

## **The study of English codes and jargons used by FX drivers of Robinsons' Novaliches to Trinoma Mall trip**

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### **Abstract**

It is not easy to drive for a living especially in the Philippines, a country in which traffic problems are commonly faced. To deal with these problems, FX drivers use a radio communication system in which they use specialized codes and jargons that only they can understand. This study examines the English codes and jargons that the Robinsons Novaliches to TriNoma Mall FX drivers use during their trips. This answers the following questions: (1) What are the English codes and jargons used by FX drivers of Robinsons Novaliches to TriNoma Mall trips? (2) What functions do these English codes and jargons serve the FX drivers? The result shows that the FX drivers use some of the Radio 10 Codes, adapted the NATO phonetic alphabet, and developed their own English jargons which include jargons for landmarks, groups of people, and organizations. Also, this reveals that these codes and jargons are used in providing traffic information, monitoring traffic situations, informing each other about passenger location, providing alternate routes, giving way to each other, giving warning, and even talking about personal matters. This study allows us to see how the FX drivers carry on in their jobs and survive the traffic problems using their specialized codes.

### **1. Introduction**

It is not easy to drive for a living especially in the Philippines, a country in which traffic problems are commonly faced. To deal with these problems, public drivers resort to every possible way that will make their job on the road easy. One of which is using a radio communication system in which they use codes and jargons that are only understandable among them. This study attempts to identify the jargons and codes used by the FX drivers and investigate the purposes these jargons and codes serve them as they do their job on the road. By analyzing the FX driver's actual use of their codes and jargons as they communicate with one another through their two-way radios, this study aims to discover the richness of the specialized language that the FX drivers use to communicate with one another. Also, this may lead to a deeper understanding of how the FX drivers deal with the problems they face on the road using their specialized codes.

This paper begins first by providing a background of the study by discussing what language codes and jargons are and by examining a previous finding on the study of jargons. Second, it presents the research questions, the research site, the participants, and the method of data collection and analysis. Third, the paper proceeds with the discussion of the identified codes and jargons as well as the functions that these codes and jargons serve the FX drivers. Finally, a conclusion is provided to summarize the result of the study and to present possible areas of studies.

### **2. Background**

It is common that every conceivable science, profession, trade, and occupation has its own set of words that are partly known by others. These terms may be slang or technical depending on their users (Hai Liaw, Dani, & Johari, 2013). In the case of the FX drivers, they

have their own codes and jargons that only they can understand. People who are not a member of their group may not be able to understand the codes and jargons they use because these terms may not be generally understood or may have different meaning aside from their regular meaning. In semiology which is known as the study of signs (Yakina & Totua, 2014), the codes and jargons and their meanings demonstrate signification. In Saussure's semiology, this signification is the relationship between signifier (the sound-image) and signified (the concept it represents) (Sebeok, 2001). Considering this relationship, the drivers' codes and jargons are the signifiers and the concepts or meanings they refer to are the signified.

In communication and information processing, a code may be defined in different ways. It may be a code that assigns letters or numbers as identifiers or classifiers for languages (Language code, 2017). They can also be explained as system of signs governed by rules agreed upon (explicitly or implicitly) between members of the using culture like Morse code, algebra codes, musical codes, and binary codes (Ogunmola, 2013). A more detailed definition would be a system of rules to convert information—such as a letter, word, sound, image, or gesture—into another form or representation, sometimes shortened or secret, for communication through a channel or storage in a medium (code, 2017). This paper uses the word code as described in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> definitions that were provided for they give a clearer description of the codes that are used by the FX drivers.

Like codes, jargons have been also defined in different ways. The word jargon refers to the unique vocabulary used by particular groups of people to facilitate communication, provide a means of bonding, and exclude outsiders (Rodman, & Hyams, 2011, p.478). It also refers to a specialized set of terms and language that are obscure or have different definitions than their regular usage that is used in a particular context and setting such as in law, medicine, academia, or an art or sport. (Jargon, n.d.). The term "code" in this paper can be best described by a synthesis of these definitions. This considers code as a specialized set of terms and language that are obscure or have different definitions than their regular usage that is used by a particular group of people in a particular context and setting to facilitate communication, provide a means of bonding, and exclude outsiders.

There have been a lot of researches on the codes and jargons used by group of people. Ogunmola's (2013) study identified selected Nigeria Highway Codes and analyzed its communication components to show the synergy between the signs and the linguistic imprints and to see how they all correlate to make communication effective. The study found that the Highway Codes used in the Nigerian roads are a combination of linguistic and nonlinguistic elements, mostly non-linguistic, that are interpretative, attractive, and evocative enough to communicate effectively and to give information that will guide the road users. On the other hand, Hai Liaw, Dani, and Johari's (2013) study identified the jargons used by a professional group of people and has examined the functions that these jargons serve this group. In this study, the researchers have identified the jargons that British police force use to communicate with each other. They found out that the jargons that the servicemen and women are pretty much comprehensive covering all aspects of the police force. Among the terms that they have identified, there are terms that are used universally, but there are also terms that are branch specific. Aside from identifying the jargons, they also identified the purpose these jargons serve for the police force. According to them, the officers primarily use their jargons to communicate easily with one another as they carry out their duties. Also, the jargons are used very effectively to confuse the public. The officers want to confuse the civilian because there will be a risk of frustration when people started to get confused. But, aside from these functions that are in line with their duty, the researchers found out that the jargons are used even in the course of regular conversation among the officers. This function allows the jargons and slangs to become part of their force naturally. This shows that the jargons are used by the users to communicate effectively with one another and to intentionally hide the truth from others.

Only few studies have been made on the codes and jargons used by marginalized groups such as the FX drivers. That is why this paper will specifically look at the codes and jargons used by this particular group.

### 3. The Present Study

This study analyzes the radio conversations of the FX drivers to know the codes and jargons they use as well as the functions that these codes and jargons serve them. This part of the paper provides a detailed discussion of the research questions, the research site and the participants involved, and how the data were collected and analyzed to answer the questions this paper aims to answer.

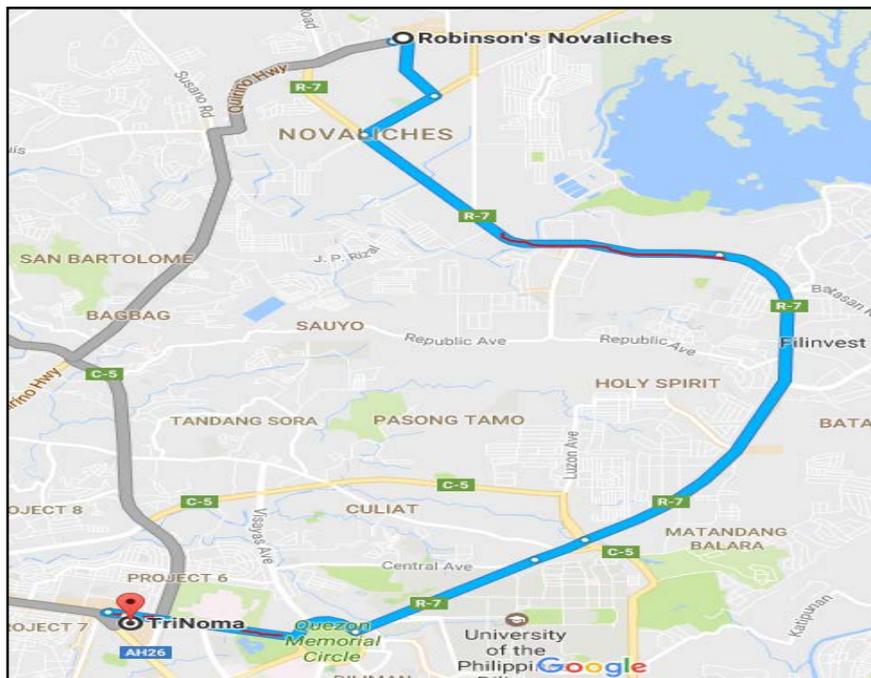
#### 3.1 Research Questions

To examine the codes and jargons used by Robinsons Novaliches to TriNoma Mall FX drivers and the functions that these codes and jargons serve them, this study specifically answers the following questions:

- (1) What are the codes and jargons used by FX drivers of Robinsons Novaliches to TriNoma Mall?
- (2) What functions do these jargons serve the FX drivers?

#### 3.2 Research Site

The research site is a 16.5 kilometer route from Robinson's Novaliches transport terminal located at Quirino Highway, Quezon City, Metro Manila to TriNoma Mall terminal located at Triangle Park, North Triangle, Ayala Vertis North, Mindanao Avenue, Quezon City, Metro Manila. The time of travel from Robinson's Novaliches terminal to TriNoma Mall terminal is 30 to 40 minutes. However, this time of travel still changes depending on the traffic situation. Considering the blue line which represents the route in the figure below (Google, n.d.), it can be noticed that there are areas that are marked red. These red areas are where heavy traffic usually occurs.



**Figure 1.** Google Maps Direction from Robinson's Novaliches to TriNoma Mall

### 3.3 The Participants

The participants comprised 9 FX drivers who are all members of R3 Transport, a UV Express transport group that is composed of around 300 FX drivers who travel in 3 back and forth routes; Robinsons Novaliches to TriNoma Mall, Robinsons Novaliches to MRT Quezon Avenue Station, and Robinsons Novaliches to Buendia. For this research, the participants are drivers of Robinsons Novaliches to TriNoma Mall route. Of this total, 8 are males and 1 is a female. A brief background about of the 9 FX drivers are provided below. The participants' names are not included for confidentiality purposes.

**Table 1.** Drivers' Profile

<b>FX Drivers</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>No. of Years as an FX Driver</b>
Driver 1	29	3
Driver 2	28	3
Driver 3	59	38
Driver 4	55	32
Driver 5	40	7
Driver 6	35	5
Driver 7	27	3
Driver 8	28	2
Driver 9	28	2

It is assumed that the participants provided the researcher the desired data to answer the research questions this paper aims to answer because they are the ones who always communicate with their two way radios. They are chosen based on the recommendation of the trip dispatcher and other FX drivers of the said transport.

### 3.4 Data Collection

The data for answering the research questions were gathered through audio recorded interviews and observations. Nine FX drivers were interviewed to know their codes and jargons. These participants were also asked how these codes and jargons function during their trips. Each interview lasted for 15 minutes. The interview contains 3 pre-determined questions that are prepared in advance (See Appendix B). To see their actual use of the codes and jargons as they communicate with other FX drivers through their two way radios, two Robinsons Novaliches to TriNoma Mall trips and two Trinoma Mall to Robinsons Novaliches trips were observed. Four of the nine FX drivers who were interviewed participated during these back and forth trips. All the conversations during the four trips were audio recorded from the moment the passengers ride and went off the UV Express cars in the transport terminals. Their radio systems were checked before the observation to know if they are sending and receiving radio frequency well.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed and interpreted the data through several steps. First, the codes and the jargons were listed from the audio recordings. And the other codes and jargons that were not part of the recordings were identified by the FX drivers themselves. They were also asked about the meanings of the codes and jargons. To clarify these

meanings that they have provided, they were even asked to give instances where these codes are used. Second, the recordings were analyzed to see the functions that these codes and jargons serve the FX driver. These functions that were identified from the recordings were presented to and confirmed by the FX drivers.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

In this part of the paper, the results are presented with a brief discussion of each. The codes and jargons that were identified are presented first, then the functions of these codes and jargons are discussed through the extracts that represent them.

##### 4.1 The Codes and Jargons

The study reveals that the FX drivers use a rich mixture of codes and jargons when communicating with each other during their trips. They do not use only a group of codes, but use a combination of numerical codes, alphabetic codes, and jargons. They use some of the Radio Ten-Codes and adapted the NATO phonetic alphabet to refer to other words that begin with their assigned letters. Aside from these numerical and alphabetic codes, they developed their own English jargons which includes jargons for landmarks, group of people, or organizations. Below are the lists of these codes and jargons.

###### 4.1.1 Numerical Radio Codes (Ten-Codes)

The result shows that the FX drivers use the Radio Ten-Codes which composed of 144 numerical codes that begin with “10” (All About Security, 2015) (See Appendix A). These ten-codes are short codes that are used to represent common phrases in voice communication, particularly in radio communication (OMICS International, 2014). However, according to the drivers, not all of the codes are used during their trips. They only use the codes that specifically have to do with their job. The participants were asked to point out the numerical codes that they commonly use when communicating with other FX drivers. Below are the numerical codes which were pointed out by the participants.

10-12 Standby / Wait	10-53 Heavy traffic / Road block
10-13 Road & weather condition	10-57 Hit and run
10-14 Avail / Get /To pick up	10-58 To direct road traffic
10-15 Response / Answer	10-59 Convoy / Companion
10-16 Problem / Trouble	10-63 Assignment completed
10-19 Come back/ Return	10-64 Message / Traffic
10-20 Exact location	10-67 Male person
10-22 Disregard / Cancel	10-74 Negative
10-23 Arrived at scene	10-76 Engaging / Proceed to
10-28 Plate no. of vehicle	10-87 Female person
10-29 Verify	
10-42 Disengage / Cancel	
10-43 Information / Status	
10-45 Vehicle / Mobile	
10-46 Assist motorist	
10-47 Crew needed	
10-48 Excavation	
10-49 Traffic situation	
10-50 Accident	
10-51 Wrecker needed	
10-52 Ambulance needed	

The FX drivers were also asked how they learned these codes. According to the senior drivers who were interviewed, the founders of their transport group gave them a copy of the list of 10 codes when they created the transport group. However, the new drivers only learned these codes by hearing them from other drivers. In fact, they have not even seen the original list.

#### 4.1.2 Codes adapted from NATO Phonetic Alphabet

Aside from the numerical radio codes, the NATO phonetic alphabet is also used by the FX drivers. It is the most widely used radiotelephonic spelling alphabet which include 26 code words that are assigned to the 26 letters of the English alphabet in alphabetical order (International Civil Aviation Organization, n.d.) (See Appendix B). However, the FX drivers are not using these 26 code words to spell the words they want to say during their trips. They only adapted these phonetic alphabet codes to refer to other words that begin with their assigned letters. Here are some of them.

Charlie Foxtrot	-	counter flow
Juliet	-	jeepney
Oscar Kilo	-	okay / go
Romeo	-	radio
Tango	-	person (tao) / passenger
Uniform	-	U-turn

The phonetic alphabet codes used by the FX drivers can be considered as polysemic because they are open for multiple meanings (polysemic, n.d). Each phonetic alphabet code may be used to refer to any Filipino or English word that begins with the letter it is assigned to, e.g. “alpha” for “area”, “armor”, or “asawa” (husband/wife) and “bravo” for “bus”, “big”, or “bayad” (fee). Using a single phonetic alphabet code to refer to many words may lead to misunderstanding among the FX drivers. But, it is worth noting that even these codes are polysemic, the FX drivers can still identify the dominant meaning or preferred meaning of the code that is being used in the conversation. According to the drivers, they do not misunderstand the other drivers because they can understand the codes they use based on the context of their conversations. It only goes to show that they must have a full understanding of the context in which the codes are used. Because if they do not have, they may have different interpretation of the message that is being communicated.

#### 4.1.3 Jargons

Since most of the FX drivers learned the numerical and alphabetic codes informally from other drivers, not all of these codes are known to their members. Because of this, they have developed their own English jargons in addition to their codes. Of these jargons that they have developed, some have the same meaning with the numerical codes such as “volume” for “53” which also means heavy traffic. According to the drivers, new jargons are developed and used because they are trying to adjust to the drivers who do not know all the codes.

The meanings of some of the English jargons they use may be obvious in context, but they are still specific to the UV Express route studied in this paper. The FX drivers of other UV Express route may use the same terms, but these may mean different things to them. Here are the jargons listed by the FX drivers.

Backdoor	-	alternative route
Double Time	-	hurry up

Eyeball	-	see / look for
Harry Potter	-	highway patrol
Matic (automatic)	-	clear / continuous
Monitor	-	update / observe
Sniper	-	traffic enforcer / speed limit officer
Titanic	-	bus
Touchdown	-	drop off
Volume	-	heavy traffic / crowded

#### 4.1.4 Landmark, group of people, and organization jargons

The FX drivers also use jargons for landmarks, group of people, or organizations. It can be noticed that these jargons have to do with the landmarks and organizations to which they are assigned. They even have explanations to the jargons they assign to specific landmarks, group of people, or organizations. For example, for the landmark “Veterans Memorial Medical Center”, they use the code “16 ni Gloria”, 16 means problem in the 10 codes. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was in hospital arrest in this hospital. This only means that when they assign codes, these codes make sense to them, so that they would remember the codes easily. They even make fun of the codes sometimes as they assign codes to them. Below are the jargons that were identified.

16 ni Erap (Erap’s 16)	-	Sandiganbayan
16 ni Gloria (Gloria’s 16)	-	Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC)
19/ Alpha 2	-	TriNoma Mall (Terminal 2)
54	-	Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue (EDSA)
76 / Alpha 1 / Robina	-	Robinson’s Novaliches (Terminal 1)
Apat na Letra (4 Letters)	-	Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA)
Baga (Lungs)	-	Lung Center
Bloke	-	SM North EDSA (The Block)
Driver ni Hellboy (Hellboy’s Driver)	-	Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center
Limang Letra (5 Letters)	-	Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB)
Litex	-	Lolit
Malaking Bilog (Big Circle)	-	Quezon Memorial Circle
Maliit na Bilog (Small Circle)	-	Doña Carmen Rotunda
Menggay	-	Manggahan
NLEX / Mayaman (Rich)	-	North Avenue
Pam-Pam	-	Philippine Coconut Authority (PhilCoA)
Purong Ginto	-	PureGold
Queen Alpha / Mahirap (Poor)	-	Quezon Avenue
Rivermaya	-	Riverside
Rowena	-	Regalado
Tatlong Letra (3 Letters)	-	Land Transportation Office (LTO)
Teresa	-	Ayala Fairview Terraces

Usually, when one driver use or assign a new code or jargon, the other drivers will also use it until it becomes known to all of them. It will become permanent in the communication system and will be adopted by their new drivers. But, there are also codes and jargons that are prescribed by the transport administration. During meetings, they decide on the

codes or jargons that they will assign to certain people, landmarks, organizations and even confidential matters such as transport security and driving violations. According to the drivers, they change some of their codes and jargons when needed. When their codes and jargons for confidential matters become too obvious to their passengers or when their radio frequency is joined by unknown users such as policemen and traffic enforcers, they change their codes and jargons to maintain their confidentiality.

The relationship between the codes and jargons and their meanings can be classified using Peirce's 3 kinds of signs namely symbolic, iconic, or indexical (Sebeok, 2001). All the codes and some of the jargons and the meanings assigned to them are symbolic because they have relationship that is purely arbitrary or they do not show direct resemblance to one another. (e.g. "Juliet" for jeep and "02" for location). There are also jargons that are iconic because they resembles the concept they stand for (e.g. "big circle" for Quezon Memorial Circle because it is a big rotunda). Aside from that, some of the jargons and their meanings are indexical because they show an existential or causal relationship based on the occurrence of co-presence within their context (e.g. "backdoor" for alternative route).

Having discussed all these, we can see that the FX drivers' communication system includes a rich mixture of numerical and alphabet codes and jargons. Now that we have identified them, we shall identify their functions in the next part of the analysis.

## ***4.2 The Functions of the Codes and Jargons***

The result shows that the codes and jargons of the FX drivers serve them a number of purposes. They deal with the problems they face on the road using these specialized codes. Specifically, these codes and jargons help them in monitoring traffic situations, informing each other about passenger location for pick-up, avoiding heavy traffic, providing alternate routes, giving way to each other, giving warning, and even talking about personal matters.

The functions of the codes and jargons are discussed below through the extracts from the recorded radio conversations among the FX drivers. Only the salient parts of the recordings were extracted to represent the functions identified. Refer to the list of codes and jargons provided below each extract to understand the sample conversations.

### *4.2.1 Monitoring traffic situation*

The codes and jargons are commonly used by the FX drivers to monitor traffic situations. According to the drivers, they do these so that they can think of another route ahead of time in case there are traffic problems along their way. In the extract below, we can see how the drivers communicate to one another to know the traffic situations along their way.

Extract 1

*D4: 76 monitor.*

*D1: (inaudible)*

*D4: Oy, Rolly! Saan ka ba, Rolly?*

*(Hey, Rolly! Where are you, Rolly?)*

*D1: (inaudible)*

*D4: Eh kilo ba pa 76 natin? Copy na?*

*(Is going to 76 kilo? Have you copied?)*

*D1: Kilo na. Copy?*

*(It is kilo already. Do you copy?)*

*D4: Eh TriNoma?*

*(How about TriNoma?)*

*D1: TriNoma? Matic. Copy mo?*

*(TriNoma? It is matic. Do you copy?)*

D4: 54?

D1: *Eh andito pa ako. 14 to 7. Copy mo?*  
(*I am still here. 14 to 7. Do you copy?*)

D4: *Eh pag daan mo kanina?*  
(*How about when you took it earlier?*)

D1: (*inaudible*)

D4: *Ok na. Matic matic mo ko ah.*  
(*Okay, You matic matic me.*)

Codes and Jargons:

76: *Robinson's Novaliches (terminal 1)*

Kilo: *Okay*

54: *Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue (EDSA)*

14: *Avail/get/pick up*

7: *Sign Off*

14 to 7: *Getting passenger to engage*

This shows how the two drivers help each other by providing traffic information. We can see here how Driver 1 asks the other drivers about the traffic situation in each of the route that he will take. This is his way of making sure that he will take the fastest and easiest route. He said, "Nagmomonitor para aware kami. Mas madali ang byahe kapag alam namin yung dadaanan" (We monitor, so that we are aware. Our trip is easier if we know our way).

#### 4.2.2 Informing about passenger location for pick-up

FX drivers also use their codes and jargons to tell each other about the location of passengers. In case that there are passengers, but their cars are already full, they will inform the other drivers about the location of these passengers, so that the drivers who are near and on the way can pick them up. They even talk about who is going to pick them up in case more than one driver is available. In the following extracts, we can see how the codes and jargons of the FX drivers are used in helping each other to get or pick up passengers.

Extract 2

D3: *Ay madaming tango diyan sa Pam-pam ha.*  
(*There are many passengers in Pam-pam*)

D4: *Wala eh puno na eh.*  
(*No, It is full already.*)

D3: *Puno ka na Bry?*  
(*Are you full Bry?*)

Codes and Jargons:

Tango: *person (tao) / passenger*

Pam-pam: *Philippine Coconut Authority (PhilCoA)*

Extract 3

D1: *24 14 24*

D2: *Oh, ako na kukuha.*  
(*Oh, I will be the one to pick them up.*)

D3: *Oh 62? 62?*

D2: *Go ahead*

D3: *Pa 19 ka na? Ang bilis mo pala nakaalis ng Mike Romeo [Tango]. Loko na. Sabi mo*

*umayaw ka?*

*(Are you going to 19 already? You left Mike Romeo [Tango] quickly. You said you reject it?)*

*D2: Eh dulo di puno.*

*(My vehicle is not fully loaded.)*

*D3: Tinitignan lang kita kung aayaw ka ako sana.*

*(I am just testing you if you are going to reject. I will be the one to pick them up.)*

*D2: Pag ganitong nagahahabol ng oras hindi pwedeng ayawan.*

*(When you are chasing the time, you cannot reject them.)*

Codes and Jargons:

*24: last two digits of the plate number of driver 2*

*62: last two digits of the plate number of driver 1*

*14: Avail / get / pick up*

*19: TriNoma Mall (Terminal 2)*

*Mike Romeo Tango: MRT*

In extract 2, we can see how Driver 1 use their codes and jargons to inform the other drivers about the presence of many passengers in a certain area. While in extract 3, we can see how the drivers talk about who is going to pick up the passengers. There are two UV express vehicles where the passengers are located. Driver 3 is behind Driver 2, and obviously, Driver 3 only waited for Driver 2 to pick up the passengers. If Driver 2 did not tell that he will be the one to pick- up the passengers, Driver 3 would have tried to pick them up. We can see here that the drivers are giving way to one another to help them increase their income through the use of their codes and jargons.

#### *4.2.3 Avoiding heavy traffic and providing alternate route*

One function of the codes and jargons used by the FX drivers is that they help them avoid heavy traffic. According to them, it is actually the most important function that really benefits them. Once the FX drivers are stuck or see a heavy traffic, they use their codes and jargons not only to inform the other drivers about it but also to suggest alternate routes that the other drivers can take. This is shown in the extract below.

Extract 4

*D2: Saan tayo dadaan? PDEA? Steve nag PDEA ka?*

*(Which road are we going to take? PDEA? Steve did you take PDEA?)*

*D1: 74, kilo mahirap*

*(74, the difficult is kilo.)*

*D2: Eh yung pagliko?*

*(How about when you turn?)*

*D1: Kilo na, tinanggal na yung ano, tinanggal na yung 50 copy niyo?*

*(Kilo, 50 have been removed. Do you copy?)*

*D2: Eh hindi nga. yung pagliko nga? Yung pagliko mo?*

*(No, how about when you turn? How about when you turn?)*

*D1: Eh teka hindi pa. Kakatawid ko pa lang eh. Eh subukan niyo mag PDEA.*

*(Wait, not yet. I have just crossed. Try to take PDEA. )*

*D2: Eh yung pagliko ng 54?*

*(How about when you turn to 54?)*

*D1: Teka lang teka lang. Dito pa lang ako sa kalahati eh.*

*(Wait, wait. I'm halfway there.)*

D2: *Para alam na namin ni Brian kung saan kami dadaan.*

*(So that Brian and I know what to take.)*

D1: *Oh kilo lang kilo lang to. Copy niyo? Op teka lang volume pala. Haha*

*(Kilo, Kilo. Do you copy? Oh wait, it is volume. Haha)*

D2: *Volume ba?*

*(Is it volume?)*

D1: *Volume pag kanan. Hindi naman masyadong malapot. Dito na ako sa ano oh sa labasan ng Sipdings. Mag PDEA na lang kayo.*

*(It is volume when you turn, but it is not that thick. I am already here at Sipdings exit. Take PDEA.)*

Codes and Jargons:

74: *last two digits of the plate number of driver 2*

Kilo: *Okay*

50: *Accident*

54: *Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue (EDSA)*

Volume: *heavy traffic / crowded*

Aside from showing how the drivers monitor the traffic situation in an area, the extract above also shows how the drivers use their codes and jargons to suggest alternate routes. There was a car accident on the road they are usually taking, so the drivers are deciding on what road or route to take. In this case, there was a driver who already took the road, the drivers were asking him if there is still heavy traffic on that road. He suggested to the drivers to take another road because the road he took seems difficult to pass.

#### 4.2.4 Giving way

The FX drivers also use their codes and jargons in giving way to each other or convoying each other when taking alternate routes during heavy traffics. According to the drivers, it is easier for them to get through heavy traffics if they convoy each other or give way to the other drivers. One driver said, “Kasi, ma’am, pag naguusap kami mas madali humanap ng daan. Mas madali sumingit kasi pwede ko na lang sundan yung nasa unahan kong driver” (Because, ma’am, when we communicate, it is easier for us to find a way. It is easier for us to enter because I can just follow the driver in front of me). We may see this function in the sample conversation below.

Extract 5

D1: *Bry? 20 mo Bry?*

*(Bry? What is your 20, Bry?)*

D4: *(inaudible)*

D1: *Ano? 23 ka ng ano?*

*(What? You are 23 of what??)*

D4: *(inaudible)*

D1: *Oh may papasok ba andito ko sa kaliwa.*

*(Oh, is there someone who is going to enter? I am here at the left side.)*

D4: *Sige muna. Teka lang eyebal eyeballin mo lang ako at magkkita tayo mamaya*

*(Okay, wait. Just eyeball me and we will see each other)*

D1: *Double time ka tatlong 45 na lang makakapasok na ko.*

*(You double time. Only three 45 ahead and I will enter already)*

D4: *Dito na ko, Steve. Teka lang.*

*(I am here already, Steve. Wait)*

- D1: Ano Bry?*  
*(What is up Bry?)*
- D4: Sige mauna ka, Steve. Di kita maeyeball eh.*  
*(Okay, you go first. I cannot eyeball you.)*
- D1: Dito na ako sa may pinakasagad sa may Barrier*  
*(I am already here at the end of the barrier.)*
- D4: Steve monitor*
- D1: Oh ano na Bry?*  
*(Oh, what is up, Bry?)*
- D5: MRT pa lang.*  
*(I am still at MRT.)*
- D1: 23 na ako ng Landmark*  
*(I am 23 of Landmark.)*
- D5: Pasukin mo. gumawa ka na ng paraan.*  
*(Enter, you make a way.)*

Codes and Jargons:

*20: Exact location*

*23: Arrived at scene*

*Eyeball: see / look for*

*45: Vehicle / Mobile*

*Double time: hurry up*

*Monitor: update / observe*

Because of heavy traffic, the drivers are having a hard time entering the mall where they will drop off their passengers. Driver 1 is trying to wait for Driver 4, so he can convoy him and give him a way to the mall's entrance. Even though Driver 1 was not able to convoy Driver 4 because he was too far, we can still see in the extract how the drivers use their codes and jargons to give way to help each other get through heavy traffics.

#### 4.2.5 Giving warning

According to the drivers, their codes and jargons are also used to warn the other drivers about road scenarios especially when there are traffic enforcers who are up to catch traffic violators. In the extract below, we can see how an FX driver uses their codes and jargons to warn the other drivers about the presence of speed limit officers in a certain area.

#### Extract 6

- D1: Positive sniper. Copy nyo?*  
*(Positive sniper. Do you copy?)*
- D4: 20 mo King?*  
*(What is your 20 King?)*
- D1: Eh andito ako sa Lolit*  
*(I am here in Lolit)*
- D4: Sniper sa Lolit? James?*  
*(Is the sniper in Lolit?)*
- D1: Sniper sa maliit na bilog.*  
*(The sniper is in the small circle.)*
- D4: Copy na yan. Copy na yan.*  
*(Copy. Copy)*

Codes and Jargons:

*Sniper: speed limit officers*

*20: Exact location*

*Lolit: Litex*

*Maliit na bilog (small circle): Dona Carmen Rotunda*

It is evident in the conversation above how helpful the FX drivers' codes and jargons are for their job. The drivers were able to help each other not to be caught by the speed limit officers. However, this will cause them trouble if they do not keep their codes confidential. There is a need for the drivers to use codes and jargons that cannot be easily understood by others because if their frequency is joined by speed limit officers or traffic enforcers, the officers will know that they are actually giving hints to other drivers.

Obviously, if the drivers are warned ahead of time, the speed limit officers would not be able to catch the FX drivers who disobey traffic rules. The benefits of the codes and jargons used by the FX drivers is a disadvantage for the officers. When the drivers were asked about this matter, one said, "Eh syempre, ma'am. Bawas kita kasi kapag nahuli kami. Maganda din na nasasabihan kami para aware kami sa takbo namin." (Of course, ma'am. Our income will be lessen if we are caught. It is good that we are warned because we become aware of our speed). This proves that they will use any possible way to make their job on the road easy.

*4.2.6 Talking about personal matters*

The codes and jargons used by the FX drivers are not only used for providing information and for helping each other survive the difficulty they face on the road. It is surprising that they still use their codes even when talking about things that have not to do with their job such as personal matters. This is shown in the extract below.

Extract 7

*D3: Copy. Kakiwa't kanan yan tango. Kahit saan yan! Ha 24?*

*(Copy, There are tango left and right. Wherever! Right, 24?)*

*D1: Kaliwa't kanan yung binibigyan yan araw araw.*

*(He gives money to people, left and right, every day.)*

*D3: Naloko ka na.Teka.*

*(You are broken. Wait.)*

*D2: Kaliwa na lang 24.*

*(Only to the left, 24.)*

*D3: Nawala na yung kanan?*

*(Does the right disappear already?)*

*D2: Wala yung Alpha ko eh.*

*(My Alpha is not here.)*

*D3: Magulo ka! i-59 ko yang ano mo. . .*

*(You are a mess! I will 59 your. . .)*

*D2: Nasa bicol (Laugh)*

*(She is in Bicol.)*

Codes and Jargons:

*74: last two digits of the plate number of driver 2*

*Kilo: Okay*

*50: Accident*

*54: Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue (EDSA)*

*Volume: heavy traffic / crowded*

In this conversation, the drivers talk about the passengers who can be seen left and right. In this context, left and right means “everywhere” or “many”. But, the topic became personal when Driver 1 joked on Driver 2 who gives his income to his left and right. This time, the word right is used to refer to the legal wife and left to refer to the mistress of Driver 2. Driver 2 said that he gives his income only to his mistress because his alpha (asawa/wife) is in Bicol. Driver 3 joked that he is going to 59 (convoy/companion) the alpha of Driver 2. It is not stated in the extract, but when he is asked about what he means when he said it, Driver 3 said that he meant that he is going to accompany the wife of Driver 2 because Driver 2 is messing with her.

It is evident that they still use their codes when talking about personal or even sensitive matters. According to the drivers, they need to use these codes so that the passengers would not understand what they are talking about. “Nakakahiya kasi mag-usap ng ganung bagay. At least, pag may codes hindi nila kami niintindihan.” (It is shameful to talk about those things. At least, with our codes, they do not understand what we are talking about). According to the driver these personal conversations still help them because they do these whenever they are bored on the road and it makes their relationship with their co-drivers tight.

Having said all these, the codes and the jargons of the FX drivers are indeed helpful for them as they deal with the different problems they face in their job on the road.

## 5. Conclusion

The result shows that the FX drivers use a rich mixture of codes and jargons when communicating with each other through their two-way radios. They use some of the Radio ten-codes and adapted the NATO phonetic alphabet to refer to other words that begin with their assigned letters. Aside from these numerical and alphabet codes, they developed their own English jargons which includes jargons for landmarks, group of people, and organizations. These codes and jargons and their meanings demonstrate Saussure’s signifier-signified relationship. The codes and jargons are the signifier while the meaning or the concept they represent are the signified.

The study also reveals that the codes and jargons of the FX drivers may be viewed as an effective instrumental and communicative tool for the drivers. Specifically, these codes and jargons are used by the FX drivers in monitoring traffic situations, informing each other about passenger location for pick-up, providing alternate routes, avoiding heavy traffic, giving way to each other, giving warning, and even talking about personal matters.

This study also concludes the following:

1. The meanings that are represented by the code and jargons may change over time. Usually, the changes in meaning are made intentionally by the members of the group to protect the confidentiality of their communication system.
2. The phonetic alphabet codes are considered polysemic because they can have multiple meanings. Each phonetic alphabet code may be used to refer to any Filipino or English word that begins with the letter it is assigned to, e.g. “bravo” for “bus”, “big”, or “bayad” (fee).
3. The meaning of the codes and jargons and how they will be interpreted changes depending on the context in which they are used. Among the multiple meanings of the codes that are being used, the drivers can identify the dominant or preferred meaning these codes based on the context of drivers’ conversation.
4. The codes and the jargons are mostly learned through exposure. Drivers usually adopt the terms as the other members of the group use them. The drivers do not undergo specific program or training to learn these codes and jargons.
5. The codes and the jargons may be assigned by the members of the group. When one driver use or assign a new code or jargon, the other drivers will also use it until it

becomes known to all of them. But, there are also codes and jargons that are prescribed by the transport administration.

6. The codes and jargons and their meanings may be symbolic, iconic, or indexical. All the codes and some of the jargons and the meanings assigned to them are symbolic because they have relationship that is purely arbitrary (e.g. “Juliet” for jeep and “02” for location). There are also jargons that are iconic because they resembles the concept they stand for (e.g. “big circle” for Quezon Memorial Circle because it is a big rotunda). Aside from that, some of the jargons and their meanings are indexical because they show an existential or causal relationship based on the occurrence of co-presence within a particular context (e.g. “backdoor” for alternative route).

Since this study reveals the rich system of communication of the FX drivers, there are still possible areas of study that can be looked at. First, researchers may specifically look at the word formation processes of the codes and jargons that the FX drivers use. Second, researchers may also look at the FX drivers’ patterns of meaning making. We can notice in the result of this study that the drivers have their own way of phrasing or combining the codes and jargons to create another meaning. Third, researchers may also look at how the drivers, using their codes and jargons, create their social identities within and outside their occupational class. Finally, researchers may also look at the jargons and codes used by other transport groups and compare them with the jargons and codes identified in this paper.

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**Appendix A. Ten-Codes**

10-0 Caution / Safe tracking	10-49 Traffic situation	10-99 Home / House
10-1 Poor signal	10-50 Accident	10-100 Office / Place of work
10-2 Loud and clear	10-51 Wrecker needed	10-101 Statement of account
10-3 Slow down / Slowly	10-52 Ambulance needed	10-102 Treasurer / Collection
10-4 Roger / Positive	10-53 Heavy traffic	10-103 Money / Cash / Check
10-5 Relay message	10-54 Investigator	10-104 Change frequency
10-6 Busy	10-55 Electric power	10-105 Reactivated / Mechanic
10-7 Signing off	10-56 Intoxicated person	10-106 Modulation going on
10-8 Monitor	10-57 Hit and run	10-107 Antenna
10-9 Repeat message	10-58 To direct road traffic	10-108 Radio License
10-10 Over and out	10-59 Companion	10-109 Uniform / Attire
10-11 Inquire / ask / Query	10-60 Hospital	10-110 Equipment
10-12 Standby / Wait	10-61 Doctors	10-111 Portable Radio
10-13 Road condition	10-62 Medicines	10-112 Base / Mobile Radio
10-14 Avail / Get	10-63 Assignment completed	10-113 Booster / Amplifier
10-15 Response / Answer /	10-64 Message / Traffic	10-114 Power supply
10-16 Problem / Trouble	10-65 Assignment / tasks	10-115 Battery pack
10-17 Request / Please / Kindly	10-66 Necessary / Needed	10-116 Repeater
10-18 Record / Log / List	10-67 Male person	10-117 Computer
10-19 Come back/ Return	10-68 Deliver / Dispatch	10-118 Rotator
10-20 Exact location	10-69 Received message	10-119 Coax cable
10-21 Call by telephone	10-70 Fire alarm	10-120 Gunshot
10-22 Disregard / Cancel	10-71 Nature and size of fire	10-121 Heart attack
10-23 Arrived at scene	10-72 Demonstration / Rally	10-122 CVA (stroke)
10-24 Follow-up	10-73 Fire trucks	10-123 Fracture
10-25 Meeting / Eyeball	10-74 Negative	10-124 Bleeding / Delivery
10-26 Subject / Victim /	10-75 Permission to contact	10-125 Hyper Emergency
10-27 Change frequency	10-76 Engaging / Proceed to	10-126 IN patient
10-28 Plate no. of vehicle	10-77 Time of arrival	10-127 OUT Patient
10-29 Verify/Observe	10-78 Assistance needed	10-128 Operator
10-30 Water supply / H2O	10-79 Dead person	10-129 Son / Daughter
10-31 Approval/Result	10-80 Kidnapping case	10-130 Secretary
10-32 Armed / Man with gun	10-81 Car napping case	10-131 Relative / Employee
10-33 Emergency / Urgent	10-82 Prepare / Review	10-132 Driver
10-34 Crime in progress	10-83 Vehicle found	10-133 Wife / Husband
10-35 Red alert / Crime Alert	10-84 Est. time of departure	10-134 National officer
10-36 Correct time	10-85 Late	10-135 Regional officer /
10-37 Eat food / Reload / Fill	10-86 Missing person	10-136 NTC
10-38 Police / Military	10-87 Female	10-137 NBI Clearance
10-39 Hurry up / Use light- siren	10-88 Telephone No.	10-138 Police clearance
10-40 Roving	10-89 Person found	10-139 Necessary papers
10-41 Operatives / Members	10-90 Robbery / Theft	10-140 Organization's ID
10-42 Disengage / Cancel	10-91 Unnecessary use of radio	10-141 Organization's Base
10-43 Information / Status /	10-92 Anti-narcotics case	10-142 Thank you
10-44 Regards / Greetings	10-93 Address	10-143 I Love You
10-45 Vehicle / Mobile	10-94 Drag racing	10-144 Welcome
10-46 Assist motorist	10-95 Operation	
10-47 Crew needed /	10-96 Visitor / Jammer	
10-48 Excavation	10-97 Radio check	
	10-98 Call sign	

## **Appendix B. NATO Phonetic Alphabet**

A - Alpha  
B - Bravo  
C - Charlie  
D - Delta  
E - Echo  
F - Foxtrot  
G - Golf  
H - Hotel  
I - India  
J - Juliet  
K - Kilo  
L - Lima  
M - Mike  
N - November  
O - Oscar  
P - Papa  
Q - Quebec  
R - Romeo  
S - Sierra  
T - Tango  
U - Uniform  
V - Victor  
W - Whiskey  
X - X-ray  
Y - Yankee  
Z - Zulu