

LANGUAGE AS [DE]COLONIZING TOOL: A POSTCOLONIAL READING OF DR. MANUEL V. GALLEGO'S THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM OF THE FILIPINOS (1932)

EL LENGUAJE COMO HERRAMIENTA DE [DES]COLONIZACIÓN: UNA LECTURA
POSCOLONIAL DE THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM OF THE FILIPINOS (1932) DE DR.
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Abstract

This study revisits the contributions of Dr. Manuel Viola Gallego (1893–1976) to Philippine language policy and educational thought, with particular focus on his 1932 essay, *The Language Problem of the Filipinos*. Through a postcolonial historical analysis informed by the works of Frantz Fanon and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, the research situates Gallego's critique of colonial education and his promotion of vernacular instruction within broader efforts to assert cultural and intellectual autonomy. The study analyzes archival records, legislative proposals, and rare published texts to reconstruct Gallego's role in the national discourse on language, identity, and education. Five central findings emerge from the analysis. First, the scholarship on Gallego remains limited, despite his substantial influence on lawmaking and public education. Second, the language issue in the Philippines originates in colonial policies that deliberately undermined native linguistic practices. Third, mother tongue education continues to encounter both ideological resistance and structural barriers. Fourth, the intellectual development of local languages requires consistent policy support and institutional commitment. Fifth, the emerging framework for Gallegan Philosophy, including its proposed inclusion in courses such as SSC 111 and SSC 112, lacks theoretical grounding in indigenous and postcolonial thought. The study calls for a more coherent, historically informed, and culturally grounded approach to language planning and curriculum development. It positions Gallego's work as a critical foundation for building an education system that affirms linguistic diversity, national identity, and intellectual independence.

Keywords

decolonization, Tagalog, language problem, Gallegan Philosophy, language planning and policies

1. INTRODUCTION

Despite its constitutional designation as the national language, Filipino remains paradoxically marginalized within its educational system (Abiva, 2024). In many Philippine classrooms, students struggle to speak Filipino fluently, encountering difficulties when required to learn academic concepts in a language that is unfamiliar to them at home. This phenomenon highlights a fundamental tension between language policy and educational practice, revealing the deeper historical contradictions embedded in the formation of the nation's linguistic landscape.

The continued dominance of English as the principal medium of instruction reflects the enduring influence of colonial education structures. While Filipino was envisioned as the unifying backbone of national identity, it has often been sidelined in favor of English, producing a generation of learners alienated from their linguistic heritage. This marginalization is not merely a pedagogical issue but a symptom of the larger colonial and neocolonial dynamics that continue to shape Philippine education, governance, and cultural identity (Abiva, 2025).

To examine these dynamics, this paper employs Postcolonial Historical Analysis as its primary methodological framework. This approach foregrounds the historical, political, and cultural contexts in which language policies emerged, highlighting the ideological structures and power relations embedded in them. Postcolonial Historical Analysis enables an interrogation of how colonial education policies, language planning, and knowledge production systems have shaped Filipino subjectivity, governance, and national development. It also facilitates a critical re-reading of Filipino intellectuals like Dr. Manuel Viola Gallego, whose contributions have been marginalized in dominant historiographies despite their foundational impact.

The first major theme explored in this study is *Major Theme 1: Intellectual Biography*. Dr. Manuel V. Gallego's life and works reveal an intellectual trajectory shaped by colonial encounters and nationalist aspirations. Born in San Miguel, Bulacan, Gallego earned his law degree at the University of the Philippines and completed his Juris Doctor in the United States, experiences that situated him within colonial institutions while also providing him tools to challenge their structures. His writings and legislative work articulate a vision of education and language policy rooted in Filipino cultural sovereignty, moral responsibility, and national development. This intellectual biography offers insight into how colonial-educated elites negotiated, resisted, and redefined the ideological systems imposed upon them.

The second major theme interrogates *Major Theme 2: Debates on National Language Policies*. Gallego was a central yet often forgotten figure in these debates. His proposals to

institutionalize Tagalog as a medium of instruction for elementary education foregrounded his belief that language is not merely a tool for communication but the embodiment of national thought, dignity, and collective identity. These debates reveal the complexities of language planning in a multilingual nation: the tension between regional languages and the national language, the privileging of English for global competitiveness, and the persistence of colonial mentality among intellectual and political elites. Gallego's interventions highlight how language policy is deeply political, shaping national consciousness, economic relations, and social inclusion.

The third major theme focuses on *Major Theme 3: Theoretical and Pedagogical Grounding for Gallegan Philosophy*. Beyond historical recovery, this study argues for the construction of Gallegan Philosophy as a framework for contemporary education. Gallego's writings integrate legal, linguistic, and educational theory to propose a vision of national development anchored in intellectual freedom and cultural authenticity. His philosophy treats education as a project of moral formation and national emancipation, positioning language at its core. Pedagogically, this framework emphasizes culturally grounded, critically engaged, and linguistically inclusive approaches that empower students to think, articulate, and act as Filipinos within a decolonizing educational system.

By centering Postcolonial Historical Analysis and these three major themes, this paper seeks to achieve two interrelated objectives. First, it recovers and examines the legislative and intellectual contributions of Dr. Manuel V. Gallego to Philippine language policy and education. Second, it proposes the foundational principles of Gallegan Philosophy that can inform contemporary curriculum development, particularly in courses such as SSC 111 and SSC 112. Through this analysis, the study advances the argument that Gallego's efforts, while often omitted from national historiography, represent a deliberate and forward-looking response to colonial linguistic domination and educational inequities.

Revisiting Gallego's thought thus provides a critical foundation for addressing his historical erasure and the ongoing challenges in Philippine language education. It invites educators, policymakers, and scholars to reimagine the role of language in shaping not only academic success but also national identity, intellectual agency, and cultural sovereignty. By foregrounding his philosophy, this study asserts that the project of educational reform in the Philippines must begin with the reclamation of its own intellectual traditions, rooted in its people's languages, histories, and collective aspirations.

Despite its official designation as the national language, Filipino remains marginalized within its educational system. Many students cannot speak Filipino fluently, which poses significant challenges to learning in classes that adopt it as the primary medium of instruction (Amarilla et al., 2025). This paradox reveals a deeper contradiction: the subject of Filipino, intended to serve as the linguistic and cultural backbone of national identity, is often sidelined in favor of English, reflecting a colonial legacy that continues to shape the Philippine educational landscape (Lumbis & Manalo, 2024).

The policy environment itself highlights these contradictions. In 2012, the Department of Education introduced the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) under the Enhanced Basic Education Program. This policy replaced the previous bilingual system centered on English and Filipino and allowed the use of native languages from Kindergarten to Grade 3, aiming to develop early literacy and numeracy in students' first languages before transitioning to Filipino and English (Malone, 2018). This reform aligned with global findings that early education conducted in a child's mother tongue improves cognitive development and facilitates second-language acquisition (UNESCO, 2010). However, despite the Philippines having more than one hundred languages, only nineteen were recognized under MTB-MLE, leaving many linguistic communities excluded from its purported benefits (Bersamina, 2024).

In October 2024, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. signed Republic Act No. 12027, formally ending the implementation of MTB-MLE in early education. English and Filipino were reinstated as the sole primary languages of instruction (Bersamina, 2024). This decision exemplifies what Batnag (1997) cautioned against: the failure of language policies that lack genuine consultation and social acceptance, reducing them to mere documents with no transformative effect. Igarashi et al. (2024) further found that this abrupt policy reversal negatively impacted foundational mathematics skills among the first cohorts exposed to the changes, underscoring the complex links between language proficiency and broader cognitive domains. Ranque et al. (2024) thus recommend more performance-based assessments to generate accurate data on students' Filipino proficiency, which could inform future reforms.

Globally, UNESCO (2010) estimates that 221 million children speak a home language different from the language used in their schools, producing educational disparities, social stigma, and systemic exclusion. In multilingual societies like the Philippines, this linguistic mismatch is not merely a pedagogical issue but also a political one, deeply embedded in histories of colonial domination and postcolonial state-building (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1986). Zeng and Li (2023) emphasize that multilingual and multicultural nations must adopt inclusive language policies to empower local communities, construct national identities that value linguistic diversity, and resist the homogenizing forces of globalization and neocolonialism. Yet, Usero (2021) argues that existing linguistic theories, documentation practices, and policies continue to threaten the Philippines' multilingual ecology, failing to uphold linguistic justice for marginalized ethnolinguistic groups.

The contradictions in Philippine language education stem from its colonial roots. Under Spanish rule, language became a tool for both subjugation and limited assimilation, while American colonization institutionalized English as the principal language of instruction and governance (Ordoñez, 2004). T.H. Pardo de Tavera explicitly stated in his letter to General Arthur MacArthur that the spread of English would allow the American spirit to possess the Filipino mind. According to his book *The Philippine Trade Act in the Light of History*, this policy was solidified by the Tydings-McDuffie Act, embedding English into constitutional and

educational frameworks (Gallego, 1936). Gallego noted that this imposition deprived Filipinos of the right to determine their national language during the critical transition to independence. Onofre Corpuz observed that such educational structures cultivated a mindset viewing political matters predominantly from an American perspective, shaping not only students but also educators and administrators.

In *The Price of Independence* (1937), Dr. Manuel Viola Gallego critiqued these dynamics, arguing that American imperialism operated beyond political structures through organized violence, economic reconfiguration, and ideological manipulation. He wrote, "We still maintain that the foreign policy of the United States of America was conceived in imperialism and dedicated to the principles of expansion" (p. 5). He asserted that staged uprisings, backed by capitalist interests, secured favorable terms for foreign investment under the guise of independence, embedding dependency within the Philippine economy and polity. These provisions in the Tydings-McDuffie Act institutionalized American control, ensuring continued economic access for U.S. capital even after formal decolonization.

Against this backdrop, Gallego emerged as a legislative and intellectual advocate for linguistic and cultural sovereignty. He argued that language is not merely a tool of communication but the very expression of national thought and identity. His proposals to use Tagalog as a medium of instruction for the first four years of elementary education in the *The Language Problem of the Filipinos* (1932) reflect what Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986) describes as decolonizing the mind—reclaiming indigenous languages as vehicles of memory, worldview, and collective consciousness. Fanon (1963) similarly argued that mastery of the colonizer's language grants conditional access to power but deepens structural dependency, while the reclamation of native language serves as an assertion of cultural and psychological liberation.

Historically, Filipinos have turned to their vernacular languages as instruments of resistance. The Katipunan adopted Tagalog in their revolution against Spain (San Juan, 2015), and revolutionary leaders during the American period continued this practice (Paz, 2024). Language became a medium for articulating indigenous socialist ideas, as Adriatico poetically wrote that "because of the language, the leaf became more beautiful, and the flower became more fragrant" (vi). Despite formal independence in 1946, American economic and cultural dominance persisted, as exemplified by the Philippine Trade Act amendments that Gallego (1937) critiqued for granting American citizens access to national resources, endangering future generations.

These issues remain relevant today as the Philippine curriculum continues to be shaped by American colonial education frameworks that obstruct efforts to intellectualize and Filipinize national education. Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Order No. 20, Series of 2013, which removed Filipino language and literature from the general education curriculum in higher education, further exposed these contradictions. While DepEd promoted local languages in early schooling through MTB-MLE, CHED removed the national language in universities, revealing failures in institutional coordination and an unwillingness to address the political nature of language planning.

This paper thus pursues two interrelated objectives. First, it recovers and examines Dr. Manuel V. Gallego's legislative and intellectual contributions to Philippine language policy through close readings of his monographs and proposed bills, interpreted via postcolonial historical analysis grounded in Frantz Fanon's (1963) and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's (1986) insights on language, identity, and political subjugation. This analysis reveals the ideological structures embedded in colonial education and language planning. Second, it proposes the foundational principles for a Gallegan Philosophy that can inform contemporary curriculum development, particularly in courses such as SSC 111 and SSC 112.

The paper advances the argument that Gallego's efforts, while often omitted from national historiography, represent a deliberate and forward-looking response to colonial linguistic domination. His emphasis on language as an expression of national thought positions him as an early theorist of cultural sovereignty whose writings provide a critical foundation for addressing both his historical erasure and the ongoing challenges in Philippine language education.

By revisiting Gallego's thought, this study proposes a culturally grounded, philosophically coherent, and politically relevant framework for Filipino educational reform. It argues that empowering students to reclaim their native languages and intellectual traditions is not only an act of historical justice but also a practical strategy for building an educational system rooted in national identity, critical agency, and linguistic inclusivity.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study uses Postcolonial Historical Analysis as its guiding methodological approach. This method investigates how colonial structures have shaped systems of language, education, and national identity. It treats historical texts not as neutral records but as politically charged interventions that emerge from specific power relations. In the context of the Philippines, where language policy and education continue to reflect colonial influence, this approach provides the analytical framework to understand Dr. Manuel Viola Gallego's contributions. The study frames Gallego's thought as a response to ongoing forms of cultural domination rooted in colonial ideology.

The analysis relies on the works of Frantz Fanon and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o as its primary theoretical anchors. Fanon (1963) critiques colonial language imposition as a form of psychological and cultural violence. He writes, "To speak is to exist absolutely for the other" (p. 17), revealing how colonial language conditions identity through external validation. Fanon also states, "A man who has a language consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language" (p. 18), showing that language determines access to conceptual and social frameworks. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986) similarly critiques the displacement of indigenous languages by colonial systems. He argues that "language, any language, has a dual character: it is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture" (p. 13), and emphasizes that "the domination of a people's language by the languages of the

colonizing nations was crucial to the domination of the mental universe of the colonized" (p. 16). Both theorists view the control of language as central to the control of thought and identity.

Gallego's writings articulate similar critiques. In *The Language Problem of the Filipinos* (1932), Gallego asserts that colonial education resulted in "a conquest not only of our country but also of our native dialect." This statement reflects Fanon's claim that colonialism extends its reach through language. Gallego also writes, "Language is the expression of a nation's thought," which aligns with Ngũgĩ's view of language as inseparable from cultural and intellectual life. Gallego supported legislation, such as Bill No. 2182, that proposed Tagalog as the language of instruction in early education. His proposals demonstrate an effort to reclaim cultural sovereignty and counteract the long-term effects of linguistic subordination. Postcolonial historical analysis enables this study to recover the political and theoretical significance of Gallego's work, which prefigures the concerns later articulated by Fanon and Ngũgĩ in postcolonial discourse.

Although this study primarily employs postcolonial historical analysis based on existing texts and archival materials, ethical considerations remain central to the research process. No interviews with human participants were conducted for this study; therefore, formal informed consent procedures were not applicable. However, the following ethical measures were observed: (a) all primary and secondary sources, including the retrieved books of Dr. Manuel V. Gallego and Atty. Obed Jose Meneses, were properly cited and referenced to uphold academic integrity; (b) the retrieval and use of primary texts from the MVGFC College of Nursing's former morgue were conducted with institutional coordination and permission, ensuring respect for institutional property and historical documents; (c) the researcher ensured faithful representation of the ideas and writings of Dr. Gallego, Fanon, and Ngũgĩ, avoiding misinterpretation or decontextualization of their works; and (d) the study recognizes the cultural and political implications of analyzing colonial and postcolonial texts and thus maintained sensitivity in interpreting concepts related to identity, nationhood, and language.

Since no human subjects were directly involved, the study did not require ethical clearance for interviews or surveys. Nonetheless, these ethical guidelines ensured that the research process remained rigorous, respectful, and aligned with academic standards.

This study faced several limitations. First, there was a notable scarcity of existing scholarship on the life, works, and writings of Dr. Manuel V. Gallego. Since 1979, no substantial research has been conducted on his intellectual contributions, severely limiting the availability of secondary analyses and contextual studies necessary for a comprehensive understanding of his legacy. It was not until Asst. Prof. Rene Boy Abiva, in 2022, initiated the first systematic scholarly exploration of Gallegan narratives, and these gaps began to be addressed. The first preliminary attempt to re-open the scholarly study in Dr. Gallego's work was accepted on the following International Conferences: *Sinag at Balag International Conference 2024- Philippine Normal University South Luzon*, *11th International Conference for*

Teacher Education, UP- Visayas, 16th Annual Global Conference on Business and Social Sciences Series, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, The Bintana International Conference 2025, Far Eastern University, Manila,, 8th International Conference on Asian and Philippine Studies, De La Salle University, 7th Linguistics Society of the Philippines International Conference, Pangasinan State University, and Joint International Decade of Indigenous Languages and International Mother Language Day Conference 2025, Sorsogon State University. Additionally, the study encountered limited access to primary sources. The research relied heavily on a small set of materials, particularly the books authored by Dr. Gallego and Atty. Obed Jose Meneses, which were only retrieved on October 18, 2024, from storage at the MVGFC College of Nursing. The decades-long inaccessibility of these texts significantly constrained the breadth and depth of documentary analysis possible for this study.

Moreover, the study faced an absence of triangulation with oral histories. Due to the unavailability of living contemporaries or organized interviews, it was not possible to include oral accounts that might have provided personal insights or anecdotal validations of Gallego's work and influence. Another limitation relates to the temporal distance from the subject. The significant time lapse since Dr. Gallego's active years in the early to mid-20th century posed challenges in contextualizing his writings within their immediate sociopolitical climate, given the limited archival data and the loss of contemporaneous materials over time.

The scope of the study was also limited to textual analysis, as the methodological approach focused exclusively on postcolonial historical textual analysis and did not integrate other analytical lenses, such as quantitative policy impact analysis or education program evaluation, which might have broadened its interdisciplinary relevance. Finally, there is a possibility of interpretive bias. By employing critical theory frameworks, particularly those of Fanon and Ngũgĩ, the study's interpretation is framed primarily by postcolonial critique. While this approach illuminates colonial dynamics, it may underemphasize alternative readings, such as purely linguistic or pedagogical analyses of Gallego's proposals.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Major Theme 1. Intellectual Biography

Manuel V. Gallego's life illustrates the paradoxes and possibilities of intellectual agency under colonial and neocolonial conditions. Born in 1893 in San Miguel, Bulacan, he rose to prominence as a lawyer, legislator, and educator shaped by both colonial education and nationalist commitment. After studying law at the University of the Philippines and earning a Juris Doctor from Chicago Northwestern University, Gallego used his elite training not merely for professional advancement but as a platform for reform. As a representative of Nueva Ecija, he championed land redistribution, women's suffrage, and health initiatives such as the School Health Act of 1946. His influence extended internationally as a Philippine delegate to the United Nations in 1946 and domestically through the founding of institutions like the Central Luzon School of Nursing. He also played a decisive role in shaping national

identity by supporting the adoption of Tagalog as the national language under National Ordinance No. 134 (1937).

Viewed through a postcolonial lens, Gallego's intellectual trajectory reflects what Frantz Fanon (1963) described as the "double bind" of colonial education—granting access to institutional power while reinforcing dependency on the colonizer's systems. Yet Gallego complicates this framework. Rather than remaining complicit, he appropriated his colonial training to advance reforms in law, health, education, and language policy that sought to weaken colonial legacies and affirm Filipino autonomy. In this sense, Gallego's career resonates with Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's (1986) insistence on linguistic sovereignty, though Gallego pursued this through policy and institutional reform rather than literary production.

Table 1 - Thematic Analysis of Dr. Manuel V. Gallego's Biography Through a Postcolonial Lens

Sub-Theme	Description	Evidence
Colonial Education as Double-Edged Empowerment	Access to professional mobility but also dependency on colonial systems	Law degree (UP), Juris Doctor (Chicago Northwestern); Fanon (1963) on conditional access
Intellectual Formation and Nationalist Advocacy	Redirected elite training toward nationalist reforms	Land reform, women's suffrage, legal texts
Education, Health, and Nation-Building	Linked education and public health as national foundations	School Health Act (1946), Central Luzon School of Nursing
Language Policy and Cultural Sovereignty	Promoted language as identity and reclamation	Advocated Tagalog as national language (1937); Ngũgĩ (1986)
International Engagement and Postwar Diplomacy	Represented Filipino sovereignty abroad	Delegate to UN (1946) on reparations and sovereignty
Agency Within Colonial Structures	Subverted colonial institutions for decolonial ends	Legislative and institutional initiatives; Fanon (1963)

Source: Author

This negotiation between colonial inheritance and nationalist advocacy points toward what I call Gallegan Philosophy: a mode of decolonial thought grounded in Philippine realities that retools colonial knowledge for cultural reclamation and nation-building. Unlike general postcolonial or indigenous frameworks, Gallegan Philosophy emphasizes institutional reform—particularly in education, health, and language policy—as the terrain where decolonization takes root.

In sum, Gallego's intellectual biography exemplifies how a colonial-educated elite could both embody and resist the contradictions of empire. His reforms in law, education, health,

and language demonstrate a distinctive Philippine pathway to decolonization, one that anticipates broader theoretical debates while grounding them in local struggles. By tracing these trajectories, this paper recovers Gallego not merely as a historical figure but as the architect of a still-evolving framework of decolonial practice.

3.2. Major Theme 2: Debates on National Language Policies

Dr. Manuel V. Gallego was a pivotal yet underrecognized figure in the early debates on Philippine national language policy under American colonial rule. Through his legislative initiatives—particularly Bill No. 588 and the revised Bill No. 2182—he argued for the institutionalization of native languages and later proposed Tagalog as the medium of instruction in the early grades. For Gallego, language was not merely a vehicle of instruction but the living expression of national thought and identity. His position anticipated later decolonial theorists such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986) and Frantz Fanon (1963), who stressed that the imposition of colonial languages constitutes a form of cultural domination. Unlike these theorists, however, Gallego worked through concrete legislative reform, making him an early practitioner of what might be called decolonial praxis within the colonial state.

Gallego's critiques went beyond language policy to the very structure of American colonial education. He read the 1935 Constitution's retention of English and Spanish as official languages as an effort to prolong colonial influence, warning that such provisions displaced indigenous knowledge and reinforced U.S. cultural hegemony. While he acknowledged the pragmatic advantages of English, he insisted that its unchecked dominance would deepen epistemic dependency. His alternative was not linguistic isolationism but a pluralist framework: one that maintained English for international engagement while centering Filipino languages in the nation's cultural and moral life.

This vision illuminates a distinctive strand of what I define as Gallegan Philosophy: a decolonial framework that treats language simultaneously as political instrument and cultural inheritance. Unlike Ngũgĩ, who foregrounded literature, and unlike Fanon, who emphasized psychological alienation, Gallego situated decolonization in educational policy and institutional reform. By arguing for native languages as the foundation of instruction, he advanced a model of nationhood rooted in linguistic sovereignty, historical memory, and civic responsibility.

Table 2. Thematic Analysis of The Language Problem of the Filipinos (1932)

Sub-Theme	Description	Evidence
Language as Colonial Domination	Language policy as tool of conquest and mental control	Spanish education as "a conquest not only of our country but also of our native dialect" (Gallego, 1932); aligns with Ngũgĩ (1986) and Fanon (1963)

Sub-Theme	Description	Evidence
Legislative Resistance as Decolonial Praxis	Bills to institutionalize native languages and Tagalog in schools	Bill No. 588; Bill No. 2182
Colonial Education and Internalized Americanization	Policies fostered elites' preference for English	Critique of Act No. 74; Fanon (1963) on psychological colonization
Systemic Exclusion in Historiography	Gallego erased from official language policy accounts	Absent in Almario's <i>Ang Wikang Pambansa at Amerikanisasyon</i>
Language as Cultural Sovereignty	Language as foundation of national identity and thought	Gallego: "Language is the expression of a nation's thought"
Contradictions in Language Planning	Balancing multilingual diversity with national unity	Proposed Tagalog as a bridge language while respecting diversity
Historical Continuities of Imperialism	U.S. policy mirrored global strategies of linguistic control	Parallels with Puerto Rico; critiques of globalization (Phillipson, 2017)

Source: Author

Gallego's interventions reveal how language debates were also debates about sovereignty, cultural memory, and the decolonization of knowledge. His exclusion from canonical accounts reflects the politics of historiography, where contributions outside elite or dominant frameworks are minimized. By reinserting Gallego into these debates, we see not only an early critique of linguistic imperialism but also the articulation of a localized philosophy of decolonization that retools colonial systems to recover cultural sovereignty. This articulation strengthens the argument that *Gallegan Philosophy* offers a coherent and distinctive framework within Philippine intellectual history.

3.3. Major Theme 3. Theoretical and Pedagogical Grounding for Gallegan Philosophy

The development of a *Gallegan Philosophy* course requires a clear theoretical foundation and a coherent pedagogical framework. At its core, the course must recognize Dr. Manuel V. Gallego not merely as a historical actor but as a Filipino thinker whose legal, educational, and linguistic contributions articulated a distinct response to colonial rule. His ideas—particularly on language as the basis of national identity and self-determination—must be treated as part of a living philosophical tradition that remains relevant to current debates on education and nationhood.

The theoretical framing draws on postcolonial scholarship, which underscores how colonial language and education policies marginalized indigenous identities and entrenched dependency on foreign epistemologies (Fanón, 1963; Ngũgĩ, 1986). Yet Gallego extends these critiques into concrete institutional reform. Whereas Fanón emphasizes psychological alienation and Ngũgĩ foregrounds literature as resistance, Gallego's proposals reoriented law, health, and education toward cultural sovereignty. This articulation constitutes the distinctive contours of *Gallegan Philosophy*: a decolonial framework that situates language and education as institutional sites of resistance and reconstruction. To sharpen this framework, the course must also engage Filipino philosophical concepts such as *ugnayan* (relationality), *loob* (interiority), and communal selfhood (De Castro, 2018), ensuring that Gallego's contributions are understood within local traditions rather than subsumed under imported theories.

Pedagogically, the course must adopt a culturally responsive approach that prioritizes Filipino and regional languages in classroom dialogue, written assignments, and student projects. Instruction should center on Gallego's own texts—his monographs, legislative records, and public speeches—paired with accessible theoretical readings. Students must be guided to see how Gallego addressed language not only as a legal matter but as a moral and cultural foundation for citizenship and national unity.

To provide structure, the course may be organized into three instructional units. The first examines the colonial history of Philippine education and language policy. The second focuses on Gallego's legislative and institutional interventions. The third invites students to apply his ideas to contemporary challenges by formulating a working framework of *Gallegan Philosophy* for the present. Each unit should combine historical case studies, critical readings, guided discussions, and community-based activities.

Evaluation should emphasize praxis. Students may conduct interviews with teachers, map the linguistic landscape of their communities, or draft policy proposals inspired by Gallego's vision. Such assessments encourage originality, contextual sensitivity, and ethical reflection, ensuring that classroom theory translates into civic engagement.

Ultimately, the course positions *Gallegan Philosophy* as both a corrective to colonial legacies and a forward-looking model for education and nation-building. By foregrounding Gallego's unique contributions, the course equips students to engage critically with policy debates, advocate for culturally grounded and linguistically inclusive practices, and recognize the philosophical foundations of national development.

Table 3. Theoretical and Pedagogical Grounding for Gallegan Philosophy

Sub-Theme	Description	Supporting Evidence
Postcolonial Theoretical Foundation	Grounds Gallego's thought in postcolonial and indigenous philosophies, viewing language as political struggle and identity formation	Fanon (1963); Ngũgĩ (1986); Gallego (1932)
Integration of Filipino Philosophical Perspectives	Embeds Gallego's ideas in local traditions of relationality, interiority, and communal selfhood	De Castro (2018)
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	Advocates teaching in Filipino/regional languages, using Gallego's texts with supportive theory	Gallego monographs; Paris & Alim (2017)
Structured Instructional Design	Three-unit framework: history, Gallego's interventions, contemporary applications	Course outline
Praxis-Oriented Evaluation	Application-based assessments linking theory to community practice	Interviews, language maps, policy proposals
Philosophical and Educational Purpose	Frames Gallegan Philosophy as decolonial critique and model for development	Gallego's writings on language, health, and education

Source: Author

4. CONCLUSION

This study repositions Dr. Manuel V. Gallego as a foundational thinker in Philippine educational and linguistic discourse. Using postcolonial historical analysis, the research interprets Gallego's writings not as isolated commentaries but as ideological interventions that resist the enduring structures of colonial domination. Anchored in the theories of Frantz Fanon and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, this study demonstrates that Gallego understood language policy as central to the formation of national consciousness. His critiques of English-medium instruction and his advocacy for Tagalog reflect a profound awareness of the psychological and cultural consequences of linguistic subjugation.

Fanon's theory of language as a vehicle of alienation and Ngũgĩ's insistence on language as a carrier of culture clarify the stakes of Gallego's interventions. His assertion that colonial education constituted "a conquest not only of our country but also of our native dialect" prefigures the postcolonial insight that control over language enables control over thought. Gallego's legislative efforts, his writings on educational reform, and his articulation of language as the expression of a nation's thought form part of a broader intellectual resistance to colonial epistemologies. Through this methodological lens, Gallego emerges not merely as a legislator or educator, but as a critical voice in the early articulation of decolonial language policy.

The contemporary relevance of Gallego's work is clear. His support for vernacular education, his emphasis on cultural self-determination, and his resistance to linguistic homogenization offer a coherent response to the contradictions within current Philippine language policy. As the country moves away from the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) framework, Gallego's vision provides an urgently needed counterpoint. His thought reminds us that education grounded in indigenous languages is not simply a pedagogical preference but a political commitment to cultural sovereignty.

This study contributes to the initial development of Gallegan Philosophy, but further work must deepen its theoretical coherence and connect it more explicitly with Filipino indigenous philosophical traditions. The integration of Gallego's insights into academic programs such as SSC 111/112 and MTB 311 represents a necessary first step. Institutions like the Manuel V. Gallego Foundation Colleges (MVGFC) must play a leading role in formalizing this intellectual legacy by curating archives, designing curriculum, and fostering scholarly dialogue rooted in local languages and histories.

Gallego's intellectual project advances a vision of education that affirms pluralism, restores historical memory, and strengthens national identity. In a postcolonial society where language remains a contested space, returning to his work offers a strategic and ethical foundation for constructing a more inclusive, critical, and culturally anchored educational system.

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