# Would be Teachers' Attitude towards the Philippines' Official Languages

<sup>1</sup>Nimfa G. Dimaculangan, PhD, <sup>2</sup>Mario C. Pasion, EdD

<sup>1, 2</sup> Laguna State Polytechnic University, Bubukal, Sta Cruz, Laguna, Philippines

*Abstract:* This study is a modified replication of the series of old studies conducted by Tucker (1968), Luzares and Bautista (1971), and Aglaua and Aliponga (1998) conducted in prominent universities in Manila. The Match-Guised Technique was utilized to gather authentic data which otherwise would not be obtained thru direct attitude questionnaire. It made use of the same semantic-differential bipolar adjective scales/evaluation sheet and reading script used in the previous studies. The subjects were introduced to judging personalities not from the persons' physical appearance but from their voices. Using a series of 12 item semantic-differential bipolar adjective scales, they evaluated the voice owners using the same rating scale with eight points from the positive to the negative end. It tried to determine the level of prestige of English and Tagalog and compare the findings with the 20<sup>th</sup> century studies. The independent variables in each analysis were the 30 judges who are all Tagalogs and the four voice Groups--American English (Am-E), American Tagalog (Am-Tag), Filipino English (Fil-E) and Filipino Tagalog (Fil-Tag). The findings revealed that graduating Education students perceived English to be more prestigious than Filipino as sustained by the high ratings they gave to American and Filipino speakers of English; however, they rated the Filipino speakers of English a little more favorably than their American counterparts. The results are parallel with the 1968 and 1971 findings; nevertheless, different from the 1998 finding that the two official languages shared the same level of prestige.

Keywords: Language prestige, attitude, Match-guise Technique, semantic-differential bipolar adjective scales.

# I. INTRODUCTION

#### A. Brief Review of Related Literature:

The Philippines is a multilingual country with over a hundred living languages spoken by the Filipinos scattered all over the archipelagos. Among the languages used in the country, the Filipinos' common  $L_2$ , English remains the instrument for acquiring new knowledge in the areas of Education, Law, Science and Technology, Humanities and Social Sciences. Nevertheless, the Filipinos'  $L_1$  remains essential for the communication of information and experience. Majority of the students express themselves more meaningfully and are better understood by their fellow learners in their  $L_1$ .

Both the languages are used as mediums of instruction (MOI). English, Science and Technology, Computer and Mathematics are still taught in English, and the rest, in Filipino, the standardized Tagalog. In affluent private schools, both the teachers and students talk in English or Engalog i.e., codeswitched English and Tagalog outside the classrooms, in corridors, and canteens; whereas, in national Basic Education schools, students and teachers converse in Filipino or the masses' Taglish the codeswitched Filipino and English. Teachers explain their lessons using the local vernaculars, mother tongue, or at least the Lingua Franca of the regions. In colleges and universities, official, national, religious or foreign languages are used depending upon the course requirements.

English and Filipino command the highest prestige in the courts. English is widely used in courts and legislation; while, Filipino is used by few assembly-men. As observed, Filipino, although an official language is used to gather testimony from witnesses and to interrogate suspects who do not speak English. The national lingua-franca and the official language continue to be the languages in government or private offices in the provinces. In some contexts, even administrators, employers or managers and their staff and the socially privileged class speak formal Filipino. The ordinary employees,

too, speak their ad hoc English and Filipino pidgin. English is still the official language of most business transactions in urban areas. Managerial deliberations as well as social functions are performed in English. In rural areas, Filipino or the mother tongue prevails as the language of labor, commercial, and industrial transactions. Interestingly, Philippine broadcast media often use Filipino; print media on the other hand, cater to the language of their subscribers. Broadsheets use English while Tabloids use Filipino.

Despite empirical data confirming the role and prestige of English as the register of Science and Technology, Business and Education and as the lingua franca of the world, it is a fact that Tagalog/Filipino, the Filipinos' language of identity and intimacy has also attained a certain level of prestige, having been a medium of instruction, and language of media as well as of some formal affairs in the government.

Similar studies on prestige of the two languages which were conducted over 40 years (Otanez, 1971; Tucker, 1968 as cited in Luzares & Bautista, 1971; and Luzares & Bautista, 1971) recorded single finding on language attitude i.e. college/university students regarded English to be more prestigious than the other Philippine official language and medium of Instruction, Filipino. Aglaua and Aliponga (1998) however found out that the two languages had the same level of prestige, and they accounted their subjects' positive attitude towards the national language to the spread of Filipino through Bilingual Education Policy and mass media.

Durano (2009) investigated the attitude of 284 seniors, 140 from two public high schools and 140 from three private high schools. The respondents were made to answer close ended and open ended question regarding their general attitudes towards English and Filipino English. Quantitative results showed that 99% of the participants had positive attitude towards English. Likewise, the qualitative data revealed that 280 participants were positive towards English which they said are connected to professional and social mobility. The findings also reflected that English was the preferred language for formal domains and Filipino for informal domains and intimate social relations.

The studies of Estipona (2009), Amano (2002), Pascasio and Castillo (1999) as cited by Estipona (2009) revealed that students, parents, and teachers preferred English to Filipino as MOI, and they were convinced that English is an intellectualized language to search for information and the language of power as well as upward social mobility.

This study is a modified replication and follow-up of the series of studies conducted by the three linguists (Tucker, 1968; Luzares and Bautista, 1971; and Aglaua & Aliponga, 1998). Nevertheless, it is not a complete replicate inasmuch as some modifications were made; one of which was having Tagalog subjects only. This was because very few non-Tagalog students are enrolled in LSPU-SCC. Only Tagalogs from the province and from the cities and municipalities in the outskirt of Laguna flock to LSPU for University education. It attempted to determine which between the Philippine two official languages, English and Filipino is more prestigious, and who among the groups of speakers (Filipino speakers of English who approximated their American counterparts' speaking behavior) would be given more favorable ratings.

#### **B.** Methodology:

#### Research Design:

This mixed qualitative-quantitative study of the selected Bachelor of Science in Education (BSED) seniors' authentic perception of the 12 voice exemplars' personality using a series of 12 semantic differential bipolar adjective scales is descriptive in nature. The time gap, the unique locale of the present study–in a state university in the province, the respondents and the current language situation make it significant.

#### Participants:

Thirty graduating BSED students were randomly selected and requested to be student judges (i.e., six students from each content area, henceforth, six English majors, six Filipino majors, six Social Science major, Biology major, and six Mathematics majors). The selection was done using fishbowl technique. The maturity, diligence, smartness, and sensitivity of the subjects were taken into account, hence the choice of the particular high year level. The graduating students have been regarded to have good judgment and critical thinking skills.

It also concerned six young English and Filipino speakers of English (i.e., three 19-25-year-old American young men from Utah, Texas and California, two twenty-four-year-old Filipinos, a couple, the wife working in Convergys Philippines Inc. for more than four years, and the husband who is an ESL teacher, and the researcher who has been into ELT for 23 years) whose voices were recorded and used as instruments to the judging made by the subjects.

The three American young men were said to have had formal education on Filipino language before they were sent to the Philippines to serve as missionaries for the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints. They had been in the country mingling with the people of Laguna using Filipino for one and a half years when the study was conducted; whereas, the one connected with the BPO industry and the high school teacher were 2004-2006 graduates with the degree BSE-English.

#### Instruments:

The 12 recorded voices of the three American missionaries, one Call Center agent, the high school teacher, and the researcher were the primary instruments used. Twelve because each of the six (6) readers was requested to read the English text and then its Tagalog translation. It was the same text that Tucker, Bautista and Luzares and Aliponga and Aglaua used in their samples that was used in the present study.

Equally important material utilized was the evaluation sheet containing the series of 12 semantic-differential bipolar adjective scales in which the subjects reflected their judgment of the voices heard. In addition, a language questionnaire completely adapted from the previous studies was used.

#### Data Gathering Procedure:

The study made of use of the Match-Guised technique to gather data. This technique as has been explained by Luzares and Bautista had been used in several studies done at McGill University in Canada for it obtains results which otherwise would not be obtained using direct-attitude questionnaire. The match-guised test was first used by Lambert (1960) as cited by Romaine (1995) and Tucker (1968) in finding out Philippine Normal College's Tagalog and Non Tagalog students' attitude towards English. Matched-guised technique is a technique used to obtain authentic opinions and reactions from research respondents. The researchers used the same persons who have the native-like command of the language/s under study (i.e., The same persons talked or read English text, then talked or read Filipino text, yet the subjects listening to them were under the impression that they were different personalities). While the subjects believed that they were merely reacting to the voices of certain people, the researcher discovered their real attitudes towards the language or the speakers whose voices had been recorded.

The 1<sup>st</sup> thing secured was the Filipino and American voice exemplars. Visits to the missionaries' office within the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints were made with the help of a friend who is a Mormon member herself. Thru her, the recording of the six voices was accomplished. Each one was requested to read the English passage then its Filipino translation.

The reading passage was then given to high school English teacher after the methodology had been explained. He was too cooperative to do it at home with his wife. The  $3^{rd}$  Filipino voice exemplar was recorded at home where nobody could hear her maximize the approximation of American pronunciation.

Soon after the recording, the 12 voices were dubbed into just one tape in random order; the English and the Tagalog readings of each speaker were spaced as far from each other as was possible for the subjects not to recognize the same voices. The 12 voices' gap from each other was a minute.

The subjects were met after their classes at the speech laboratory. The general instructions were carefully explained to the subjects with the researcher code-switching from English to Filipino and vice-versa for clearer instructions. A practice voice (the female researcher's friend) was played twice for the subjects to try-out rating the speakers using the semantic differential scale. During the first try out, the use of the semantic differential scale was demonstrated while the subjects followed. The subjects were left doing the task alone during the actual data gathering; while, the researcher was going around checking if they were using the rating scale correctly. After listening to the 12 voice exemplars, the subjects guessed the speakers' income and occupations.

#### Data Analysis Procedure:

This study adopted the 12 item semantic-differential bipolar adjective scale of Tucker. The value of 8 to the positive end of adjective scale and the value of 1 to the negative end were assigned. The ratings of the subjects for each of the 12 scales were tabulated separately. All the responses given by each subject to the 12 voice exemplars were added to provide an overall rating for each group corresponding to every adjective.

With the help of a statistics professor, the data were statistically analyzed using analysis of variance (ANOVA). The P-value was used in the test of significance for results obtained in analysis of variance. To determine the speaking groups with whom the significant difference arose, Tukey's Method of grouping information was employed.

II.	<b>RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>	

Adjectives	American English	American Tagalog	Filipino English	Filipino Tagalog
Light	6.1778	4.1556	5.8000	4.8556
Pleasant	5.7889	4.1444	5.4333	4.6556
Religious	6.0222	5.0778	6.3444	5.2778
Active	5.6333	4.4111	5.1556	5.4222
Successful	6.0778	4.3333	5.9222	5.1000
Industrious	5.3778	4.2444	5.3111	4.6556
Reliable	5.2778	4.4778	5.6889	4.9000
Healthy	5.7111	5.0111	6.2333	5.6333
Self-Confident	6.1111	4.4889	6.2556	5.2667
Intelligent	6.1778	4.4889	6.0667	4.7111
Honest	5.5444	4.8000	5.7111	4.9667
Patient	5.4000	4.4111	5.7333	5.3667
Average Mean	5.7750	4.5037	5.8046	5.0676

As reflected in Table 1, English was perceived to be more prestigious than Filipino by the selected BSED students. This is revealed by the high ratings they gave to American speakers which reflected their high regard to the  $L_1$  English speakers. The average mean of 5.7750 for AmE speakers and slightly higher average mean of 5.8046 for FilE show this perception. Both the average mean scores of the two speech groups are higher than their Filipino speaking counterparts–FilTag and AmTag. The summary table for the ANOVA which follows immediately reflects the same finding.

TABLE II: SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE ONE-WAY ANOVA

	Source	DF	SS	MS	F	р
	Factor	3	14.013	4.671	40.99	0.000
	Error	44	5.014	0.114		
=	Total	47	19.027			

0.3376 R-Sq = 73.65% R-Sq(adj) = 71.85%

S

Decision Rule: If the computed P value is less than 0.05, the H0 is rejected.

The statistical analysis of variance produced significant P-value of 0.000 for the four voice groups (AmE, FilE, AmTag, and FilTag) tested at 0.05 level. Inasmuch as the computed P value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 level, the null hypothesis, *English and Filipino are both prestigious; hence, there is no significant difference between their level of prestige* was rejected. On the other hand, the alternative hypothesis, *English is more prestigious than Filipino; hence, there is significant difference between their level of prestige* was accepted.

	Ν	Mean	Grouping
Filipino English	12	5.8046	А
American English	12	5.7750	А
Filipino Tagalog	12	5.0676	В
American Tagalog	12	4.5037	С

#### TABLE III: INFORMATION GROUPED THRU TUKEY'S METHOD

Mean scores that do not share a letter are significantly different.

To determine the speaking groups with whom the significant difference arose, Tukey Method of grouping information was employed. It says, mean scores that do not share the same letter are significantly different. As can be gleaned, FilE and AmE speakers share the same letter A confirming that no significant difference was found on the listeners' judgment of them through the 12 semantic differential bipolar adjective scale. Significant difference is obvious between Fil-Tag and Am-Tag speakers, FilE and Fil-Tag speakers and AmE and AmTag speakers.

The figures suggest that English is still regarded to be more prestigious than Filipino. The student judges equated its prestige with the status of the speakers. When they perceived the speakers' fluency in the English language, they imagined them to be intelligent, successful, active or confident. Practically, language is prestigious when it is used by prominent people or speech communities; it is the status of the speaker that gives status to the language. The subjects still acknowledged the prestige of English maybe because of the continued growth of the English language as evidenced by its being the intellectualized language in the Philippines, the lingua franca of the world, and the language of prestigious international competitions.

This finding is parallel to the findings of three studies done over 40 years: Tucker (1968), Otanes (1971), and Luzares and Bautista (1971) and Durano's (2009) study which all revealed that English was more prestigious than Filipino. The results of the first three studies were understandable because it was four years later before the Philippine government supported the national language and developed the nationalistic sentiment of the students toward their native tongue through the implementation of Bilingual Education policy. Their subjects like the present study's subjects were also college students. Relatively, Durano's subjects preferred English which they saw as the language of professional and social mobility for formal domains and Filipino for informal domains and intimate social relations.

The data gathered indicate that the AmE and FiE speakers were judged by the subjects as predominantly composed of professionals. Six to 10 among 30 subjects judged the AmE speakers as executives; while, 20 saw them as professionals. Two subjects saw Speaker 2 as doing blue collar, and so did the four subjects with Speaker 1. Consequently, two judges imagined the FilTag and AmTag speakers as executives; 10-18 thought they were professionals, and 4-10 saw them in blue collar workplaces. The item *jobless* was actually not part of the options given in the Semantic Differential scale form where they were asked to guess the speakers' occupation and income; however, the remaining subjects suggested that it be added to the options; thus was considered additional item.

Those who were perceived as executives among AmTag were assigned 25,000-40,000-peso monthly salary; professionals 18,000-25,000-peso monthly salary and the very small number of blue collar workers, 5,000-8,000-peso monthly salary. Among the AmTag and FilTag, the executives were assigned 25,000-peso salary, professionals 10,000-18,000-pesos and blue-collar workers such as carpenter and vendors 2000-4000-peso monthly salary. It seems then that the days when the association of Filipino with manual work or blue-collar jobs such as: carpentry, farming and vending are gone. Tagalog is now associated with good paying occupations like executives, doctors, lawyers, and teachers. Despite the Filipino language lesser prestige, the judges saw it as language of the educated and high paying jobs.

The subjects' preference for the English language over the Filipino is probably brought by the influence of the high status and successful Filipino speakers of the language including good ESL teachers as well as educational leaders.

#### Subjects' Ratings to Filipino Speakers of English:

As reflected by the figures in Tables 1-3, the subjects rated the FilE speakers who tried to approximate their American counterparts' speaking behavior a little more favorably than their AmE counterparts though they do not show significant difference. This result can be attributed to the FilE speakers' approximation of the English behavior; inasmuch, as they

have acquired the behavior in natural setting, call centers where everybody is enjoined to think and speak in American English. It may be important to opinionate that a probable flow might have been caused by the female researcher's use of her own voice. During the administration of the experiment, a few student judges appeared to recognize her voice. Another factor that might have made the subjects rate the FilE speakers a bit more favorably than their AmE counterparts and the FilE group more favorably is their being pure Tagalog. They are all from Tagalog region, were born into Filipino language only, and grew within Laguna Tagalog culture.

In the 1968 study of Tucker, he had non-Tagalog subjects who rated the FilTag more unfavorably than their Tagalog counterparts. AmE was rated most favorably. FilE next favorably and FilTag least favorably. Luzares and Bautista obtained the same results except that FilE and Fil-Tag more given the same rating. In other words, the non-Tagalog seemed to downgrade the Filipino exemplars due to *linguistic ill will*. Aglaua and Aliponga's (1998) study showed that Am-Eng was rated similarly with Am-Tag, Fil-Eng. and Fil-Tag. The present study shows that the subjects gave the highest rating to FilE group (5.8046) and then AmE (5.4450). EngTag was rated much favorable than their AmTag counterpart. The subjects showed no linguistic ill toward Filipino speakers as dictated by their being Tagalog.

#### **III. CONCLUSION**

The students' perception on the level of prestige of English implies that they can be motivated to learn it rigidly to secure access to world's knowledge, to land into high paying jobs, to elevate their social status and mingle with the social class speaking the language. ESL teachers across the curriculum should also be motivated to level up their English language behavior and be models of academic English for the learners' welfare. Content area teachers of courses taught in English should make their classrooms venues for correct English language acquisition.

A challenge is put on the shoulders of Filipino language teachers. This perception of students may eventually affect their behavior towards Filipino language and may cause the loss of their interest in learning their own language. Normal schools and all universities offer Education courses Major in English and Filipino among others. The number of students specializing in these two content areas may silently reflect the same perception of the judges used in this study.

The not so big number of Education students specializing in Filipino may suggest students' disinterest and negative perception about their native tongue which may indeed become may suffer diglossia if not properly take care of. It is recommended that Filipino teachers review their methodologies and technique; make honest assessment of their and their students' performance, and finally be more enthusiastic and innovative in delivering lessons. Some probably need to change paradigm, Filipino language teaching, just like English is not talk preponderating. Lively interactive and interesting discussion should be done communicatively. If students' perception will be altered, and they find Filipino language as beautiful, unique, useful, significant like English, it will share the same level of prestige especially now that the K-12 Program promotes Mother Tongue Based Multi-lingual Education (MTB-MLE) too.

In connection, it may be helpful to recommend the use modern Filipino (Filipino with a lot of borrowed English lexical items which are better understood in English) in the diagnostic and achievement tests given to elementary pupils, career assessment examination administered to senior high school students, Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) and all Board Examinations, or at least balance the number of test items in the English and Filipino subjects. Translation of English books in highly technical subjects as Medicine, Computer, Law to supplement the English books into modern Filipino as well for better learning is suggested. After all, Translation Method in language teaching still works in this modern times when the situation calls for it. The college students from MTB-MLE curriculum may increase their proficiency in the two languages while learning the content.

Mass media, transportation, government offices among others show ease mixing the two official languages in expressing themselves naturally and clearly. It may also be wise to propose the formal allowance of code switching in the language classrooms to allow the flow of ideas in the students' minds and lips. Regardless of the students' reason for code switching--whether expertise in both languages or limited knowledge in one of the languages, as long as it performs a sociolinguistic function and helps the students maximize class participation and learn best, they may be allowed to. After all, English got its international flavor from barrowed words, the modern Filipino, formal and colloquial Filipino is also made classier through amalgamation of loaned terms from English.

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#### **APPENDIX - A**

#### READING SCRIPT IN ENGLISH (The same reading script used in the previous studies):

One hurried rainy day, rather late in February, we started south, along a desolate road through the forest. Now and then we heard frogs in the swamps and the peninsula. Later a fog rolled in from the water. After three or four miles, the road came out onto a barren sandy stretch. Here and there was a barnyard, with a donkey and a few hogs. Some orange flowers grew beside the road. Suddenly the rain came down in torrents and the roof of the car began to leak. We were sorry that we hadn't fixed it before leaving home, but our plans had involved so many details that we hadn't bothered. Our clothes absorbed so much dampness that we felt cold, so we hurried to the next village. After leaving the car to buy grease at a garage, we found a restaurant, where we ordered coffee and pancakes with maple syrup. We waited for lunch by a huge

fireplace, where a log was burning. The walls and floor were made with heavy plane boards, which were black with soot. We were surprised to see various queer things in odd corners. There was a glass case filled with dolls, some of which were from foreign lands. Next to the chimney was a calendar that advertised a laundry and beyond it was a horrible old parrot and a patch. We watched this absurd scene until a waiter brought our lunch through a narrow sort of corridor from the kitchen. While we ate, we tried to solve a crossword puzzle, but our hands were so greasy that we had to wash and rinse them first. When we finished, we found that the rain had cleared up to warrant our going on. We borrowed a cloth to clean the car windows, and hoped that tomorrow would bring good weather. The route number seemed to correspond with the one on our road map, and we followed at past the old stone quarry near the Oregon State land. That night we slept in tourist cabin and listened to a windmill which revolved slowly and noisily outside the door.

**READING SCRIPT IN FILIPINO** (The same reading script used in the previous studies):

Malapit nang matapos ang buwan ng Agosto, at isang araw na malakas ang ulan, patimog naming tinungo ang daan papunta sa kagubatan. Humuhuni na nag mga palaka at lumalatag na ang mga ulap. Pagkaraan ng mga tatlo o apat na milyang paglalakbay, napansin naminmg unti-unti na kaming nalalayo sa kabihasnan. Saan ka man tumingin ay makikita mo ang kabukiran at ilang hayop tulad ng kabayo at baboy. At sa tabi ng daan ay may magila-ngilang halamang namumulaklak. Biglang bumuhos ang napakalakas na ulan at nagsimulang tumulo ang ulan sa bubungan ng awtong aming sinasakyan, na dahil sa dami ng gawain ay nakalimutan namimng ayusin bago umalis ng bahay. Nababasa na ang aming damit na suot at nakakaramdamna kmai ng ginaw kaya't nagmamadali kami upang marating ang susunod na bayan. Matapos maisilong ang aming kotse, nakakita kami ng isang restawran at nag-order ng kape at tinapay. Ang dingding at sahig ng restwrang iyon ay yari sa makapal na tabla na nangingitim na sa dumi. Matapos kaming kumain ay maliwang na ang langit na nagpapahiwatig na maari na kaming magpatuloy sa aming paglalakbay. Humiram kami ng isang basahan para punasan ang bintana ng bato at umaasa na sana ay maganda ang panahon kinabukasan. Ang bilang sa daan at ang nasa mapa ay nagkakatulad, kaya't tinalunton namin ang daang patungo sa hanggahan ng lalawigan.

#### **APPENDIX: B**

The series of 12 semantic-differential bipolar adjective scales (The same Evaluation/rating sheet used in the previous studies)

Name:	Course:	School:	
Light			Dark
Unpleasant			Pleasant
Religious			In Religious
Passive			Active
Successful			Unsuccessful
Lazy			Industrious
Reliable			Unreliable
Healthy			Sickly
Self -confident			Not self-confident
Unintelligent			Intelligent
Dishonest			Honest
Patient			Impatient
Salary:	Pesos per month		
Occupation:	Housewife:	_ Professional Exec	cutive

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# **APPENDIX: C**

# Sample rating sheet:

American English Speakers

Speaker 1

(+) end	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	(-) end
Light	8	4	9	2	4	3	0	0	Dark
Pleasant	9	3	7	5	1	5	0		Unpleasant
Religious	3	6	8	9	4	0	0		Irreligious
Active		9	5	7	9	0	0		Passive
Successful	8	3	8	6	5	0	0		Unsuccessful
Industrious	9	3	5	9	3	0	2		Lazy
Reliable		8	8	9	5	0	0		Unreliable
Healthy	10	2	8	3	4	3	0		Sickly
Self-Confident	5	4	7	7	6	1			Not Self Confident
Intelligent	8	6	6	5	5	0	0		Unintelligent
Honest	3	3	10	7	5	2			Dishonest
Patient	3	4	6	6	7	3	1		Impatient

Judged as teachers, Priests, Military man (soldier), Actor

Professionals according to	20 evaluators/listeners
Executive according to	5 evaluators/listeners

Blue collar job according to 4 evaluators/listeners

SALARY P 10.00 – P 45.00