

THESIS ABSTRACTS

A STUDY OF THE COMPETENCE OF HILIGAYNON SIXTH-GRADE PUPILS IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE STRESS PATTERNS, OF PILIPINO WORDS WITH FALSE VISAYAN COGNATES¹

Ninfa G. Doronila

This study hopes to serve the general purpose of determining (1) whether it is true that similarities between Pilipino and the vernacular of a Philippine region could facilitate the study of Pilipino; and (2) what may be the probable causes of mispronunciation among elementary school children, particularly in the non-Tagalog areas.

This particular study was narrowed down to determining the competence of Hiligaynon (Visayan) sixth-grade pupils in the production of the stress patterns of Pilipino words which have false cognates in the vernacular (Hiligaynon).

Answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What Pilipino stress patterns are commonly missed by Hiligaynon sixth-grade pupils?
2. Who have greater percentage of errors in the production of Pilipino stress patterns, the

boys or the girls?

3. If there are outstanding differences in competence, to what may they be attributed?
4. Does mastery of Hiligaynon stress patterns facilitate or interfere with the learning of Pilipino by a Hiligaynon Visayan sixth-grade pupils? To what degree?

Twenty-four false cognates, put into eight groups of three words each, were used in the study. In the first phase of the study, the twenty-four test words were used in context form — the pupils were asked to read the answers to questions in Pilipino. These answers contained the most appropriate words. In the second testing, another group of sixth graders were asked to read the list of the same twenty-four false cognates, after they were told that those were Pilipino words.

In each of these tests a child who correctly produced sixteen out of

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the twenty-four test words, or 66 per cent, was considered as having mastered the stress patterns tested for. On the contrary, a child who produced less than two-thirds of the words correctly was considered as not having mastered the stress patterns.

In the first testing, the general findings showed that on the whole, all the word groups were not difficult for the sixth graders in Guimaras schools who participated in this study.

When the performance of each of the eight central schools on any one of the eight groups of false cognates was considered, certain specific words were found difficult by the pupils of some schools in the district.

When the performance of male and female sixth graders in Guimaras schools was compared, it was found that the males seemed to find the Pilipino false cognates more difficult than the females did.

The results of the second testing showed that three types of words, na- + root word, ka- + root word and na + root word + -an were considered difficult by the boys. Girls seemed to have no particular difficulty with any group.

When the performance of the different sections was compared, Section A had difficulty with ka- + root word type and the na- + root word type.

Section B had the same difficulties as Section A.

Section C had difficulty with each particular group of words.

It seems then that, when presented in appropriate context, false cognates in Pilipino did not pose difficulty for sixth graders in Guimaras schools. On the other hand, when false cognates were presented as a list of isolated items (in the subsidiary study), many of the items were considered difficult. Although the first test was administered at the end of the school year and the second was at the beginning of the same grade level, it is conjectured that the difference found could be due to the method of presentation of the test items rather than to learning that the first group had had after one year's work in Grade VI Pilipino.

Words which tended to be difficult were those whose Hiligaynon cognates were, by impression, very common in the speech situations of Hiligaynon children. The more used speech habits must have interfered more strongly with the acquisition of the second language.

The study tends to suggest that, for Pilipino false cognates to be learned effectively, the words should be used in meaningful (Pilipino) context. Also, extensive drills should be given in the teaching of Pilipino items which have, as cognates, vernacular items which are common in the speech of the learners.