Exploring *-ING* Forms in the Novel Words Adulting, Trolling, and Social Distancing

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Abstract

This paper investigates the productivity of words ending in *-ing* through exploring three novel examples namely: *adulting, social distancing*, and *trolling.* Through the use of corpus-based methodologies using the NOW corpus, the study determined the semantic meaning of the selected novel words through collocations and identified the syntactic behavior and functions of *-ing* in each word by utilizing an automated part-of-speech (POS) tagger. This study aims to answer the following questions: 1) What is the semantic meaning of *adulting, trolling,* and *social distancing* in Philippine context and 2) what are the syntactic functions of '-ing' in *adulting, trolling,* and *social distancing.* Part of the discussion is determining the pedagogical implications of the results of the study in language teaching and learning and identifying any grammatical feature associated with the use of *adulting, trolling,* and *social distancing* that may be of significance to Philippine English.

INTRODUCTION

In the English language, the suffix – ing is commonly known to have a wide variety of functions. It is generally attached to words to derive nouns and adjectives or to signal a grammatical change and express the present and progressive aspect of the verb. The *-ing* is also known for its gerundive functions which is widely discussed because of its mixed nominal and verbal properties, making it an elusive concept (Taher, 2015).

This paper opt to investigate these behaviors of *-ing* in the selected three novel words for two reasons. First, as language continuous to evolve and more and more novel words are coined, students are likely to be more exposed to confusing constructions such as the *-ing forms* especially with the limitations brought by the students' mother tongue (L1), lack of knowledge about the target language (L2), and incomplete instruction and discussions about it in English classrooms (Aziz, M. F., & Triyono, S. (2018).   The use of novel words which students are frequently exposed to in this study is intended to contextualize and situate the discussion in a more functional approach in order to get insight into the understanding of the context (the Philippine context) where these novel words appear and help both teachers and learners widen their understanding of these words (Feng, 2013).   Second, the gradience in the function of *-ing* can be problematic especially for the non-native English speakers and learners as they tend to overgeneralize *-ing forms* as a part of the verbal string alone, usually as a progressive. This is prevalent as English language is ripe with *-ing* constructions in progressives and up to now new forms of progressives are continuously developed (Ranta, 2015; Rautiohano, 2020). One such example is the increase in the number and use of *stative verb + ing* to more deviant forms such as *adulting, social distancing, and trolling* which root word is not a verb but a noun.

Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions: 1) What is the semantic meaning of *adulting*, *trolling*, and *social distancing* in Philippine context and 2) what are the syntactic functions of '-ing' in *adulting*, *trolling*, and *social distancing*. Part of the discussion is determining the pedagogical implications of the results of the study in language teaching and learning and identifying any grammatical feature associated with the use of *adulting*, *trolling*, and *social distancing* that may be of significance to Philippine English.

METHODS

Corpus-based methods

Corpus linguistics has been a popular field among language scholars who desire to study changes and variations in language. In English Language Teaching (ELT), the use of corpus-based methods have also proven to be effective. Its wide use is directly associated with the quality and kinds of texts (spoken, written, and in various genre) it provides for the study of language where authenticity of texts and materials are critical and necessary (Beeching, 2014). Corpus-based methods is used in this study since it aims to explore the novel words with   -ing suffix in authentic texts.

Specifically, the study used News-On-the-Web (NOW) corpus. The NOW is designed to track the latest and most updated changes in language through restricting the corpus to web-based magazines and newspaper articles. This feature makes the words *adulting*, *trolling*, and *social distancing* more frequent in this corpus than in any other corpus in the English.corpora.org. This corpus also contains 16. 5 billion words of data from web-based newspapers and magazines from 2010 to the present time.   For the purpose of the research, the study limited the date only until December 10 of 2022 as the corpus keeps on adding new occurrences of *adulting, trolling,* and *social distancing* every day.

Data-gathering and procedure

Table 1. *Frequency of the selected novel words in Philippines (NOW, c.a.16 billion words)*

Keyword	Frequency in NOW	Per million	Frequency in Philippines (PH)	Per million
social distancing	344963	20.78	5235	11.14
trolling	30586	1.84	435	0.93
adulting	2133	0.13	237	0.50
glamping	7575	0.46	188	0.46
swatting	5460	0.33	130	0.28
googling	10103	0.61	124	0.26
ghosting	6337	0.38	93	0.20
trigger warning	1806	0.11	30	0.06
catfishing	2077	0.13	28	0.06
manspreading	448	0.03	2	0.00
ubering	140	140	2	0.00
breadcrumbing	276	0.02	1	0.00

A preliminary manual search was done to select which novel words ending in *-ing* will be included in the study. The novelty was determined in terms of *timeliness* and *frequency* . With these criteria, the study included only those *-ing* words which spiked from 2018 onwards (last five years). Since the NOW corpus has a feature which allows to search keywords within a specific country, the study was able to select those that have spiked from 2018 onwards in Philippine context. The novel words ending in *-ing* which has the most number of frequency were included to get an ample amount of texts to study the behaviour of *-ing.* From the identified novel words in the table above, it was

shown that the words *adulting, trolling,* and *social distancing* are among the top three words ending in -*ing* not only in the Philippine context but also in the whole NOW corpus.

Table 2. List of newspapers and web-based magazines included in the virtual corpora

Inquirer. Net	Rappler
The Standard	Philippine Tatler
Philippine Star	Cosmopolitan Philippines
Tempo	SPOT.ph
Manila Bulletin	pageone.ph
ABS-CBN News	Technology Market Report
Sun.Star	Yahoo News
Business Mirror	outoftownblog.com
Wise Bread	bworldonline.com
Weekly Volcano	journal.com.ph
Tiebreaker Times	Philippine Daily Inquirer

After identifying which novel words to include, a virtual corpora (VC) or a subcorpus was created within NOW to allow for a more contextualized search. The study built sub corpus for each novel word specifically selecting news and web magazines published in the Philippines. From among the 27,868,699 texts, the corpus suggested 159 texts for *adulting* and 153 texts for *trolling.* Since the search field only allows for single word, the researcher used distancing as an alternate keyword for *social distancing*. 102 texts was collected for *social distancing.*

In determining the meaning of the three keywords, the study used collocation-window approach using five-left (5L) and five- right (5R) for a looser word search. Collocations are used to understand the words better in context. As advocated by Firth (1977), semantically related lexical items always go together and this habitual recurrent juxtaposition can be visualized as network of words that can be analyzed to determine the relationship between lexis, the text and and the discourse community.

The limitation of the tag sets available in the NOW corpus allowed for the use of an automatic part-of-speech-tagger followed by manual correction. The study specifically utilized the Penn Treebank POS-tagger which has tag sets more suitable for the study. Penn Tree bank tagger has a well-developed predicate- argument schemes which can label complex syntactic functions of words under constituents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Meaning of social distancing, adulting, and trolling
Table 3. *Top collocates of Social Distancing*

Part-of-Speech (POS)	Top collocate	Frequency	Total collocates in NOW
Noun	Measures	19	183
Adjective	Strict	6	82
Verb	Prevent	7	130
Adverb	Also	6	45

The word *social distancing* frequently appears with the noun *measure* as its top noun collocate hence the phrase *social distancing measures*. The other top noun collocates are *guidelines, area,* and *masks.* The top adjective collocate is *strict,* which frequency is closely tied to *extreme* and *stringent*. The top verb collocate is *prevent* followed by the top adverb collocate *also.*

Social distancing, also known as physical distancing, is a term which rose in productivity during the intense of period of Covid-19 pandemic. This term was greatly used that it was finally added as an official English word to Collins English Dictionary, Merriam-Webster Dictionary and Oxford English

Dictionary (OED) in 2020 (Mineo, 2021). While this term is a well-known Covid-19 vocabulary, the concept of distancing one's self from others during illness has been practiced since the 14th century bubonic plague which killed millions of people in Europe (Mineo, 2021).

Social distancing also has a surprising history as a practice to distance one's self from people of another race during 19th century. Lily Scherlis, a doctoral student who researched the evolution of *social distancing*, stated in an interview with the *Time* that one of the earliest reference she found about this term is on the 1831 memoirs of Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourrienne. In this memoir, Loius talked about the "experienced space" she felt with his friendship with Napoleon as Napoleon began to travel and conquer more territories . Scherlis added that this term further seen more productivity when British and American newspapers used the term *social distancing* as a euphemism for class and race (Waxman, 2020 para. 3). During this time the term social distancing co-occurred with the term *social distance scale,* a social science tool *which measures prejudice by asking participants to describe how comfortable they feel interacting with people of another race"* (Waxman, 2020 para. 3).

As suggested by the top noun collocate, social distancing is a *measure* observed and followed specifically to reduce physical contact as seen in the sample texts below.

(1) Service establishments shall remain in operation during the same period, provided that strict **social distancing measures** are observed (pia.gov.ph)

(2) President Rodrigo Roa Duterte has approved the imposition of Stringent **Social Distancing Measures** in the National Capital Region (NCR) for thirty (30) days (pia.gov.ph)

(3) This is the first-ever Range Rover built under the company's new **social distancing measures**, and it recently rolled off Land Rover's Solihull factory which restarted operations (auo-industriya.com)

The main goal of this measure is to *prevent* the spread of the corona virus which is proven to be highly-communicable.

(1) DOH underscores' social distancing' to **prevent** COVID-19

(2) because of COVID-19, people are advised to stay at home (aka social distancing) to **prevent** the rapid spread of the disease

(3) created a technical working group that will formulate uniform policies on social distancing measures to reduce and **prevent** coronavirus disease

While social distancing is commonly implemented to reduce physical contact, there is no one-size-fits-all way of following social distancing as measures may vary and remain context-specific (Sun, KS, et.al, 2022) . In the Philippines, social distancing is achieved through various means in addition to the usual one-meter -distance such as preference for virtual activities, staying of out the external environment, and avoiding touching of objects (Cahapay, 2020). Besides these, the Philippine government also imposed multi-tier lockdowns which placed the Philippines in the so called "community quarantines". These quarantine measures lasted for over two years, making the Philippines the country with the longest lockdown.

These social distancing measures are characterized as *strict* as suggested by the top adjective collocate:

(1) its recorded COVID-19 deaths so far, one indication that delaying **strict social distancing measures** can prove deadly.

(2) Essential work-related meetings and religious activities may continue so long as **strict social distancing**, defined as the strict maintenance of a distance

(3) provided that **strict social distancing** measures are observed.

In the Philippines, social distancing measures are even termed *draconian* (Hapal, 2020) since these measures are met with punitive action if violated and not adhered to. The pandemic experience in the country also has a war-like narrative as argued by (Hapal, 2020) where the virtuous archetype is embodied by "healthcare professionals, frontline workers, police, military, and so called

"homeliners," and law-abiding citizens" and the errant archetype is embodied by the *"pasaway"*. This prolonged lockdown is blamed either to the failure of the government's response (Hapal, 2020) or to those *pasaway* or unlawful citizens who keep violating government-imposed health protocols for various reasons such as mobility, economic, and attitudes towards social distancing measure (Hapal, 2020).

The most frequent adverb is *also*. *Also* is identified by Quirk et.al (1985) as an adverbial subjunct which is usually integrated in the clause of a sentence and which functions in similar category as adverbs of manner, place, time, and degree. *Also* is determined by Quirk et. al (1985) specifically, as a 'focusing subjunct' which semantic influence depends on its position in the sentence. Its *focus* or *semantic influence* however can only be more defined in speech more than in writing. The utterance is deemed important to know which is the focus of the word *also* in the sentence as shown in the sample text below:

(1) We may have violated social distancing issues but **WE ALSO <u>need to show</u>** sympathy, understanding and concern to our fellow

(2) **SIGNAGES** reminding its stakeholders to observe proper social distancing will **ALSO** be **<u>posted</u>** in strategic points

(3) like monkeys and bats, **<u>we</u> ALSO PRACTICE** nuanced social distancing, reducing nonessential social contacts while still providing essential care for sick family members.

There is a dearth of research about the grammatical status of *'also'* in Philippine English. (PhiE). The sole study about subjunct in PhiE so far was conducted by Alonzo and Dita (2019) but the study did not include *focusing subjuncts* to know whether PhiE *also* has the same function as AmE, a direct translation of the Filipino adverbial counterpart *rin or din*, or serves as a discourse filler more than an evaluative word (Dita, 2011).

Table 4. *Top Collocates of Trolling*

Part-of-Speech (POS)	Top collocate	Frequency	Total collocates in NOW
Noun	Internet	5	132
Adjective	Online	7	80
Verb	Become	5	90
Adverb	Also	6	45

For full-list of collocates kindly email mmjimenez2@up.edu.ph

Internet and *online* as top collocates show that *trolling* remains as a web-based activity. In the sample texts below*, internet* and *online* are used interchangeably but mean the same thing:

(1) we hate the person. Otherwise, we're just a bunch of emotional haters **trolling the internet** for someone to attack. "

(2) going into the ring and proving it EVERY SINGLE NIGHT.... not excellence in **internet trolling**. Clearly I'm doing it all wrong.

(3) details that would allow them to be traced, in a country notorious for **online trolling**, disinformation and use of anonymous social media accounts. "

(4) lacked the slash in the NTF-Elcac budget, after being subjected to alleged **online trolling,** purportedly carried out by the government agency. #

Many associate *trolling* from its source term *troll/s* who are considered killer monsters in Scandinavian folklore and literature. These trolls kill with no purpose and aimlessly wander in the forests (Mckay, 2018). This term, however, also has surprising origins in the fishing industry as a technique whereby a person keeps moving the bait in order to attract and catch the fish (Madison, 2022).

This concept of trolling was adapted by a community of online users called Usenet. group during the 1990s whereby they carefully craft a 'bait'-post to attract newbies and make these newbies even more gullible as they respond to a topic that is already very well known to the experienced users of

the community (Kiberd, 2016). Since then, albeit metaphorically, trolling has been known as an *"attempt to bait someone into an unpleasant conflict"* (Madison, 2022, para. 4).

In the Philippines, online and internet trolling made major social media sites a political weapon. These social media sites have become a bedrock of deception, aggression, and disruption which are major characteristics of internet trolling as identified by Hadake (2010) . Incidents of trolling in the Philippines have risen dramatically during the 2016 elections when troll farms become more widespread (Bencito, 2017). These troll farms refer to groups of paid trollers who sign up and set up fake accounts in Facebook and twitter for political operations (Ong & Cabanes, 2018). These troll farms consists of click armies or paid trollers who manipulate and plant seeds of disinformation, misinformation, and fake news about their political opponents (Ong & Cabanes, 2018).

The verb "become" could be indicative of the ongoing evolution of the term as seen in the following sentences where the text describes trolling as on the process of becoming a lucrative and profitable industry.

(1) right to speak up and be heard. It does not help us that trolling **has become** a profitable industry, or that thinkers, whom we have relied on

(2) content. This explains the uniform posts or comments seen on Facebook. Clearly, trolling **has become** and can **become** an even more lucrative business.

Interestingly,   as studied by (Ong & Cabanes, 2018), Ad and PR strategists as well as digital influencers lead these major troll farms where they get paid for very large amounts. A troll also earns beyond minimum wage salary every month in exchange of 150 shares of posts and bait-posts per-day (Paulo, 2022). With the high-pay trollers get from this activity, most of them admit to seeing trolling as a freelance or even a full-time job (Ong & Cabanes, 2018).

Similar with *social distancing*, the most frequent adverb collocate of *trolling* is *also* as seen in the text below:

(1) pointing out and bringing to light how some of these fake news sites and **also TROLLING ACTIVITY** operate, because I think for most people, including myself, it was

(2) after six hours, the incident impacted the journalist and her colleagues. # State-sponsored **trolling** has **also** been widely **EMPLOYED** over the past few years. Content which originates from

Table 5. *Top Collocates of Adulting*

Part-of-Speech (POS)	Top collocate	Frequency	Total collocates in NOW
Noun	Life	10	204
Adjective	Real	9	103
Verb	Start	8	182
Adverb	So	18	140

The word *adulting* started to appear in twitter in 2008 and 2009 but had a spike in 2016 as reflected in the NOW corpus. This term however had long occurred as a verbal form of adultery (Bramley, 2022). It started to rise in productivity after Kelly Williams Brown published a book about in in 2013 titled *Adulting: How to Become a Grown-up in 468 Easy(ish) Steps* (Cai, 2022).

Today, it is a term commonly known among millennials to refer to the process of transition from childhood to maturity. The noun *millennial* is listed as the second top noun collocate. *Adulting,* from the findings of the corpus, occurs with the noun *life,* hence the phrase *adulting life* as seen in the sample text below:

(1) operates even on weekends and holidays from 10 AM to 8 PM to make your **adulting life** easier.

(2) When the **adulting life** has eaten all of you, there will come a time

(3) **adulting** and getting his **life** together in the face of unavoidable pressures and responsibilities.

As the top noun and verb collocate suggest, it is the phase of life where a young individual starts to take on responsibilities only known to adults as indicated in the following texts:

(1) This realization unfolds when you **start adulting** and you discover the bits and pieces of yourself that are not all desirable.

(2) it should be mandatory for fresh grads to go through it before they **start adulting**.

(3) It's that age when we're old enough to actually **start adulting** -- whether by force or not, LOL -- and young enough still to be.

In the Philippine context, this could mean finally graduating from university, filing for government IDs, living alone, paying for own bills, paying for taxes, and achieving a work-life-balance (Barrientos, 2022). Adulting is a phase of *life* where everything also gets *real* as indicated by the top adjective collocate.

(1) The **adulting** struggle is so **rea**l that we forget to plan for life's possible what-ifs,

(2) **Adulting** suddenly becomes **real** now.' When I was still in high school,

(3) It took her first **real** step towards **adulting**. # It didn't last long. After she left her advertising gig,

The adjective *real* is also modified by the top adverb collocate so, hence the term *so real.* In the following sentences, *so* is used both as an intensifier and as a linking adverbial (Quirk.et.al, 1985):

(1) The adulting struggle is **so** real that we forget to plan for life's possible what-ifs,

(2) Adulting is **so** hard.

(3) adulting could be **so** demanding and challenging if you don't know where to start

(4) **So** the pressures of adulting, I can relate to her in that sense

(5) **So** this is what adulting feels like

This *realness* comes from the fact that adulting is hard for most millennials as they are used to depending on their parents for basic needs or living within their weekly or monthly allowance. With *adulting,* they suddenly have to deal with the reality of living independently from their parents and figuring things out alone. Adulting, however, has a negative connotation as some think that millennials and the more younger generation are being a "*snowflake*" or being overly sensitive and weak, making the concept of adulting self-infantilizing as it seems to encourage millennials to perceive basic life skills as a hard thing to do (Williams, 2019).

The investigation of the collocates above shows that the current meaning of the three novel words have undergone significant semantic change. The term *trolling* for example metaphorically adapted its concept from the world of fishing to becoming an aggressive and a manipulative activity. Traditional semantic typologies may explain this phenomenon as metaphorization and pejoration. The first refers to the mapping of one concept unto to the target concept and the latter refers to the process whereby a word acquires negative connotations and associations.

Social distancing, on the other hand, remained neutral in the sense that it still retained its original concept. Only that today it has become a specialized term (specialization) for the Covid-19 pandemic and hence underwent some sort of *narrowing* of its original meaning. Finally, the term adulting which is considered by Michaelis, L. A., and Hsiao, A. M (2021) as a linguistic innovation has a multi-layered trigger for its productivity. It could be psychological in nature, a product of creativity, or is caused by the internal structure of language which has to do with the attractiveness of *-ing*. In the book where the term adulting was first seen and was given public attention, Kelly Brown clearly wants to get across that adulthood is a verb and not a definitive category. This means that adulting is an ongoing process whereby an individual has to appreciate more the process than the destination.

Grammatical behaviour of -ing in adulting, trolling, and social distancing

The findings from the corpus show that the *-ing* in *social distancing* and *adulting,* function more frequently in the nominal form than in adjectival form or verbal form (aspectual). The word trolling,

however, function more in the verbal form but which frequency is closely tied to the nominal form. One item is recorded for trolling in the adjectival form.

Table 6. Syntactic behavior of -ing in the novel words

	Verbal form (Aspectual function)	Nominal form (Gerundive function)	Adjectival form (Attributive function)	Frequency
Social distancing	x	129	4	133
Adulting	62	170	72	237
Trolling	59	45	1	103

The majority of discussions about -ing behavior focus on its idiosyncratic characteristics, which cause confusion, particularly to English learners. -Ing is considered transcategorical (Alexiadou, 2013) which means that one cannot easily assign a grammar category upon -ing forms as it sometimes appear to belong to various categories simultaneously. The fact that -ing is a morpheme that can easily be attached to base words and commit both derivational and inflectional processes contributes to its peculiarity. -Ing can derive adjectives and is also used as an inflection to express the present form and progressive aspect of the verb. With this, -ing as derivation and -ing as an inflection are suggested to be treated as two different but homophonous morphemes (Kamayana, 2017). In the analysis of Taher (2015), whether -ing is inflectional, derivational, or both depends highly on its function in the sentence. He stated that -ing becomes *inflectional* in the verbal gerund whereas in the nominal gerund, the -ing is *derivational.*

The consensus, however, is that -ing, has a verbal usage (referring to the present and progressive aspect) as in (1), adjectival usage as in (5), and nominal usage (referring to gerund) as in (8) and (9) (Kamayana, 2017; Alexiadou, 2013; Taher, 2015).

(1) Teddy Roosevelt: THEY'RE **ADULTING** (verbal usage).
(2) Says she **has been adulting** for about a year (verbal usage).
(3) Critics have accused him of maliciously spreading false information or **trolling** After I realized…(verbal usage).
(4) More on **adulting stories** and advices and navigating through life as young adults in general (adjectival usage).
(5) PUV) is gradually restarting but with limited capacity in keeping with the **social distancing policy** (adjectival usage).
(6) In a country notorious for online **trolling,** disinformation, and use of anonymous social media accounts (gerund but nominal).
(7) Online gigs in days of **social distancing** while quarantines and lockdown are in place in many countries due to the COVID 19 (gerund but nominal).
(8) a reputation for hilariously **trolling** each other on social media this is one exception (gerund but verbal).
(9) Between the two took place earlier this year after Noah condemned West his incessant **trolling** of ex-wife Kim Kardashian on social media (gerund but verbal).

The gerund, containing both the mixed verbal and nominal properties, has been thoroughly investigated by various scholars who offered their examinations on the differences between the two. Alexiadou (2013) and Fonteyn (2016) posits that both nominal and verbal gerunds reflect the prototypical noun phrases or they both occur in the nominal position as in (6 and 7). The complements of nominal gerund are introduced by *of* while verbal gerund take accusative complements (8 and 9). Other difference is that nominal gerunds take adjectival modifier but not adverbial modification while verbal gerunds cannot take adjectives as modifiers. Maekelberghe (2018) also observed that verbal gerunds can be "action-referring", subject-less, and can refer to facts.

Heyvaert (2019), studied the difference between nominal and verbal gerund through investigating their aspectual features. They challenged the notion that gerunds, whether verbal, or

nominal, are progressively-viewed or as 'ongoing". In their corpus study, results showed that while majority of gerunds, both verbal and nominal, denotes activities, only a few of them is marked as 'ongoing' or progressive.

The study argued that the suffix-*ing* does not have an inherent aspectual value and it is necessary to include the lexicogrammatical context of the gerund to understand its aspectual value exactly. Alexiadoui (2013) and Maekelberghe (2018) relates this phenomenon to the development of the -*ing* progressive as it provided the environment which led to the confusion. Since verbal gerunds and nominal gerunds are nominalizations, some progressives through the years pose as verbal gerunds and verbal gerunds (nominalization) on the other hand acquired verb-like characteristics as a result of the diachronic verbalization of the -*ing* (Maekelberghe, 2018).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the foregoing discussions, it can be gleaned that semantic meaning as well as the syntactic functions of *adulting*, *trolling*, and *social distancing* can be difficult for learners to understand if not taken into context. This highlights the critical role of contextualized teaching approaches in making novel lexical items comprehensible to learners, particularly in non-native English contexts like the Philippines. Especially, the syntactic functions of -*ing*, which is inherently transcategorical due to the various positions it takes in a sentence, can pose challenges. As such, it is suggested that language teachers take into consideration the various functions of -*ing* when teaching progressives, gerunds, or adjectives in their English classrooms. Emphasizing its communicative purpose in interaction will further enhance learners' understanding and usage of these forms.

Moreover, as gleaned from the study, further analysis of focusing subjuncts such as *also* and conjunct adverbials such as *so* must be taken into consideration in future research about Philippine English, as there is still a dearth of literature on Philippine adverbials. Understanding how these elements function in Philippine English will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of its evolving syntactic and pragmatic features, shedding light on its uniqueness within the spectrum of World Englishes.

This study also underscores the importance of acknowledging the dynamic nature of language and its adaptation to cultural and societal changes, as evidenced by the emergence of novel lexical items like *adulting*. These words reflect both linguistic creativity and the evolving socio-cultural contexts in which language operates. Incorporating such real-world linguistic phenomena into English language teaching could enhance learners' engagement and foster their awareness of the interplay between language and culture.

Finally, future research on the behavior of -*ing* and the novel words highly utilized in Philippine contexts is encouraged. Such studies can further refine the teaching and learning of English locally, particularly in areas of syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Investigating how these words and structures interact with broader linguistic trends in Philippine English will also contribute to the development of localized teaching materials and curricula that better reflect learners' linguistic realities.

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