requiring an understanding of the function of words and the correct arrangement of sentences. It organizes words, phrases, and statements in a systematic way to clarify communication. It becomes the standard which everyone familiar with the language can follow. A foreigner just learning a specific language is compelled to rely only on the grammatical level of understanding.

While the grammatical level focuses mostly on syntax and semantics, the pragmatic level focuses on how the language is used. Chinese linguist Yan Huang defines pragmatics as “the systematic study of meaning by virtue of, or dependent on, the use of language” (2). In language-games, syntax and semantics in isolation can lose meaning as only context brings forth such meaning (Baker and Hacker, *Understanding and Meaning* 159). While semantics deals with the inherent meaning of words, sentences, or symbols in isolation, pragmatics is concerned with how speakers and listeners use and understand language in particular situations. At the pragmatic level, we can imagine interlocutors to be playing a language-game. At the grammatical level, P1 and P2 only resort to their previous grammar knowledge to make meaning; at the pragmatic level, they start to account for the rules and convention that they developed as they got along with each other.

The instinctive level, in a colloquial sense, pertains to two people understanding each other so well that they can finish each other’s sentences. Understanding at this level can be assumed to be automatic. While Wittgenstein did not elucidate on such situation, this can be implied from his concepts such as “form of life” where shared understanding can lead to the kind of mutual anticipation implied in finishing each other’s sentences; “meaning as use” where people who have shared many experiences and conversations might have a more aligned understanding of how certain words or phrases are used, allowing them to anticipate each other’s speech; and “rule-following” where both speakers are attuned to the implicit and explicit rules of their shared language-games, allowing for smoother communication and anticipation. At the instinctive level, both parties are assumed to have mastered the language-game and thus have more refined responsiveness and sensitivities, thereby *pakikiramdam*, towards each other.

It is important to remember that the social interaction in *pakikipagkapwa*, with its levels, is not a step-by-step process. While not exactly a process, the differences between the levels of interaction are hierarchical. One stage is higher than the other. The distinction between each stage relates to the level of unity between the two parties involved. The hierarchical differences can be observed as:

1. *Pakikiisa*
2. *Pakikisangkot*
3. *Pakikipagpalagayang loob*
4. *Pakikisama*
5. *Pakikibagay*
6. *Pakikilahok*
7. *Pakikisalamuha*
8. *Pakikitungo*

The highest level of interaction is where two parties are most united or most '*kapwa*' (i.e., *pakikiisa*).

Pakikitungo is the lowest level of interaction thus having the lowest level of *pakikipagkapwa*. With the lowest level of *pakikipagkapwa*, responsiveness and sensitivities are on a lower end. P1 may approach P2 for the purpose of transportation, thus asking where the church might be. The driver anticipates the need for transportation as the tourist approaches. This exemplifies *pakikitungo*, which involves a transaction. Since there is a transaction, there is also civility—mutual civility; one party is to benefit from the other party and vice versa. The understandability here is only grammatical.

As socializing is central to *pakikisalamuha*, this can be imagined as P1 asks P2 what *ano* means. Interaction begins, leading to the development of initial methods to establish rules for the language-game. This interaction contributes to the contextual understanding, aiding in the mutual comprehension and ongoing navigation of the language-game between participants. Note that this is still in the IT category. Mere interaction is not enough for a person to master a language-game. Understandability here is still at the grammatical level.

In *pakikilahok*, the understandability oscillates between grammatical and pragmatic. This level can be perceived to resemble *pakikisalamuha*. One pertains to socializing and another pertains to enjoining. Another use of the word *lahok* in Tagalog involves being included in a blend or mixture, for instance a potato being added to a dish like *adobo*. Potato in this regard is a '*lahok*' to *adobo*. Beyond its literal meaning,

lahok also conveys the idea of participation. Imagine yourself being included in a social activity or group—this concept aligns with the essence of *lahok*. The notion ‘enjoining’ in *pakikilahok* implies more than just being part of a group. It suggests being instructed or encouraged to engage in an activity where both (P1 and P2) are participating in. In this level, P1 can be imagined to be inside the tricycle with P2 driving. There is a social activity going on. Both are in a social activity pertaining to “going around town.” P1 and P2 may continue to chat or not, either way there is something going on that both of them experience. Understandability here is both grammatical and pragmatic. They are still strangers to one another, hence the reliance on grammar knowledge. Although there is still uncertainty from both, unspoken rules and conventions start to develop as the shared experience is going on. Beyond grammar, pragmatics come into play. It is about context, shared experiences, and unspoken conventions. Unspoken rules emerge—like knowing when to pause, when to elaborate, or when to share personal anecdotes. For instance, if P1 says, “I’m fine,” P2 might sense underlying emotions—perhaps fatigue or excitement—based on the context. P1 and P2’s communication evolves from mere grammar to a rich interplay of pragmatic nuances.

With enough interaction and participation, both parties can start to understand each other based on who they are, what they believe in, or their religious or political biases. In *pakikibagay*, disposition is being accounted for. Understanding that language is a game where one is to assume what the other is talking about—assumption then requires conformity with one another. Beliefs and one’s character become additional context to reduce the number of possibilities to make the guessing game a bit easier. P1 or P2 here adjust to each other, as both try to grasp each other’s biases. Understandability here is at a pragmatic level.

Pakikisama is “getting along with” and can be imagined to be the combination of *pakikisalamuha*, *pakikilahok*, and *pakikibagay*. P1 and P2 have developed ‘togetherness’ and bridged the gap between IT and HIT. *Pakikisama* is still within the IT category, thus P1 to P2, and vice versa, still remain outsiders to each other. The third case of *ano*, specifically IT-*ano* or the stranger level of *ano*, applies here. The meaning of *ano* in this case is more difficult, but not impossible to uncover. More effort is required to guess correctly in this case.

In HIT-*ano* where individuals reach a higher degree of familiarity, the third case of *ano* applies. As the interaction progresses, P1 and P2 transition from a state of distant acquaintance to a sense of unity. This evolution suggests that P1 and P2 have moved beyond mere recognition or to a deeper level of connection and cooperation; they have developed a mutual understanding or shared goals, indicating a stronger bond and collaboration compared to their previous interactions.

In *pakikipag-palagayang loob*, one's *loob* or inner self is shared with the other person. This is metaphorical and thus presents the idea of trust. One's core is entrusted to another with an expectation that the latter will take care of it, let alone not damage it. We can notice how drastically different HIT-*ano* is compared to IT-*ano*. Imagine P1 and P2 to be very close friends, in the same context; P1 is new to the place while P2 is a tricycle driver from that town. As they are very close, it can be assumed that they talk regularly. Perhaps the night before they were talking about the famous church that P2 is excited for P1 to visit. Imagining that P1 and P2 have extensively talked about that church, a scenario like below may happen the following morning.

C3c

P1: "Saan yung simbahan?" ("Where is the church?"; *my trans.*)

P2: "Dyan sa ano." ("There [in x]."; *my trans.*)

P1: "Ay oo! Tara!" ("Oh yes! Let's go!"; *my trans.*)

From the observer's standpoint, it is baffling how P1 knew right away what P2 was talking about. Instead of asking what *ano* meant, she already realized that it likely referred to the church they were discussing. Playing a language-game like this, where confidence is in P1 or P2, requires trust between the two. This is a consequence of *pakikipag-palagayang loob*. Understandability in this situation starts to become instinctive as observed in C3c.

Pakikisangkot is a consequence of one's core being put into the other person, and vice versa. This contributes to a decreased difficulty in assuming what the other is supposed to mean. It is important to remember that while the instinctive level of understanding presents a language-game participation that is almost automatic, as if a person just knows right away, this does not guarantee accuracy. The instinctive level of understanding in a language-game participation may create an illusion of infallibility, as individuals seem to intuitively grasp the meaning without conscious effort. But errors remain a possibility.

In the HIT category, although interlocutors may not be entirely error-free in their guesses, there is a greater likelihood of correctness. This increased accuracy leads to greater confidence in their guesses, creating the impression that they are certain and accurate.

Last in the hierarchy is *pakikiisa*—which is the ultimate level of *pakikipagkapwa*. In *pakikiisa*, both parties are already "one." This is the level at which language-game guessing is at its highest chance of being correct. Confidence in both parties is also at its highest, such that responsiveness and sensitivities are also in their

most refined state. We can imagine P1 and P2 if they are at *pakikiisa* level having a conversation as below:

C3d

P1: “Saan nga?” (“Where?”; *my trans.*)

P2: “Dyan sa ano.” (“There [in x].”; *my trans.*)

In the conversation above, even P1’s question lacks clarity as it is missing any object which should be the focus of the question “where.” However, P2 still responded similarly to the original C3, using the vague term *ano*. P2 guessed the object of “where” P1 is talking about. Since P1 and P2 operate at the *pakikiisa* level, it is not surprising that they understood one another. Outsiders may not understand how this happened, but those participating in their own language-game just understand each other. For us to understand them, we must enter and participate in their language-game. This is the same in Filipino communities, or any community in general.

This essay calls attention to how Enriquez emphasizes the significance of “being together” over mere interaction. This emphasis underscores the notion that the quality of interpersonal relationships and shared experiences contributes significantly to the development of *kapwa*. Drawing from Wittgenstein’s concepts, it is evident that as individuals engage in deeper levels of *pakikipagkapwa*, characterized by heightened sensitivity and responsiveness, their mutual understanding deepens. Being together leads to becoming more *kapwa*. The higher the level of *pakikipagkapwa* among interlocutors, the greater the understanding between them. This is because higher levels of *pakikipagkapwa* entail greater *pakikiramdam*, leading to refined sensitivities and responsiveness. Enriquez’ focus on being together coincides with Wittgenstein’s idea of language being shared resulting in a “form of life.”

Pakikipagkapwa in Filipino psychology as discussed by Enriquez, delves deep into the intricacies of social interaction and understandability within the Filipino community. The language and its nuances, especially in the context of social relationships, are not merely transactional but are deeply rooted in shared experiences, trust, and unity. The levels of interaction, ranging from IT to HIT, highlight the progression of relationships from mere acquaintance to deep connections. The essence of *kapwa*, which signifies the unity of ‘self’ and ‘other,’ challenges the conventional dichotomy present in English semantics. The various levels of interaction, from *pakikitungo* to *pakikiisa*, underscore the increasing depth of connection and understanding between individuals. This shared understanding, or *pakikiramdam*, emphasizes empathy, sensitivity, and non-verbal communication, which are integral to Filipino

socialization. The hierarchical nature of these interactions, while not strictly linear, showcases the increasing unity and shared identity between individuals as they progress in their relationship. Drawing parallels with Wittgenstein's philosophy, this study highlights that language is not just a tool for communication but a reflection of shared experiences and a "form of life." The emphasis on togetherness and shared experiences in *pakikipagkapwa* resonates with the idea that language evolves and gains meaning through shared experiences, leading to a deeper and more instinctive understanding between individuals.

NOTE

1. The numbers used in citing Philosophical Investigations refer to section number not page number.

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