

COMPOUNDING OLD AND NEW WORDS IN FILIPINO

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As an affixing language, Filipino has the flexibility to form words from stems which at times are difficult to subject to traditional grammatical categorization. This is illustrated by the stem *bahay* (house) which can become *mabahay* (a location with many houses), *magbahay* (establish a home/house), *kabahay* (house-mate), *pambahay* (used in the house/home), *bahayan* (location used as a house/home). Sometimes, the stems by themselves also function as words.

In this language words are also formed by two stems or words (affix + stem) resulting in compound words (Cw)ⁱ. The resultant meaning may or may not be the aggregate meaning of both words, such as *kapit* (next to, cling to) + *bahay* (house), meaning neighbors; *bahay* (house) + *bata* (child) meaning 'uterus'; *bahay* (house) + *kubo* meaning 'thatched roofed hut, nipa hut'.

At times a Cw is formed by shortening the original form of the words, that is dropping one or two syllables of each word in forming the Cw. The resultant meaning is the aggregate of the original words, such as *tapsilog*, a breakfast meal of *tapa* (dried meat); *sinangag* (fried rice) and *itlog* ([egg] fried egg sunnyside up). This type of compounding is not included in this study.

This paper is of two parts. The first part describes the process which results in Cws, while the second part discusses compounds consisting of borrowed words and their effect on Filipino in the modernization of this lingua franca which is now recognized as the national language of the Philippines.

The Cw

Compounds in Filipino are derived from a phrase which consists of two words joined by a marker (m). The marker is usually dropped or lost in the process of compounding when the marker is preceded by a consonant (C), or a variant of the marker is affixed to a preceding (V).

Some examples are:

sawi na palad > *sawingpalad* one who is unfortunate
unlucky m palm of the hand,
frustrated fortune

bahag ng hari > *bahaghari* rainbow
g-string m king

takip sa butas > *takipbutas* substitute
cover m hole

Resultant Cws are nouns, adjectives, and verbs such as:

nouns (n) –

balatbunga flattery, insincere comments
skin fruit

hanapbuhay livelihood
find life

putingtabing screen for films
white screen

adjectives (adj.) -

butot-balat very thin
bone skin

mukhang-pera materialistic
face money

agawbuhay on the verge of death
snatch life

verbs (v) -

labaspasok going in and out
going out coming in

akyatpanaog going up and down stairs
climb up climb down

parot-parito coming and going
going coming (when worried or restless)

Types of Cws

Compounds are derived from six kinds of phrases grouped here according to the first element in the phrase.

I. The first group of phrases consists of the attributive (atph) and the possessive phrase (posph).

A. Attributive Phrase (atph)

The attributive phrase consists of two words or stems (st) joined by an attributive marker (am), **na/-ng**. The variant **-ng** is affixed to the preceding word or stem which ends in a vowel. The resultant Cws are nouns.

1. A noun stem (nst) may be followed by another nst or n (nst +vaf), an adjective stem (ast) or adj (ast + adj af) or a verb (vst + vaf).

a. nst **am** nst, n > n

bahay na kubo > *bahaykubo* nipa hut/thatched roof
house am hut hut

bagoong na alamang > *bagoong-alamang* salty sauce
fermented sauce am minute shrimps of small shrimps
bantay na salakay > *bantaysalakay* one who takes
guard am surepticious attack advantage of what he/ she is
supposed to be watching

bahay na sanlaan > *bahaysanlaan* pawnshop
house am pawn -an (loc. af)

bahay na sugalan > *bahaysugalan* gambling den
house am gamble -an (loc. af)

b. nst **am** adst, adj > n

aso na ulol > *asong-ulol* mad dog
dog am crazy

sili na labuyo > *siling-labuyo* small hot peppers
hot pepper am wild

tubig na maalat > *tubig-alat* sea water
water am ma-(adj af), salty

c. nst **am** v > n

lupa na hinirang > *lupang-hinirang* native land
ground am create, -in-(vaf)

2. Adjectives or ast and a nst, or a verb joined by the **am** is another attributive phrase from which a Cw may be derived.

adj, ast **am** v, nst > adj

Matanda na tinali > *matandang-tinali* bachelor
ma-(adj af) old am tie up -in-(vaf)

mahaba na buntot > *mahabang-buntot* spoiled
 ma-(adjaf) long am tail sensitive

panghaba na buhay > (*pang*) *habang-buhay* forever
 pang-(adjaf) long am life

sawi na palad > *sawing-palad* unfortunate, unlucky
 unlucky/frustrated am palm of hand, fortune

mahaba na pisi > *mahabang-pisi* well funded/
 ma-(adjaf) long am string financed

B. Possessive phrase (Posph)

The possessive phrases from which Cws are derived consist of a nst followed by another nst (the possessor) marked by the possessive marker **ng/-ng** (pm) The **-ng** is affixed to the preceding stem that ends in a v.

nst **ng** nst > n, adj

bahag ng hari > *bahaghari* rainbow
 g-string pm king

bahay ng bata > *bahaybata* uterus
 house pm child

anak ng araw > *anak-araw* albino
 child pm sun

tenga ng daga > *tengang-daga* a species of mushroom
 ear pm rat

tenga ng kawali > *tengang-kawali* insensitive, does
 ear pm deep frying pan not listen

balat ng bunga > *balatbunga* flattery, insincere
 skin pm fruit words

balat ng sibuyas > *balatsibuyas* sensitive, easily hurt
 skin pm onion criticism

utak ng biya > *utakbiya* dumb, ignorant, pea brain
 brain pm a kind of fresh water fish

mukha ng pera > *mukhang-pera* materialistic
 face pm money

dalaga ng bukid > *dalagang-bukid* country lass,
young women pm field a kind of fish

balita ng kutsero > *balitang-kutsero* rumor
news pm driver of horse drawn vehicle

dahon ng palay > *dahompalay* poisonous green snake
leaf pm rice plant

buto ng pakwan > *butong-pakwan* dried water-melon
seed pm water melon seed

tawa ng aso > *tawang-aso* insincere smile/laugh
laugh pm dog

buka ng bibig > *bukang-bibig* something habitually
open pm mouth said by an individual

kisap ng mata > *kisapmata* one instance
blink pm eye

luto ng makaw > *lutong-makaw* contrived, a set up
cook pm Macao

A few of such Cws retain their original form as phrases:

lukso ng dugo > *lukso ng dugo* intuitive feeling that
jump pm blood one is related to a particular person

hulog ng langit > *hulog ng langit* unexpected help or
dropped pm sky material gain

II. The next set of Cws are derived from phrases containing a v and nst or v marked by **sa** 'lm' (locative marker), **ng** 'om' (objective marker), **at** 'cm' (coordinate marker), and **ang** 'dm' (descriptive marker). The first element of the phrase is always a verb (vst + vaf) and except for some exceptions, the verbal affix is dropped in the resulting Cw. The general rule holds, hence the marker is dropped.

A. Locative Phrase (loph)

These phrases consist of a verb (v) a locative marker (lm) and a noun stem from which noun Cws are derived.

tinakip sa butas > *takipbutas* substitute
cover -in-(vaf) lm hole

sinampay sa bakod > *sampaybakod* vagrant, good for
to hang on something, -in-(vaf) lm fence nothing

tinakip sa silim > *takipsilim* sunset
cover -in -(vaf) lm light

The Cw **takipsilim** may be explained as assimilation of the **d** of **dilim** 'dark, darkness' to **s** of **sa** before this marker was dropped

tinakip sa dilim > *takipsilim* sunset
cover -in-(vaf) lm dark, darkness

The Diccionario Tagalog - Hispano of Serrano Laktaw (1914) lists *silim* as Spanish *sol* - Tagalog *araw* (sun or day); *ilaw* (light) and Spanish *el anochecer* - Tagalog *takipsilim*. But, in some Tagalog dialects the verb *sumisilim* (to stay in the shade) is still in use.

B. Objective Phrase (obph)

The Cws derived from the objective phrase consists of a **v** followed by the object marker (om) which marks the object or noun stem. These result in nouns and adjective Cws. The om is dropped after -C and the variant -ng is affixed to a preceding -V. Most of the time the vaf is also dropped.

nagbayad ng utang > *bayad-utang* retribution
pay, nag-(vaf) om debt

nag-agaw ng tulog > *agawtulog* on the verge of sleep
snatch, ng-(vaf) om sleep dropping off

naghanap ng buhay > *hanapbuhay* job, source of income
look for, nag -(vaf) om life

ginantihan ng pala > *ganting-pala* prize, reward, award
revenge/reward/response
-in-(vaf)-han (vaf) om grace, blessing

magbasag ng ulo > *basag-ulo* fight, rumpus
break mag-(vaf) om head

makadurog ng puso > *makadurogpuso* causing extreme

maka-(vaf) crush om heart

sadness

di makabasag ng pinggan > *di makabasagpinggan* well-
neg maka-(vaf) break om plate behaved, good character

Notice that in the last example the negative **di** is retained in the resultant adjective.

C. Descriptive Phrase (desph)

The Cws of this group are derived from a phrase which consists of a verb and nst marked by *ang* (dm). The *vaf* is dropped and the variant of **ang** which is **-ng** is affixed to a preceding vowel. The resultant forms are adjectives and nouns.

binigay ang kaya > *bigaykaya* with full effort/ability
give, -in-(vaf) dm ability

dinala ang tao > *dalang-tao* pregnant
carry, -in-(vaf) dm person

tinaas ang noo > *taasnoo* proud, proud of accomplishment raise
-in-(vaf) dm forehead

binukas ang palad > *bukaspalad* generous
open -in-(vaf) dm plam/fortune

kinapos ang palad > *kapospalad* unlucky, unfortunate
short, inadequate -in-(vaf) dm plam/fortune

tiniklop ang tuhod > *tikloptuhod* humble, contrite
bend/fold -in-(vaf) dm knee

winala ang puso > *walang- puso* hard hearted, unkind
none, loose -in-(vaf) dm heart

linukso ang tinik > *luksong-tinik* a children's game
jump -in-(vaf) dm thorn

D. Coordinate Phrase (coph)

The coordinate phrase which consist of 2 verbs or 2 noun stems marked by the coordinate marker **at** (cm) results in verb, noun or adjective Cws. The **at** is dropped after consonants or the variant **-t** is affixed to a preceding vowel and at times the *vaf* is also dropped..

1. v at v > v, n

lumabas at pumasok > labaspasok in and out
out, -um- (vaf) cm in-um-(vaf)

magbantay at magsalakay > bantaysalakay one who
watch, mag-(vaf) cm attack, mag (vaf) takes advantage of
what he/she is supposed to guard/care for

mag-urong at magsulong > urongsulong undecided,
mag -(vaf) move backward cm mag-(vaf) going backward and
move forward forward

pumaron at pumarito > parotparito to pace, come and
go -um-(vaf) cm come, um-(vaf) go

pumanik at pumanaog > panikpanaog restlessly going
climb/go up, cm comedown up and down
-um-(vaf) - um-(vaf)

humigit at kumulang > humigitkumulang more or less
over/more than, -um (vaf) cm lack -um-(vaf)

The last examples show the Cw retaining the verbs of the phrase. The cw *parotparito* shows that the last consonant of *paron* possibly assimilated to the **-t** of **at** before the cm was dropped.

2. nst at nst > n, adj.

buto at balat > butot-balat very thin, skin and bones
bone em skin

pulot at gata > pulotgata honeymoon
honey/syrup, cm coconut milk

Summary:

$$1. \text{ph} \longrightarrow \text{ph}_1, \text{ph}_2$$

$$2. \text{ph}_1 \longrightarrow \text{atph}, \text{posph}$$

$$3. \text{ph}_2 \longrightarrow \text{locph}, \text{obcph}, \text{coph}, \text{desph}$$

$$4. \text{atph} \begin{bmatrix} \text{nst} \\ \{ \text{adj} \} \\ \{ \text{ast} \} \end{bmatrix} \text{am} \begin{bmatrix} \left\{ \begin{matrix} \text{nst} \\ \text{n} \\ \text{ast} \\ \text{adj} \\ \text{v} \\ \text{v} \\ \text{nst} \end{matrix} \right\} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$5. \text{posph} \longrightarrow \text{nst} + \text{pm} + \text{nst}$$

$$6. \text{locph} \longrightarrow \text{v} + \text{lm} + \text{nst}$$

$$7. \text{obph} \longrightarrow \text{v} + \text{om} + \text{nst}$$

$$8. \text{desph} \longrightarrow \text{v} + \text{dm} + \text{nst}$$

$$9. \text{coph} \longrightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \text{v} \\ \text{nst} \end{bmatrix} \text{cm} \begin{bmatrix} \text{v} \\ \text{nst} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{nst} \\ \{ \text{adj} \} \\ \{ \text{ast} \} \end{bmatrix} \text{am} \begin{bmatrix} \left\{ \begin{matrix} \text{nst} \\ \text{n} \\ \text{ast} \\ \text{adj} \end{matrix} \right\} \\ \left\{ \begin{matrix} \text{v} \\ \text{nst} \end{matrix} \right\} \end{bmatrix} \Rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \text{Cwn} \\ \text{Cwadj} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\text{nst} + \text{pm} + \text{nst} \Rightarrow \text{Cwadj}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{lm} \\ \text{v} \left\{ \begin{matrix} \text{om} \\ \text{dm} \end{matrix} \right\} \text{nst} \end{bmatrix} \Rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \text{Cwn} \\ \text{Cwn}, \text{Cwadj} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{v} \\ \text{nst} \end{bmatrix} \text{cm} \begin{bmatrix} \text{v} \\ \text{nst} \end{bmatrix} \Rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \text{Cwn}, \text{Cwadj} \\ \text{Cwn}, \text{Cwadj} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\left[\begin{pmatrix} \text{nst} \\ \text{adj} \\ \text{ast} \\ \text{v} \end{pmatrix} - \text{C} + \text{m} + \begin{pmatrix} \text{nst} \\ \text{adj} \\ \text{ast} \\ \text{v} \end{pmatrix} \right] \Rightarrow \left[\begin{pmatrix} \text{nst} \\ \text{adj} \\ \text{ast} \\ \text{v} \end{pmatrix} - \text{C} \begin{pmatrix} \text{nst} \\ \text{adj} \\ \text{ast} \\ \text{v} \end{pmatrix} \right]$$

$$\left[\begin{pmatrix} \text{nst} \\ \text{adj} \\ \text{ast} \\ \text{v} \end{pmatrix} - \text{V} + \text{m} + \begin{pmatrix} \text{nst} \\ \text{adj} \\ \text{ast} \\ \text{v} \end{pmatrix} \right] \Rightarrow \left[\begin{pmatrix} \text{nst} \\ \text{adj} \\ \text{ast} \\ \text{v} \end{pmatrix} - \text{V} \begin{pmatrix} -\text{ng} \\ -\text{t} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \text{nst} \\ \text{adj} \\ \text{ast} \\ \text{v} \end{pmatrix} \right]$$

$$\left\{ \text{vst} + \text{vaf} \right\} \left\{ \begin{matrix} \text{lm} \\ \text{dm} \end{matrix} \right\} \text{nst} \Rightarrow \text{vst nst}$$

$$\left\{ \text{vst} + \text{vaf} \right\} \left[\begin{matrix} \text{om} \\ \text{dm} \\ \text{cm} \end{matrix} \right] \left[\begin{matrix} \text{nst} \\ \text{vst} + \text{vaf} \end{matrix} \right] \Rightarrow \text{vst (vaf) am vst (vaf)}$$

Idioms

As shown in the previous discussion it is evident that the elements of the phrases from which the Cws are derived have individual or different meanings. The meaning of the resultant Cws are either a composite of the meaning of the elements of the phrase or have completely different meaning, and are idiomatic. Examples of the first type are:

<i>bahaysanglaan</i>	pawnshop
house pawn	

<i>lampastuhod</i>	passed the knee	(a measure for water,
over/passed knee		water depth)

The resultant idiomatic Cws are shown by the following examples:

<i>balatsibuyas</i>	sensitive
skin onion	

<i>bayad-utang</i>	retribution
pay debt	

<i>walang- puso</i>	cruel, insensitive to suffering of others
no/none heart	

<i>anak-araw</i>	albino
child sun	

<i>bahaghari</i>	rainbow
g-string king	

Both types of Cw are perceived as one word or expression hence a single concept, object or quality. Whereas other phrases in the language are not considered so.

<i>galing sa itaas</i>	coming from above
come from lm	above

<i>bahay ng byuda</i>	house of the widow
house pm	widow

<i>magandang babae</i>	beautiful woman
ma-(adj af) beautiful	-am woman

In other words, not only the structure of the phrase or form of the phrase characterizes the Cw but also the single word concept, which is in the real world of the speaker/hearer and may or may not evolve into an idiom.

Orthography

One of the current issues in the propagation of Filipino as the National Language is the standardization of its orthography. One of these issues is the orthography of Cws. Dictionaries of the language show that at present, there is no standard form by which Cws are written, that is whether to use a hyphen or not. The dictionary of Leo English (1977) has entries such as *bukas-isip* (open-minded), *bukas-puso* (gladly) but also *bukas palad* (generous). Even entries in dictionaries of the English language show this inconsistency such as:

holdup (n) Webster

hold-up (n) Cobuild

makeup (n) Webster

make-up (n) Cobuild

ice-cream/ice cream Cobuild

Actually, one can ask whether it is really necessary to follow a standard way of writing down Cws, obviously a problem to language teachers.

It is proposed here that the hyphen may be used in two situations, as indicated in the examples given in the different sections above. A hyphen is used:

1. when the second word starts with a vowel like *basag-ulo* (fight brawl), *bukas-isip* (tolerant, open minded), which recognizes the existence of a glottal stop before initial vowels, though not represented when the word is written separately, following the (c)cv(c)(c) syllable pattern of Philippine languages;
2. when the marker or part of it is an enclitic or is not dropped such as in *sawing-palad*, *bukang-bibig*, *butot-balat*, the hyphen comes after the enclitic phrase marker.

Language Modernization

This discussion attempts to show how Cws are formed in an effort to analyze part of Filipino morphology as it modernizes. The influence and change brought about by constant contact with foreign cultures pressures the language to respond to these rapid changes in all aspects of the ecology

of Filipino. In other words, the modernization of the language means the development of its vocabulary in response to needs brought about by: the influence of foreign cultures on daily living through the different forms of modern communication; the need to learn and adopt to modern technology transfer; and the ability to sustain international interaction.

Certain strategies have been used to modernize Filipino. Two of these are: semantic addition to words already found in this language or other Philippine languages, and borrowing from foreign languages. The first one is usually the result of efforts to keep the language from acquiring loan words. Good examples of this strategy are the words *pag-unlad* and *batis*. The latter means 'spring or stream', but in recent years has been given the additional meaning of 'original source or data source' by academicians, especially historians. *Pag-unlad* (progress), now also means 'development' in the jargon of the government. The other strategy or borrowing words from foreign languages is indicated by the tremendous influx of words from English into Filipino. This strategy is the one addressed in this present study.

A great amount of borrowing from English, which shows no let up in these times of rapid change, is largely due to the colonial influence of American life, advertising, media such as movies and TV, information in printed sources and transfer of technology coming from that country.

Numerous words in Filipino which were originally Cws in English or Spanish, were not considered Cws by the majority of the speakers of the language at the time the borrowing took place. This is probably because Filipinos more often than not, were unaware of this fact. The cultural object or concept was entirely new to them and was considered a simple term and not a Cw.

Even considering the Spanish loans like *todoslosantos* (Holy week) and *amorpropio* (self pride), Filipino speakers were not aware or did not consider the fact that these Cws consist of single words in Spanish. The Spanish Cw loan like the colloquial term *buena mano* (after you) has undergone semantic change in Filipino, and now means 'the first buyer or customer'. Unlike these are the innovations such as *kontrabida* (villain in a story, one who supports the unpopular stand) from the Spanish words *contra* (against, contrary) and *vida* (life). The Filipino Cw *matapobre* is another innovation since it consists of an indigenous word *mata* (eye) and Spanish *pobre* (poor).

From English are the words:

<i>blakbord</i>	blackboard
<i>holdap</i>	hold up
<i>bolpen</i>	ball pen
<i>meykap</i>	make up
<i>polosyert</i>	polo shirt
<i>peyrol</i>	pay roll
<i>barbel</i>	barbell

Cws such as these are spoken and often written as one word regardless of their forms in English. Those who claim to know English well have a problem writing them down or accepting them as Cws knowing they are two words in English. Other examples:

<i>tsuwinggam/chewinggam/tsuwinggam</i>	chewing gum
<i>naytgawn/nayt gawn</i>	night gown
<i>sosyal-sayans/ sosyal sayans</i>	social science

Since borrowing is rarely done deliberately, that is the loan eases into the language either as a result of a need or language prestige, the borrowed item usually adjusts to the rules of Filipino. It also happens that these rules are modified to accept the change brought by the loans. These changes are done unconsciously and without resistance when spoken. The trouble starts once these loans are recorded in written form since this is done deliberately and with a permanent effect on the borrowing language as shown above. Hence the orthographic changes lag behind and pass a controversial stage before being fully accepted. Such is the case of the Cws in Filipino which originated from loans.

These loans have had a significant effect on the syllable structure of Filipino. New consonant clusters are now present in the different positions of the word. The effect of this change results in new cluster such as *gs*, *kr*, *ks*, *wd*, *sp*, *st*, *yt*, *kl*, and *rt*.

<i>ayskrim</i>	ice cream
<i>teksbuk</i>	text book
<i>lawdspiker</i>	loud speaker
<i>naytklab</i>	night club
<i>portpolyo</i>	portfolio

Most of these Cws are not idiomatic since they are loans that retain the meaning as found in English. But there are Cws which are innovations constructed with loans previously borrowed from English. Some examples are:

paybsiks - usurious interest rates (from *payb* [five] and *siks* [six])

oberlukiing - spectacular view (from *ober* [over] and *lukiing* [looking])

brawn-awt - electrical outage (from *brawn* [brown] and *awt* [out])

Relatively a young language with speakers who have different native languages and who are subject to rapid cultural change from within and

without the country, Filipino is undergoing rapid modernization. Since it is one of the languages taught in schools and is now gaining wider use as the language of instruction, it is presently highly pressured to standardize.

Note:

ⁱ Two studies on this topic may be cited: *Balarila ng Wikang Pambansa*, 1950 by Lope K. Santas and *Makabagong Balarila ng Pilipino*, 1971 by Teresita Ramos.

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