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# Development of a Bilingual Glossary of Technical Terms on Coffee Varieties Used by Coffee Farmers in Cavite, Philippines

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## Abstract

*This study aimed to develop a bilingual glossary of technical terminologies related to coffee varieties as identified and used by coffee farmers in Cavite. Surveys were conducted with 150 farmers, validated by 50 key informants from five coffee-farming towns. From an initial list of 68 terms sourced from World Coffee Research and the Philippine Coffee Board, plus 15 validator-suggested terms, 83 were considered for the survey; feedback led to the removal of 23, leaving 60 validated terms. Of these, Arabica, Organic coffee, Owner/originator, and Robusta were recognized across all locations, followed by coffee gold, defect, hard beans, Kopi Luwak, location, quality, resistant, and sour (vinegary). Results showed that 53% (48) of the terms were commonly used, while 47% (42) were rarely used, and 19 were deemed inappropriate, including aromatic, aromatized coffee, American coffee, aged coffee–Anejos, bitter, black beans, body, bold, bright, Brazil, cardamom, classification, clean, coffee gold, flavor, grading, Honduras, selection, and susceptible. The findings highlight the need to align technical language with farmers' usage to promote clearer communication. It was recommended that the glossary undergo further validation by coffee and language experts for cultural and technical accuracy, and that a digital format be developed for wider accessibility and more efficient knowledge sharing among coffee farmers.*

**Keywords:** *Bilingual Glossary, Coffee Varieties, Coffee Farming, Technical Terms, Coffee Farmers*

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## Introduction

Coffee is a global industry that continues flourishing in select regions while gradually fading in others (Ridder, 2023). Like other fields and industries, coffee has developed its own technical vocabulary or jargon, allowing for precise communication across the different stages of production and consumption (Carey, 2023). These terms, ranging from farming to brewing, serve as tools for clarity and as markers of group identity among farmers, baristas, and enthusiasts. According to Ferguson (1998), the use of specialized vocabulary within communities of practice often strengthens cultural identity and professional solidarity, underscoring the need to study such terminologies within their social context.

Cavite stands out in the Philippines as a province where coffee farming remains vibrant, reflecting its economic value and role in local identity. Amadeo, hailed as the Coffee Capital of the Philippines, is recognized not only for the number of coffee producers but also for its cultivation, processing, and marketing quality. Coffee in Cavite is not merely an agricultural product; it has become deeply interwoven with Caviteño culture, featuring prominently in community life, festivals, and heritage tourism (Calamaan, 2021). Studies highlight that agricultural practices such as coffee farming often intertwine with cultural rituals, values, and linguistic expressions (Sisante, 2020; Barretto-Tesoro, 2018). The specific terms and expressions used by Caviteño farmers, from naming coffee varieties, describing planting cycles, and processing methods, to brewing practices, reflect a living lexicon rooted in tradition and adaptation to global coffee culture.

However, despite its cultural and economic significance, documentation of Cavite's coffee lexicon remains partial. When recorded, these terms are often translated into English, stripping them of their cultural nuance and symbolic meaning (Carey, 2023). UNESCO (2003) emphasizes that local languages and terminologies form part of intangible cultural heritage, and their preservation is vital to maintaining cultural identity in an increasingly globalized economy. In this regard, compiling a glossary of Caviteño coffee terms enriches linguistic and cultural research and contributes to heritage conservation and local empowerment. In line with the broader objectives of the research program to which this study belongs, this work endeavors to uncover the role of coffee in Caviteño culture and the Filipino language by systematically documenting and analyzing local and technical terms, phrases, and expressions used by coffee farmers, particularly those referring to varieties. This effort highlights the intersection of language, livelihood, and cultural identity in Cavite, reaffirming coffee as both an agricultural product and a cultural symbol.

## Research Objectives

The development of the glossary of technical terms on coffee varieties followed the processes outlined by Larson (1984), Newel (1995), Manuila (1989), Hartman (2001), Ballena (2005), and Mojica (2008), ensuring both linguistic rigor and contextual accuracy. An initial list of coffee-related terms and their corresponding descriptions in English was compiled from credible sources such as the World Coffee Research and the Philippine Coffee Board, which served as a pre-survey instrument. This preliminary list was then reviewed, refined, and validated by a panel of three experts, two language specialists and one coffee industry expert, and key informants composed of coffee farmers. Based on their recommendations, a final set of terms was selected for inclusion in the survey. During the validation process, the meanings of each identified term were confirmed by participants, and local Caviteño terms that emerged through field interviews were integrated into the glossary to ensure cultural and linguistic relevance. To determine the glossary's level of acceptance, selected coffee farmers were asked to evaluate the final output using two key measures: frequency of use, rated on a five-point Likert scale (5–highly used; 4–used; 3–moderately used; 2–rarely used; 1–not used at all), and appropriateness of meaning, rated on a three-point scale (3–very appropriate; 2–appropriate; 1–inappropriate). The combination of expert validation, farmer input, and systematic evaluation ensured that the glossary was technically accurate and culturally grounded, making it a reliable resource for documenting the specialized lexicon of Cavite coffee farming.

## Methodology

### *Developing the Glossary of Technical Terms on Coffee Varieties*

Using the processes designed by Larson (1984), Newel (1995), Manuila (1989), Hartman (2001), Ballena (2005), and Mojica (2008), the bilingual glossary was developed and validated by three language and coffee experts and key informants (coffee farmers). The initial list of terms, including their descriptions in English, was gathered from the websites of World Coffee Research and the Philippine Coffee Board and served as a pre-survey instrument. The final list used in the survey consisted of terms selected and recommended by validators.

### *Validating the Glossary of Technical Terms on Coffee Varieties*

The participants gave meanings of the terms identified, and local terms were added to the final list. The final output's acceptance level was determined based on the evaluation results from selected coffee farmers. It was measured in terms of

frequency of use (5-highly used; 4-used; 3-moderately used; 2 rarely used; 1- not used at all) and appropriateness of meanings (3-very appropriate; 2- appropriate; 1-inappropriate).

## Results and Discussion

Participants from the five study locations identified similar equivalent words or meanings for the terms Arabica, organic coffee, Robusta, and yield. For them, Arabica is referred to as “*thin coffee*”; organic coffee means without fertilizer/manure/or chemicals; Robusta is known as coffee with fine or thin leaves; and yield is understood as harvest. Notably, when referring to Arabica, the definition focuses on the actual coffee bean, whereas for Robusta, it refers to the thinness of the coffee plant’s leaves. Meanwhile, Excelsa is referred to as thick or large coffee beans, and Kopi Luwak is known as “*kapeng alamid*” (civet coffee), except in the town of Silang, where the term Kopi Luwak is not used. In all towns except General Emilio Aguinaldo (Bailen), the term “*may kanya/may kanya ng lupa*” is used to refer to the owner/originator (coffee farmer or plantation owner). In Bailen, however, the word “*tenant*” or renter describes coffee farmers. According to the respondents from Indang, Amadeo, and Silang, the term soft bean means immature, raw, unripe, or defective coffee beans. The term sour (vinegary) has various meanings: sour-tasting (Indang), overripe-smelling beans (Amadeo), harvested prematurely (Silang), and ripe beans ready for processing (Bailen).

### *Level of Acceptance of Technical Terms Used by Coffee Farmers*

Data show that 48 out of 90 terms (53%) received a score of 4, corresponding to “*used*”. It suggests that coffee farmers are familiar with the terms and use them in their daily transactions with other coffee farmers, both for the globally accepted words and the local terms, corroborating the findings of De los Santos (2021) and Madrazzo et al. (2020).

Regarding appropriateness of meaning, 19 terms (21%) were found to have inappropriate definitions, which clearly suggests that these terms were not commonly used in the farmers’ everyday conversations about coffee varieties. These terms include aromatic, aromatized, American, aged coffee-Anejos, bitter, black beans, body, bold, bright, Brazil, cardamom, classification, clean, coffee gold, flavor, grading, Honduras, selection, and susceptible.

### *Bilingual Glossary of Technical Terms on Coffee Varieties*

Some of the globally known or used technical terms relating to coffee varieties identified and used by coffee farmers in Cavite, Philippines, and listed in the final output of this study are shown in Table I. It can be noted that the three popular coffee varieties, i.e., arabica, robusta, and excelsa, were given local counterparts that primarily describe the texture of the coffee bean pulp or the coffee leaves.

Table 1: Global Technical Terms on Coffee Varieties

No.	Technical Term	Local Term (Filipino/Tagalog)
1	Arabica	<i>Kapeng manipis</i>
2	Criollo tree	Cacao
3	Excelsa	<i>Makapal na kape</i>
4	Kopi luwak	<i>Kapeng alamid</i>
5	Robusta	<i>Kapeng manipis ang dahon</i>
6	Special coffee	<i>Primera</i>

Local terms, on the other hand, were also identified by the participants as shown in Table II. These terms were chosen based on their preponderance in the data consolidated from the five study sites.

Table 2: Local Terms on Coffee Varieties Used by Coffee Farmers in Cavite, Philippines

No.	Local Term	Definition/Meaning
1	<i>Bugnoy</i>	Over-ripe coffee beans
2	<i>Buko</i>	Young coffee cherry
3	<i>Laon</i>	Good quality of coffee beans suitable for breeding
4	<i>Mura</i>	Pre-mature coffee cherries
5	<i>Nabibingi</i>	A bad characteristic of coffee cherries: defective

No.			
	<i>Local Term</i>	<i>Definition/Meaning</i>	
6	<i>Palbog</i>	Bland or pale flavor of coffee	

## Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the coexistence of globally recognized technical terms and localized Caviteño terminologies in the coffee industry, underscoring the deep interconnection between agriculture, language, and culture. Across the five study locations, participants consistently identified equivalent local meanings for terms such as Arabica, Robusta, Excelsa, and Kopi Luwak, reflecting how farmers adapt international coffee classifications into vernacular expressions grounded in observable characteristics of the beans or plants. For instance, Arabica was described as *kapeng manipis* (thin coffee), focusing on the quality and delicacy of the bean. At the same time, Robusta was defined by the thinness of the leaves, and Excelsa as *makapal na kape* (thick or large beans). These associations emphasize the farmers' experiential and ecological knowledge, as their definitions draw from physical traits directly observable in the field. Similar observations were noted by De los Santos (2021) and Madrazzo et al. (2020), who found that farmers' terminologies often reflect functional and sensory attributes rather than abstract technical categories.

The study also revealed the cultural nuances embedded in coffee terminology. For example, while Kopi Luwak was universally recognized as *kapeng alamid*, this term was not used in Silang, suggesting local variation in language adoption. Moreover, distinctions in describing farm ownership, *may kanya/may kanya ng lupa* (land owner) in most towns versus *tenant* in Bailen, point to socio-cultural and economic differences shaping the language of coffee farming. It aligns with Ferguson's (1998) argument that specialized vocabulary reflects technical expertise, community identity, and local socio-economic relations.

Regarding acceptance and appropriateness, results indicated that more than half of the terms (53%) were categorized as "used," demonstrating that farmers are familiar with and employ them in everyday exchanges. It confirms the findings of De los Santos (2021), who emphasized that agricultural lexicons are living vocabularies sustained by daily practice. However, 21% of terms, such as aromatic, aged coffee (Anejos), and grading, were deemed inappropriate or not commonly used, highlighting a disconnect between global industry jargon and local practice. It suggests

that while Cavite farmers engage with coffee within global market frameworks, their linguistic system remains rooted in practical, localized descriptors that better reflect their realities.

The bilingual glossary produced by this study further illustrates how Caviteño farmers enrich global coffee discourse by infusing it with indigenous expressions. Local terms such as *bugnoy* (overripe beans), *buko* (young cherries), *laon* (breeding-quality beans), and *palbog* (bland flavor) provide insight into the farmers' embodied knowledge of crop quality and flavor profiles. These terms document linguistic diversity and serve as cultural markers of Cavite's coffee heritage. As UNESCO (2003) emphasizes, such vocabularies form part of intangible cultural heritage and must be safeguarded to preserve community identity in the face of globalization.

Therefore, the findings demonstrate that Cavite's coffee lexicon represents more than technical jargon; it encapsulates cultural knowledge, farming traditions, and socio-economic realities. By documenting these terms, the study contributes to linguistic preservation and recognition of coffee farming as a cultural practice that sustains identity and livelihood. Future research should examine how these localized terms can be promoted in education, tourism, and heritage branding, thereby ensuring continuity as living components of Caviteño culture.

## **Conclusion**

Coffee farmers in the province of Cavite use technical terms written in English, which are commonly used by coffee farmers globally alongside local counterparts. These terms generally share similar meanings among the farmers, indicating that specific groups like coffee farmers have unique jargon that they alone use and understand. Global technical terms related to coffee varieties are frequently used and understood appropriately by local farmers regardless of their language repertoire and proximal background. Although some terms were less accepted, farmers still find ways to use them to ensure meaningful and effective communication- especially by incorporating local terminology.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the bilingual glossary of terms is recommended for further validation by coffee and language experts to ensure its usefulness for Cavite coffee farmers. It may be digitalized as an educational material for the local coffee farmers, teachers, students, and researchers in agriculture-related programs, extension workers, coffee farmers' associations, and other local farming communities.

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