Language Group Specific Informational Reports

Produced by Graduate Students in the M.Ed. In TESL Program
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Language Group: Tagalog
Author: Holly Bedrosian

Program Contact Person: Nancy Cloud (ncloud@ric.edu)
TAGALOG:
AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE PHILIPPINES

Compiled & Presented by:
Holly Bedrosian
Rhode Island College
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Tagalog is an Austronesian language which serves as the basis for Filipino (Ager, 1998).

There are roughly 57 million speakers of Tagalog in the Philippines (Ager, 1998).

Tagalog is primarily spoken in parts of the Luzon island, Manila, Lubang, Marinduque, and parts of Mindoro (Ramos, 2002).

Tagalog speakers are also found in Canada, Guam, Midway Islands, Saudi Arabia and the UK (Ramos, 2002).

(http://sino.net/philippinetourist, 1994)
Tagalog used to be written in the Baybayin alphabet (which derives from South Indian scripts) (Ager, 1998)

( [http://www.omniglot.com](http://www.omniglot.com), 2010)

Tagalog is currently written using a Latin alphabet

A B K D E G H I L M N Ng O P R S T U W Y

a ba ka da e ga ha i la ma na nga o pa ra sa ta u wa ya

Tagalog is a phonetic language; letters and letter combinations essentially have the same pronunciation. (Transparent Language, 1991).
VOCABULARY

- Sanskrit, Arabic, Chinese, English and Spanish have influenced the vocabulary of Tagalog (Ager, 1998).
- There are some vocabulary words that sound very similar in English (sero=zero; bangko=bank; tiket=ticket) (Ramos, 2002).
- BEWARE! Some vocabulary words mean completely different things in Tagalog than English (at=and; ma=uncle or mister) (Ramos, 2002).
- [Link to how-to-say-basic-tagalog-phrases](http://www.wonderhowto.com/how-to-say-basic-tagalog-phrases-169672/)
MORPHOLOGY

- **Vowels** (Mckibbin, 1995).
  - Many Tagalog words end in vowels; very few end in consonants
  - When saying words in English, the final consonant is often deleted
  - There is often reduction of length in vowel pronunciation and/or misemphasis on vowel parts of words

- **Many words are monosyllabic** (Mckibbin, 1995).
  - Syllable misemphasis errors or syllable deleting
    - i.e. DI-versity (diversity).... Efunt (elephant)

- **Epenthesis**- adding -*uh* to the beginnings or ends of words (Mckibbin, 1995).
  - i.e. bookuh (book); bulack (black)
Sentence structure is completely different (Ager, 1998).
- Ex. “The bear is big” would translate to “Big the bear.”

Gender specific pronouns do not exist (i.e. he/she) (Ager, 1998).

Grammar consists of complex systems of verbal affixes that show a special relationship between the verb and a noun phrase in a sentence (Ramos, 2002).
- Ex. To show pluralism, the particle “mga” is used
  - "the child" is "ang bata"; "the children" would be "ang mga bata".
No gender distinction on nouns and pronouns (Mckibbin, 1995).
- Leads to misuse of pronouns

Little emphasis on articles (Ramos, 2002).
- This leads to over generalizing
  - i.e. He went the home.

Incorrect use of comparative adjectives (Mckibbin, 1995).
- i.e. This book is gooder than that

Verb tense can be problematic (Lightbrown & Spada, 2006).
- Ex. He didn’t went by himself
- I cook dinner yesterday
In many Philippine schools, children are taught to be respectful & passive. They are supposed to be quiet, not question the teacher, or express freely their thoughts (McKibbin, 1995).

- As a result, many native Tagalog speakers are not comfortable taking risks, don’t have ease expressing their thoughts (in writing or general) and do not actively participate in discussion
- Students have great difficulty growing accustomed to the informal language use in school

The most effective method of error correction is probably to teach rules since Philippine schools are very rule focused (Lightbrown & Spada, 2006).
Native Tagalog speakers have similar communication styles to those of various Asian language speakers (Ager, 2002).

- Teachers are regarded in the same manner as doctors; they are shown the upmost respect.
- Eye contact is seen as rudeness, which is why many students avert their eyes when speaking to an adult.
- Philippine schools DO NOT integrate boys with girls.
- The quiet, passive learning environment in Philippine schools result in native speakers who prefer to not do cooperative group work or read aloud in class.
- Parents are very uncomfortable with the openness of sex education in American schools; this is not a topic that is freely discussed in Philippine schools or homes.
Tagalog speakers are not usually animated, nor do they show much emotional expression (Mckibbin, 1995).

They usually speak softly and have difficulty being direct with questions and answers (Mckibbin, 1995).

Tagalog speakers are very aware of personal space and do not use body language to communicate (Mckibbin, 1995).
Using numbers is difficult because many native Tagalog speakers use numbers from Spanish and/or English (Ramos, 2002).

- Expressing the date is particularly difficult because of the different sentence structure from each language.

Consonant and vowel digraphs are difficult to master because there is no consonant/vowel distinction (Ager, 1998).

- Ex. Th, ch, ea, oi, ou

Some parents “believe that ESL classes are inferior to classes without these programs...” (McKibbin, 1995)

Much learning is done through rote drills and memorization in schools where Tagalog is spoken (Mckibbin, 1995).
Teachers should ease students into tasks that require opinion expression, judgment forming, or problem solving (Mckibbin, 1995).

Parents do not disagree openly or question teachers. (Mckibbin, 1995).

Parents say “yes” to show understanding, so it is important to ensure information is being clearly understood (Mckibbin, 1995).

It is sometimes considered “a disgrace to the family for parents to openly discuss a child or family related problem...” (Mckibbin, 1995).

Families often use gifts in exchange for professional services and feel offended if they are turned down. (Mckibbin, 1995).
Books


Internet Sites & Images


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