

Mainstreaming Indigenous knowledge in/through media and information literacy: A basis for a decolonised task design

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This critical qualitative inquiry sought to examine and understand how academic authors as curriculum implementors and media producers incorporated Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media in the design and development of textbook tasks for media and information literacy instructional materials. This is based on the fundamental assumption that a textbook as a communication artifact is deeply implicated in the history and politics of inequality, exclusion, and elitism, marginalising and invisibilising Indigenous paradigms, policies and practices. As an analytical lens, Henry Giroux's transformative construct of "border pedagogy" was employed in making sense of how Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media are instantiated and represented for analysis, adoption and action-taking. This research also utilised critical discourse analysis and close reading in examining the student tasks as text and the broader development ecology as the social context. In view of the text in its dialectical context, the study revealed a set of co-orienting and interanimating themes that can be summarised as critical knowledge management, critical technology, place-based activism, role of community elders, critical sense-making, language preservation, systemic injustice, critical rootedness, and community-based praxis, foregrounding the potential of these selected instructional materials in exposing community threats, opposing structural forces and proposing empowering alternatives.

Keywords: Indigenous knowledge, Indigenous media, Indigeneity, border crossing, border pedagogy, critical media, information literacy

Introduction

This critical textbook research is predicated on the basic assumption that tasks as texts communicate deeply embedded messages and meanings about media, education, values, identity and culture. In this sense, the textbook task instructions serve as the medium or channel of the intended message. Given the didactic structure and ideological nature of textbooks, this renders the communicative act of conceptualising and constructing textbook tasks as purposive, discursive and, hence, politico-normative.

From the colonial up to the contemporary period, Indigenous sources of information continue to be undermined by the mainstream and more dominant modern and Western counterpart. Within this context, students of media and information literacy therefore need to be taught and enlightened about the inherent value of Indigenous knowledge systems and practices (IKSP) in the nation's collective being and becoming. As a "zone of transaction" (Genette, 1997, p. 2) and potential transformation, the media and information literacy textbook tasks that learners need to respond to and act upon provide an opportunity for them to achieve and actualise critical praxis. Along this line, Cordes and Sabzalian (2020)

advocate for an “anticolonial media literacy” (p. 184) that will challenge the hegemonic and dehumanising misrepresentation of Indigenous peoples and disrupt the prevailing colonial logics and epistemologies.

The powerful forces of imperialist globalisation have severely eroded Indigenous perspectives and practices, leading to what the United Nations Development Programme (1996) aptly described as “rootless growth” (p. 4). This assault to social and cultural rootedness has far-reaching consequences to ecological sustainability, community solidarity and Indigenous education. As a result of globalisation’s manifold disruptive and de-territorialising effects, people experienced alienation and dislocation from their own local communities and cultures. Socio-culturally and, by extension, socio-academically, the assimilated population end up becoming more acquainted with, drawn to and influenced by foreign perspectives, practices and products that bear little or no significance to community life. This detached and disengaged social encounter continued to spread and perpetuate across many contexts and settings through the strong influence and broad reach of mainstream cultural institutions, such as media and the academe. In the process, it also adversely impacted the discovery, documentation, dissemination and development of ethno-ontologies and ethno-epistemologies of many geographically disadvantaged, economically displaced, socially marginalised, culturally underrepresented and linguistically minoritised groups. As an illustrative case of this deplorable pattern, Pallavi (2017) reveals the homogenous character of the media coverage in Bihar, India, thereby further crowding out the already downplayed cultural dimension of their existence and, by extension, also undermining the Indigenous knowledge system of the Tharu community in the locality. More disconcertingly and closer to home, Natano (2023) reported the eroding sense of pride among young Indigenous people in Rizal Province in the Philippines as manifested in their “limited involvement in cultural practices” and “insufficient knowledge about their traditions” (p. 167).

As an embodiment of the curriculum, the textbook through its learning activities and performance tasks can potentially link students to local communities as well as connect the explicit (or institutional) knowledge coded in the academic disciplines with the tacit (or Indigenous) knowledge embedded in the local ecologies and cultures. This potential interweaving of knowledge systems will develop cultural competence, foster intercultural dialogue and bring about cultural development in/through media and information literacy education. Within this context, UNESCO (2020) underscores the central importance of synergy between key stakeholders in ensuring and enriching plurality and diversity in the media ecosystems. Along this line, Ajani et al. (2024) accentuate the critical role of digital media technologies in revitalising and sustaining Indigenous knowledge systems and practices, pointing out also that there are socio-historical, logistico-economic and politico-administrative challenges along the way.

A well-designed textbook task section can also serve as an effective springboard of campus and community alignment, engagement and collaboration, especially on matters of mutual interest such as democratic literacy, participatory governance, ecological sustainability, public health, community safety and cultural heritage promotion, among others. In this sense, a community-oriented task design therefore holds huge potential in creating a synergy of institutionalised and localised knowledge towards the development of contextualised and culturally grounded student learning and the formulation of sustainable solutions to longstanding, as well as emerging, community problems. This opportunity for knowledge co-production builds trust and confidence between schools and communities – a crucial first step in tackling multisectoral, multidimensional and transboundary development issues and concerns.

This media and communication inquiry, therefore, seeks to surface and foreground the critical elements, dimensions, and attributes of Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media that are instantiated and

interposed in the textbook task design of media and information literacy instructional materials. This is predicated on the basic premise that mainstream knowledge products such as textbooks tend to omit and erase Indigenous knowledge systems and practices in the instructional delivery and learning assessment. As such, there is a crucial need to problematise prevailing discourses and draw critical insights, as well as identify curricular exemplars from the substantive and pedagogical dimensions of the textbook tasks that pertain to Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media.

The objective of this qualitative inquiry is to influence the pioneer and novice, as well as prospective media and information literacy textbook writers and educators, in integrating Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media when designing and developing student tasks and assessments. In more specific terms, this study aims to contribute to the goal of harnessing the knowledge and skills of students in carrying out culturally rooted and sensitive media text analysis, media research and media production. When employed as a guide in writing textbooks and designing assessments, the findings and analyses of this media and communication inquiry will help develop academic authors and media educators into becoming self-reflective practitioners who are capable of equipping learners with knowledge and skills in interrogating the wrong notions and perspectives about local culture, social change and development.

The macro-structural context that surrounds the textbook shapes the complex process of its inception and materialisation as a cultural product. Concomitantly, this broader terrain is reflected in the following attributes of the textbook and its constitutive student task section, namely: (1) textbooks as embodiment of state-rendered curricula, (2) textbook tasks' formal and didactic structure, (3) textbook tasks as politico-communicative expressions, (4) the commercial nature of textbooks as media products, and (5) the marginalisation of Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media in mainstream instructional materials. As communication artifacts, textbooks can be appropriately understood as "instantiations of socially regulated discourses and that the processes of production and reception are socially constrained" (Janks, 1997, p. 1). Ultimately, these culturally imposed parameters in the micro, meso and macro levels of instructional materials development will influence every dimension and stage of constructing the textbook task section and how this key component of learning will take form and evolve. Relatedly, this also encompasses the breadth and depth of how Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media are discursively instantiated and pedagogically interposed in the student task section of the instructional materials. As a site of struggle, the textbook task section can also alternatively serve as a social platform to amplify the voices of the subaltern and foreground marginalised sectoral perspectives.

Framework of the study

Henry Giroux's (1991) articulation of how power in the "metaphorical and literal sense" is circumscribed and inscribed "differently on the body, culture, history, space, land and psyche" underscores the multidimensionality and multi-contextuality of power relations (p. 51). Given the development realities of the nations in the Global South and the uneven North-South relations, these embodied and emplaced differences interconnectedly manifest in terms of class-based, racialised and gendered dynamics.

Through border pedagogy, the "historically and socially constructed strengths and limitations of those place and borders which we inherit, and which frame our discourses and social relations" are revealed and rendered visible, as well as subjected to thoroughgoing examination and transformation (Giroux, 1991, p. 52). This assertion by Giroux runs consistent with how the critical ethics of care apprehends social contradictions, especially among communities involved in intense contestations over rights and resources. Along this line, the political act of border crossing stands to benefit learners by emboldening

them to reach the broader social expanse of the unfamiliar and then render it as a place of connection, discovery and engagement. This is particularly empowering, liberating and transformative for the atomised and alienated selves of many vulnerable individuals and groups.

As such, solidarity work must essentially be conceived as a process. Process, within this parameter, is apprehended as a “give and take of lived experience”, “structure-agency interaction” and “the working through of complex power relationships at play between academic and community” (Kuecker, 2009, p.49). This points to the fact that forging solidarity is not possible without the conscious and earnest effort to interpenetrate and understand each other’s socio-material worlds. In this sense, border pedagogy then becomes instrumental in facilitating the “interaction between solidarity partners” (Kuecker, 2009, p. 49). This social engagement allows the sectoral groups to explore and make sense of their commonalities in terms of shared burdens, aspirations and struggles.

This solidarity work with the marginalised, according to Dulay (2004), allows students to “become aware of their social location and the social space they occupy in the society which is what we call *punto de vista* – the window through which they see, hear, feel, touch and even taste the social reality” (p. 58). It is assumed, therefore, that students’ social awareness of others is only possible if there is a critical understanding of their own social location in relation to other people’s social situatedness. Within this context, reading the word (text) and reading the world (context) necessitate the full activation of learners’ sense perceptions, while also being conscious of how they can be leveraged by available media and communication technologies.

Correspondingly, through critical discourse analysis, the often ignored and unseen connections between ideologies, discourses and power relations are examined, analysed and, ultimately, challenged. Branston and Stafford (2010) maintain that critical discourse analysis enlightens us about the “in-between areas” of how discourses, ideologies and epistemologies become ingrained in human interaction and communication (p. 172). As an approach in critical communication research, it exposes and interrogates the social structures that influence the traditionally covert power dynamics embodied and embedded in discourse. Relatedly, Santiago (2007) argues that “discourse is a site of struggle and should be understood in the context of power where ideological assumptions are often hidden in language” (p. 1). By adopting a critical discursive lens in examining instructional materials, the text in its dialectical context becomes the central subject of analysis in the interrogation of underlying messages and meanings. As a critical reflective approach, this alternative framework and methodology aids in unpacking and problematising how the discourses on power, ideology, ethics, ethnicity, Indigeneity, violence and social exclusion are constituted, expressed, concealed, taught, normalised, omitted or resisted in textbook tasks. Certainly, this involves the resource divide and power asymmetry between dominant and marginalised cultural groups in both material and non-material terms.

As an enactment of the action-oriented and transformative attributes of critical discourse analysis, Johnson and McLean (2020) explain that this methodological approach “maintains an implicit impetus to intervene actively in, or challenge, the power relations or social problems under investigation” (p. 324). This can be exemplified in the conscious and active integration of Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media in the instantiated cases and contexts and the interposed interventions and initiatives in textbook task design.

Research methodology

This media and communication inquiry aligns with the critical qualitative tradition that seeks to contextualise the phenomenon, interpret the covert messages and meanings, frame perspectives and standpoints, identify patterns and nuances, interrogate hegemonies and monopolies, and, ultimately, propose alternative social systems and structures.

With reference to the subject of analysis, the commercially available textbook titles in media and information literacy that align with the Philippine K-12 (kinder to grade 12) curriculum were identified. In ensuring impact and relevance, the corpus of materials for review were shortlisted based on their broad circulation and adoption.

Based on the preliminary lineup of titles, the researcher further streamlined the list to cover only the textbook titles that bear contents pertaining to Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media, particularly with reference to the textbook task section. Within this parameter, the set of student tasks serves as the unit of analysis in this media and communication inquiry. In guaranteeing dependability, the researcher went through the materials iteratively to validate and document the incorporation of Indigenous culture and Indigenous media in the student tasks.

The instructional materials covered by this discursive inquiry included the following textbook titles with the corresponding authorship, year of printing and publishing outfit also being indicated: *Media and Information Literacy: Empower the Discerning Audiences* (Alagaran, 2019, Abiva Publishing House); *From Cave to Cloud: Media and Information Literacy for Today* (Campos, 2016, Phoenix Publishing); *Media and Information Literacy* (Cantor, 2019, Vibal Group); *Media and Information Literacy* (Liquigan, 2016, Diwa); *Media and Information Literacy: Enhancing Education through Effective Communication* (Magpile, 2016, Intelligente Publishing); *Media and Information Literacy: Being a B.E.S.T. Digital Citizen for Senior High School* (Yuvienco, 2017, C&E Publishing); and *Media and Information Literacy* (Zarate, 2016, Rex Book Store).

The instructional materials were browsed for missing pages as well as skimmed and scanned for ideas and concepts before carrying out the actual close reading. Within the parameter of this media and communication inquiry, the discursive analysis specifically focused on the task instructions (imperative form) and task inquiries (interrogative form).

The researcher iteratively went through the text to surface the patterns of discursive and pedagogical conjunctions and disjunctions in relation to Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media as subjects of inquiry. The entries were then coded and categorised according to themes and subthemes in the epistemological, teleological and praxeological sense.

Result and discussion

In employing border pedagogy and critical discourse analysis as theoretical and conceptual frames in examining the student tasks in the instructional materials, the following recurring and interanimating thematic patterns pertaining to Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media emerged: (1) knowledge management involving/through Indigenous culture, (2) technologies as leverage in promoting Indigenous knowledge, (3) place-based orientation of Indigenous knowledge, (4) community elders as wellspring of Indigenous knowledge, (5) critical sense-making about Indigenous knowledge, (6) empowering potential of Indigenous language, (7) systemic challenges confronting Indigenous knowledge and media, (8) social contradictions between the global and the local standpoints, and (9)

counter-imperatives of community-based praxis. The unfolding of these themes reveals the material and non-material dimensions of Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media and how these cultural resources and the Indigenous peoples who nurture and develop them are peripheralised, excluded and prevailed over. Relatedly, the themes also embody the progressive potential of selected textbook tasks to leverage technologies, recentre ethno-stories and engender place-based activism.

Knowledge management involving/through Indigenous culture

In a reading task, Yuvienco (2017) forwarded the perspective about Indigenous knowledge as “information systems management” (p. 52). As a case in point, he illustrated the Laguna copperplate inscription as an “artifact that gives the future generations a deeper insight on how the past can be a source of collective guide for the society” (Yuvienco, 2017, p. 52).

Viewed as a social technology, Indigenous knowledge itself can serve as a vital resource in “collecting, storing, preserving and even repurposing Indigenous knowledge systems in a time of rapidly accelerating change” (Yuvienco, 2017, p. 53). As a social anchorage and given its place-based attribute, Indigenous knowledge also allows learners to remain deeply grounded in the history and heritage of their local communities.

Technologies as leverage in promoting Indigenous knowledge

With the objective of promoting and protecting Indigenous knowledge through the application of media and information literacy skills and competencies, the following tasks were interposed by the academic authors in the textbook tasks: video production featuring an interview with a resource person from an Indigenous community (Liquigan, 2016, p. 53); documentation of Indigenous knowledge for “future generations” (Yuvienco, 2017, p. 55); dissemination of the documentation about Indigenous knowledge through social media platforms (Yuvienco, 2017, p. 56); and adoption of “mother tongue language” for a music video production (Cantor, 2019, p. 281). Based on the foregoing list, the pedagogical interventions and initiatives in mainstreaming Indigenous knowledge systems and practices can then be summarised and categorised into the following: (1) cultural sensitivity in media production, (2) sustainable management of Indigenous knowledge and resources, and (3) responsible adoption and promotion of Indigenous language. However, using the critical tradition as a frame of analysis, the above-cited endeavours fail to take into serious account the material bases of Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media. Fundamentally, it can be argued that, when natural and physical ecologies are systematically plundered and Indigenous people are unjustly displaced from their ancestral lands, Indigenous knowledge systems and practices then become gravely compromised and imperilled as an inevitable consequence. As such, similar to how Campos (2016) instantiated “land-grabbing, illegal mining and the militarization of the home place” (p. 115) in his film analysis task, it is also important to expose the direct connection between development aggression and ethnocide (i.e., killing of culture) in the critical and contextual analysis of IKSP-related social and sectoral issues.

Moreover, the continued digitalisation of media and communications must not displace and spell an end to Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media. There are at least two general approaches that can be strategically employed to avoid this dreadful cultural disaster. Firstly, digital media can be instrumentalised to mainstream Indigenous culture, similar to the tasks above that encouraged the use of modern technologies in promoting Indigenous knowledge systems and practices. Secondly, ethno-media (communication channels) can be effectively utilised to popularise Indigenous knowledge systems and practices (communication messages). However, it must be underscored that the coherence and

alignment of the Indigenous message with the Indigenous channel of the second strategy must only be complemented by, and not replaced by, the first approach.

With the aim of introducing learners to IKSP documentation, Yuvienco (2017) encouraged them to explore the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction's *Recording and Using Indigenous Knowledge: A Manual* (pp. 52–53). This is complemented by a viewing task of a documentary film featuring an Indigenous elder preparing a betel nut concoction. This then is followed up by a question inquiring learners about an Indigenous knowledge in their respective localities which they could document and report. Correspondingly, the subsequent task requiring students to create an Instagram account where they can upload and compile the documented Indigenous knowledge material necessitates free and prior informed consent (FPIC) and, in some instances, also the approval from the council of elders (traditional) and the local government unit (formal and institutional). However, free and prior informed consent from an individual respondent may not be truly free because they may not be in an empowered position to decide on their own terms considering the unequal power relations at play between the academe and Indigenous communities. It is within this context that a collective Indigenous body, such as the council of elders, is perceived to be in a better position to negotiate and decide on the consent request.

Place-based orientation of Indigenous knowledge

Then and now, places remain as enduring wellsprings and repositories of knowledge. In traditional societies, for instance, cave paintings, which are essentially place-based, serve as representations and embodiments of ancient cultures, thereby effectively capturing and cradling Indigenous knowledge. In the same vein, languages and other art forms also have strong socio-material bases that are tied closely to place and its constitutive elements. As the term implies, place-based inquiry (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008) underscores the critical role performed by place in the emergence, cradling and development of not just tacit knowledge (Indigenous) but also of its explicit counterpart (institutional). Even in the socio-historical understanding of media, the element of place remains indispensable. For instance, Campos (2016) foregrounded Africa's writing system "being tied down to their locations and cultures" and, as such, he then asked learners about the "implications on knowledge creation and circulation of having different writing systems situated in a particular place" (p. 38). This points to the fact that a place's eco-cultural resources play a salient part in defining and influencing the social and communication systems of its people. Correspondingly, this place-based orientation also has strong bearing to the interconnected social practices of making sense and making use of knowledge.

Since there was no printing yet and no way for words to travel far, how did particular places play a crucial role in cradling knowledge? (Campos, 2016, p. 38)

The writing systems in Africa are different from those of the writing systems in Asia and Europe, and these systems are tied down to their locations and cultures. What do you think are the implications on knowledge creation and circulation of having different writing systems situated in particular places? (Campos, 2016, p. 38)

Community elders as wellspring of Indigenous knowledge

In the textbook task of Liquigan (2016), for instance, students were asked about which information source (i.e., "Indigenous, library, internet, mass media") would they prefer to employ in learning about a list of specified themes (p. 47). Conceivably, the diverse but interconnected themes that follow can be answered in full or in part by Indigenous information, depending on the extent and dimension that Indigenous

knowledge and culture is foregrounded and depicted: “human genome project, cultural practices of the Lumads in Mindanao, current state of the tourism and hospitality industry in the Philippines, political conflicts and strife in different parts of the world, agricultural practices in Central Luzon, recent events in the last decades that changed the world, the ASEAN integration, and the history of Bangsamoro” (Liquigan, 2016, p. 47).

The same can also be argued about Alagaran’s (2019) task that inquired students to identify their preferred information source (i.e., “mass media, internet, experts, community elders, or officials”) for the following varied but interlinked subjects of interest: “climate change, health and nutrition, local politics, science and technology, market prices, disaster and risks, sports and wellness, water and sanitation, movies and entertainment, product and service” (p. 96).

In this sense, community elders can be associated with tacit knowledge that is locally and culturally grounded. Considering the vast knowledge and profound wisdom possessed by community elders about Indigenous ecologies and societies, they can certainly contribute substantive insights and reflections to public discourse. However, considering the strong leaning towards and heavy reliance of today’s youth on the internet, Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media tend to be marginalised and undermined as legitimate and viable information sources. Given this inclination, it can be inferred that some students would instinctively choose the modern information source to get acquainted with and learn about the wide range of topics instantiated above. As such, it must therefore be a conscious effort among curricularists and educators to instantiate and mainstream Indigenous paradigms and perspectives in enabling learners to alternatively make sense of the various dimensions of their physical, natural and social environments.

Critical sense-making about Indigenous knowledge

In order to effectively promote Indigenous knowledge and employ Indigenous media, students need to first understand these alternative epistemologies and technologies more clearly, coherently and critically. As instantiated in the textbook tasks, the subsequent entries itemise the various ways in which Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media are depicted and represented by the academic authors, i.e., benefiting communities (Liquigan, 2016, p. 49), contributing to “social development” (Alagaran, 2019, p. 68; Yuvienco, 2017, p. 56), evolving in nature (Alagaran, 2019, p. 68), being undermined and forgotten or “are dying” (Alagaran, 2019, p. 68), needing preservation (Alagaran, 2019, p. 68; Magpile, 2016, p. 57), and acting as a countervailing force to “balance the influx of foreign ideas and ideologies” (Liquigan, 2016, p. 113). Based on the foregoing representations, it can then be argued that Indigenous knowledge as a cultural resource is unquestionably beneficial to society and that it needs to be protected from the inroads of unabated globalisation, Westernisation, and homogenisation. And, contrary to the incorrect notion that it is static, Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media, in fact, continue to evolve and adopt to changing cultural patterns and social circumstances.

Empowering potential of Indigenous language

Among the corpus of texts covered in this study, there were only very few tasks that afforded students the option to write their outputs in Filipino. Aside from the need to increase its frequency and broaden its adoption, there is also a necessity to promote and mainstream other local languages and dialects for students to express their most profound thoughts and emotions.

Write these details [most memorable moment] in one to two short paragraphs. Use English or Filipino. (Cantor, 2019, p. 109)

Create an outline of the main points you want to share about your memorable moment. Use English or Filipino. (Cantor, 2019, p. 109)

However, in order to enhance media and information literacy through linguistic diversity, the tasks should not only be limited to the two instantiated languages. More tasks must encourage the use of other local languages and dialects similar to Cantor's (2019) media production that requires students to produce a music video with the use of a "local song with lyrics sung in Filipino or their mother tongue language" (p. 281).

As an "expression of self-determination" (UNESCO, 2019), the use of local languages is an effective strategy in promoting Indigenous education and local heritage. In fact, according to UNESCO (2019), Indigenous languages are "not only methods of communication, but also extensive and complex systems of knowledge that have developed over millennia", and are, therefore, in themselves, forms of knowledge. Relatedly, Ajani et al. (2024) contend that "these languages encapsulate rich cultural, historical and ecological value, embodying unique knowledge systems and identities" (p. 35).

The instructional policy of allowing the use of Filipino and other local languages and dialects in producing and presenting the media outputs of students will enable media and information literacy to become a more effective platform in fulfilling educational institutions' curricular objectives (i.e., academic) and socio-civic missions (i.e., more-than-academic). With respect to the latter, especially in the case of the Philippines and other similarly situated nations in the Global South, the central aim must be to improve the lives of those who are income poor (i.e., substructure) and/or information poor (i.e., superstructure).

Systemic challenges confronting Indigenous knowledge and media

Critical and community-oriented pedagogy reveals and interrogates not only the North-South gap between the two global hemispheres but also the urban-rural divide that characterises societies within a nation. In this lopsided affair, displacement and underdevelopment become recurring patterns of structural violence in the precarious lives of people inhabiting the Global South and rural regions. More distinctively, this vicious cycle marks the lives and struggles of the marginalised Indigenous people and peasant communities in the Philippines. From the critical place-based perspective (Langran & DeWitt, 2020), the cultural identity of Indigenous people is believed to be strongly and inherently linked to their ancestral lands. In the political economic sense, the historical and contemporary patterns of physical and economic displacements (i.e., material dimension) have a far-reaching and irreversible impact on Indigenous people's identity and culture (i.e., non-material aspect). Correspondingly, the following guide questions provided by Campos (2016, pp. 108–109) for the media text analysis of the film *Sa Rikaw* are valuable in establishing this deep land-life connection and in foregrounding the vicious cycle of systemic violence that Indigenous people in the Philippines continue to experience and endure. Within this context, the role of case studies through documentary film analysis is instrumental in the process of consciousness-raising and the social preparation for border-crossing.

Why are the Iraya Mangyan afraid to go to town? (Campos, 2016, p. 108)

What are the possible reasons why the Iraya Mangyans no longer speak the Irayan language? (Campos, 2016, p. 108)

A critical examination of the socio-economic and socio-cultural realities in the country reveals that many regions remain characteristically rural and agrarian, and, given this development context, Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media must continue to form part of students' education, communication and media praxis. However, textbook tasks and learning activities vary in terms of community, cultural and sectoral representation. Some possess strong urban orientation and stereotypes, while others manifest varying levels of depiction of the country's predominantly rural and underdeveloped character. It is notable that a task by Liquigan (2016) paid attention to the urban bias and Metro Manila-oriented reporting of traditional media for students to critically examine and reflect on.

Recall your encounter with the following instances of media exposure and share in class your observations: the types/themes of news story headlines of a local broadsheet (e.g., Metro-Manila centric). (Liquigan, 2016, p. 55)

Campos (2016) also instantiated the urbanisation process that is becoming the social current in many localities and then posed a question if "all the Philippine spaces" (p. 119) need to go through the same hegemonic and homogenous pattern. As a counter-current, his question points to the importance of self-determined development that the rural people must decide upon independently and collectively.

How do you see the Philippines in the future? Should all of the Philippine spaces head in the same direction of urbanization? How should rural peoples proceed along the track of progress? (Campos, 2016, p. 119)

In the series of film analysis required by Campos (2016), strong place-based orientation was observed to be consistently represented and embodied in the following discursive themes and subthemes: ancestral land, apprehension to migrate, Indigenous leadership, language loss, Indigenous language preservation, community literacy, energy poverty, transportation poverty, community solidarity, community dynamics, urban and rural ecologies, development debate, urbanisation and rural life contradictions, and social construction of identities.

Relatedly, these threats are also reflected in Cantor's case studies (2019, pp. 202–203, pp. 220–221) about cultural appropriation and poverty pornography, where power asymmetries are revealed to appear in various material and non-material dimensions and contexts (e.g., skin complexion, socio-economic status, spatial location, cultural artifacts).

Social contradictions between the global and the local standpoints

The influence and impact of the globalisation of media varies across cultures and societies as reflected in the diverse issues foregrounded in the textbook tasks, i.e., (1) Westernisation of culture, (2) globalisation of news, and (3) glocalisation of global television programs. In this sense, tasks with politics as the dimensional focus will enable learners to reflect and problematise the power relations involved in their experience with foreign media (i.e., politics of media effects), the transmission mechanism of global news (i.e., politics of news distribution) and the privileging of the global over the local and vice versa (i.e., politics of recognition and representation). This emphasis on the politico-cultural dimension in apprehending media texts is critical in both the personal and public lives of individuals as media consumers, especially in asserting their individual and collective identity, agency and autonomy. Correspondingly, this social contradiction between global and local values and standpoints also places Indigenous culture in a precarious position.

On the other hand, there is also a pressing need for learners to develop the skill of perceptively connecting the local and the global and to make a deeper political sense of this complex nexus, especially if it involves wide power asymmetry and social divide. Through this pair of reflective questions by Campos (2016), the cultural dominance of global media is thereby presented for interrogation and analysis.

If American media exert more global influence, reach more nations, and are trusted and taken as credible by more people around the world, what are the implications of Schechter's charges? (Campos, 2017, p. 77)

Which global media agencies exert influence on local media and the Philippine public? (Campos 2016, p. 77)

Strikingly, Anglo-Saxon conformity is one of the ideological patterns and social norms that dominates mainstream media and education. Through territorial annexation and economic globalisation, this cultural trend extends to many nations, including the Philippines. Globally and locally, the dominant narratives surrounding terrorism, as a case in point, remain centred on the Anglo-Saxon standpoint and this effectively marginalises the perspectives of the victims of the hegemon's wars of aggression, aptly labelled by critical international scholars as "imperialist wars" (Chossudovsky, 2014) and a "long war against humanity" (Falk, 2015). Strategically, language, media and education are also utilised to perpetuate the prevailing storyline by the power elites from the Global North and their local conspirators in the Global South. As a countervailing measure in the academe, critical socio-linguistics, critical media studies and critical literacies must be recognised as complementarily useful in fostering and strengthening (1) Third World solidarities, (2) development justice movements, and (3) Indigenous knowledge systems and practices. Relatedly, the initiatives of Campos (2016) in introducing students to alternative news media and interrogating Western-oriented narratives embody the patriotic, post-colonial and anti-imperialist pedagogy (decolonial praxis). Along this line, the set of queries below can also guide learners in problematising how media organisations from various ideological persuasions represent and mediate the ethico-moral issues of public interest, such as propaganda war, ethnic prejudice, human rights violations and the culture of impunity.

Why are there differences in the kind of war images shown between American media and Al Jazeera? Does opposition to America mean alliance with terrorism? (Campos, 2016, p. 76)

If Al Jazeera presents different news from what American media present, what are the implications of having access to both sources of information? (Campos, 2016, p. 77)

Counter-imperatives of community-based praxis

In designing and developing textbook tasks, academic authors need to encourage students to integrate their acquired knowledge and skills from other subject areas with those that they gained from media and information literacy and apply them in understanding and dealing with the concrete and complex social and sectoral problems in their respective local communities. To amplify this approach's discursive and pedagogical potential, media and information literacy needs to fulfill its trifocal functions by not only being knowledge-oriented and skill-based but by serving also as a values-inspired subject area. Broadly speaking, public values encompass social cohesion, political participation, economic equity, cultural integrity and ecological sustainability. Given this set of mutually reinforcing locally grounded values and consistent with border pedagogy, it can be inferred how cross-disciplinarily connecting Media and Information Literacy (MIL) with Understanding Culture, Society and Politics (UCSP) or Inquiries,

Investigations and Immersions (III) in the senior high school curriculum can be particularly advantageous in engendering relevant, integrated, contextualised, empowering, and development-oriented media and information literacy education in the local context.

An essential media and information literacy competency that learners need to cultivate is skill in contextualising and applying MIL precepts and concepts in the socio-cultural milieu of their immediate localities, surrounding regions and wider global community. Paradigms, precepts and concepts only make sense and become useful when provided with contextual and cultural application. Enlightened understanding of global and local diversity is a crucial first step towards cross-cultural dialogue and peacebuilding. In this sense, intercultural encounter contributes to what Murti (2009) envisioned as a process that will allow learners to “grow as individuals and citizens of the world community” (p. 195). However, this is only possible if intercultural competence and cross-cultural communication form part of the textbook tasks and are applied in both local and transnational contexts.

By ensuring the correspondence of local issues foregrounded in the news media with the social and sociological constructs from various academic disciplines, learners will then be able to acknowledge how such complementation can provide local context to the concept, as well as present conceptual analysis to the contextual issues. While the news and public affairs section of mass media serves as a veritable mine of concrete local cases and contexts for analysis and intervention, the textbook authors complement it with disciplinary concepts and theoretical constructs that deepen and sharpen the ongoing discourse. This complementation is vital in covering what dimension or level of analysis has been missed or downplayed in the news media. Conceivably, these foregone topics and themes are the challenges and struggles that confront disadvantaged Indigenous people and peasant communities. Within this context, the role of media education is indispensable in fostering public dialogues and critical conversations about social pathologies and dysfunctions. For instance, the instantiation of the social reality of economic dualism by Campos (2016) in most of his tasks on film analysis reflects the superordinate factors (i.e., root causes) that underpin many development and policy issues in the rural regions.

By making critical sense of the interlocking social and sectoral debates, students will also recognise how a particular local development issue such as corruption is connected to other local political, policy, legal, constitutional, administrative and ethical debates. Zarate's (2016) learning activity that requires students to identify and map interlocking social problems in a diagram format is helpful in developing their analytical, evaluative and integrative skills. Specifically, it also allows them to critically recognise the complexity of the social terrain and apprehend the covert connections between the economic, political, legal, cultural and ethical setbacks. To enhance and deepen their learning experience, students must also be trained to employ the *problematique* technique in identifying the superordinate (i.e., root causes) and subordinate factors (i.e., symptoms) of the development issue under scrutiny. This will also help them formulate viable and sustainable local solutions that target and address the problem source.

As prospective instruments of transformation, textbooks need to bear the message of hope and persistence. Such attributes must also be expressed not only in the main text but also in the task and assessment section where position-taking and action-taking can be enacted and materialised. In the quest for knowledge, sociologist Randolph David (2004) believes it is important that one finds “excitement and hope” (p. 124) in the learning process and that academic disciplines become social tools to “inspire and move” (p. 124) individuals and groups. Ideally, both schools and communities must be places of hope, anticipation, motivation, inspiration and action. These positive and active notions about learning and the social ecology where it operates are critical elements in engendering the collective agency of both students and their co-learners in school and in localities.

Summary and conclusion

Based on the foregoing themes and from the perspective of knowledge management, Indigenous knowledge systems and practices serve as a mechanism of capturing, storing, preserving, disseminating and defending local knowledge. Within this context, information and communication technologies and communication activism are critical elements in protecting Indigenous knowledge from the inroads of imperialist and corporate-led globalisation.

Indigenous knowledge systems and practices also function as a deep repository of contextualised information from which students can draw and develop profound understanding of their own history and culture, as well as that of others. Correspondingly, the role of elders is critical in the process of intergenerational transfer and exchange of local knowledge. Relatedly, Indigenous language is valued not only as a tool to communicate and connect but also a form of knowledge itself.

As a social construct and communication channel, Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous media are conceived in various ways, among which are as follows: beneficial, evolving, dying, needs preserving and a resistive force. Consequently, this meaning-making serves as a strong basis for critical analysis, interpretation and action-taking.

Unquestionably, place has been firmly established as the anchor of Indigenous knowledge from which it forms deep roots and thrives. It is within this context that place must be understood to possess mutually defining material and non-material dimensions and attributes.

Contentiously, a serious threat to Indigenous knowledge is the rampant de-territorialisation and discrimination being committed against the socially and culturally minoritised, manifesting in various but intersecting forms of structural violence such as urban bias, spatial injustice, territorial encroachment, rural underdevelopment and ethnocide.

As a zone of transaction (Genette, 1997) and border crossing (Giroux, 1991), textbook tasks can serve as a social platform for critical self-reflection, reflective action and collective reflective action (McLaren & Crawford, 2010) – a sharp departure from the conventionally rendered instructional tools and student assessments.

Implication and recommendation

This communication research finds wisdom in Dulay's (2004) assertion that transformative education is "an ongoing historical action that is integrally linked with all the sectors" and, consistent with its strong social justice orientation, the focus is on the most vulnerable who "therefore are the most determined for transformation" (p. 56). Along this line, there is an even greater need to allot more attention (and space) to the issues and struggles that deeply concern the marginalised sectors (i.e., Indigenous people and peasant communities). Dulay (2004) further argues that this would involve (1) "walking the less-travelled path", (2) "unlearning mastered familiar ways", and (3) "shifting to new and perhaps unsettling ways of looking at life and its context" (p. 56).

As a theoretical implication, this points to the imperative to coherently incorporate Indigenous ontologies, epistemologies, teleologies, axiologies and praxeologies in making critical sense of history, understanding oneself, engendering other-awareness, and defending national patrimony in various lessons in class and community-based advocacies.

In the methodological sense, future studies along this line may also extend the adoption of critical discourse analysis in the exploration of Indigenous knowledge systems and practices in the instructional materials of other subject areas such as mathematics (i.e., ethno-mathematics), science (i.e., ethno-science), pharmacy (i.e., ethno-pharmacology) and engineering (ethno-engineering), among others, by covering not just the student tasks but also the lesson proper.

In the practical dimension and in the specific context of textbook task design, this would involve a shift from the conventional true-or-false matching type and the fill-in-the-blanks assessment type towards collaborative, critical, community-oriented pedagogy such as participatory action research, countermapping, photo voice, photo or video elicitation technique, ethno-videography, body-mapping, power-mapping and community theatre.

By employing key informant interviews and focus group discussions with community elders in conducting media production and research, students are given the opportunity to develop deeper bonds with older people in the locality, thereby fostering intergenerational solidarity. Any textbook task involving senior citizens must also be fully cognisant of this sector's heterogeneous composition, i.e., being diverse in terms of income class, ethnicity, health status, employment, information access and other pertinent social variables. Within this context, intergenerational solidarity must also involve what Giroux (1991) calls the dialectical process of border crossing, especially if the students and the older generation in question belong to distinct socio-economic classes or cultural groups.

Customarily, elder members from rural communities have nurtured strong associations with their natural ecologies and cultural traditions. This can be attributed to their deep connection with and memory of their place. In this sense, interview tasks that tackle Indigenous knowledge should privilege the voices of local folks and, as such, must therefore form the central element of the narrative. Without foregrounding this need to re-centre their ethno-stories, the media production might end up as another material that is conventionally and unfairly represented from the narrow frame of reference of community outsiders.

With respect to MIL's information literacy component, more tasks and learning activities must be interposed that will identify, locate, evaluate and produce the information needs of various sectors in local communities, especially the marginalised and subaltern, i.e., farmers, fisherfolks, Indigenous people and local artisans. With reference to the vulnerable farming sector, the following valuable data and information may be instantiated in textbook tasks as subjects of inquiry: climate resilient agro-ecological farm practices, increasing threat of alien invasive species and alternative sustainable markets for agricultural products. In the context of Indigenous peoples, the following culturally grounded knowledge and wisdom are conceived to be useful: ethno-ecology, ethno-botany, ethno-medicine, ethno-nutrition, ethno-psychology, ethno-history and ethno-poetry. Fundamentally, media and information literacy only becomes inclusive and empowering if it serves the development agenda of the economically disadvantaged, politically marginalised, culturally discriminated against and the information poor. Aside from the importance of strengthening the information literacy component of MIL, there is also an even greater imperative to mainstream and cultivate its more progressive counterpart, i.e., critical information literacy, where the struggles for economic and information resources are foregrounded and problematised.

More than an academic subject in its functional sense, media and information literacy must also be conceived as a platform for democratic literacy, social justice communication and cultural activism. As a course and discourse, it should foster a strong commitment among learners to uphold truth and justice

in media production, dissemination and consumption. In this period when information is increasingly being weaponised to undermine democratic rights, processes and institutions, education stakeholders need to be resolute and persistent in promoting critical media and information literacy across regional areas, sectoral interests and age groups. Textbook tasks, therefore, must coherently embody Indigeneity, rootedness, relationality, criticality, creativity and steadfastness in learning design, strategy and assessment.

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