

Weighting and Sequencing English Tense-Aspect Modifications For Hiligaynon Speakers

(A Doctoral Dissertation)

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The purpose of this study was to evolve a pattern of weighting and sequencing English tense-aspect modifications for Hiligaynon speakers. Three more or less independent but complementary studies were involved: (a) a study of the errors committed in 20,124 verb occurrences in 1,100 compositions written by Hiligaynon students whose grade levels ranged from Grade IV through the freshman year of college; (b) a study of the functional load of English tense-aspect modifications from a variety of written and spoken sources, which included a corpus of 12,000 sentences from which 7,043 verb usages were sampled; and (c) a contrastive analysis of English tense-aspect modifications and their Hiligaynon equivalents.

On the basis of the findings in the above studies, the tense-aspect modifications were arranged in a sequence. This sequencing was based on (a) the difficulty of the items as revealed through the analysis of errors and the contrastive analysis, (b) the functional load of the tense-aspect modifications, and (c) certain pedagogical considerations. However, since the tense-aspect modifications as such would have been of very limited value to teachers of English as a second language in the Hiligaynon speech community, they were used in sentence patterns which were controlled for the kind, number of layers, and variety of noun-head modifications. The sequenced patterns illustrating the uses of the

tense-aspect modification formed the conclusion of the entire investigation.

The study revealed that in the preparation of materials for teaching English as a second language, both the results of a contrastive analysis of the native language, and those of a systematic tabulation of the learners' errors should be combined. It was found that the greater portion of the errors encountered in the students' compositions were due to the differences between the verb system of English and that of Hiligaynon; however, a number of errors could

not be explained in terms of these differences and were not, consequently, predictable. The coefficients of correlation between the difficulty ranks of the modifications in the error count and those in the contrastive analysis ranged from $\pm .70$ to $\pm .85$, which were significant at the 5% level. These coefficients of correlation had a predictive efficiency which ranges from 30% to 48% 'better than a mere guess.' This is the basis of the suggestion that both the results of a contrastive analysis and the tabulation of errors should be combined in the preparation of teaching materials.

This investigation has pointed to the need for similar studies in other categories of English, such as noun-head modifications, its pronoun system, the comparison of adjectives, prepositions, and word order so that a more realistic weighting and sequencing of these categories could be made for Hiligaynon speakers learning English.

... of ignorance & learning

... ignorance is a prison. It is slavery. Ignorance is dangerous. It robs people of life and joy. Learning means work, discipline and sacrifice, but without it a man cannot be free, is not truly living. Join your students in a glorious shared adventure in the discovery of truth.

Dr. Linnea A. Nelson, Director,
Teacher Training Division, Central
Philippine University.

From a speech delivered at a faculty meeting of the College of Engineering.