

Tausug-English Dictionary: Kabtangan Iban Maana. (Also published as **Sulu Studies 4.**)
By IRENE HASSAN, NURHADAN HALUD, SEYMOUR ASHLEY, and LOIS ASHLEY.
Jolo, Sulu: Coordinated Investigation of Sulu Culture and Manila: Summer Institute of
Linguistics, 1975. Pp. XLII, 789.

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The *Tausug-English Dictionary* by Irene Hassan et al. provides a big boost to the effort of the government to establish better understanding and coordination with our Muslim brothers in the South. In this light, this dictionary is significant for its social value but it is also significant for its contribution to Philippine linguistics.

The Dictionary deserves commendation for being the first of its kind published in the Tausug language. It has a preliminary section and appendices that provide explanation about the structure of the language and the methodology in writing the dictionary. The sections referred to are those on orthography, alphabetization, explanatory notes, grammar notes, abbreviations, listing of birds, fish, sea shells, plants and, finally, an English index. The authors and the other people responsible for this dictionary should be congratulated for completing the collection and organization of this volume within the limited time of two years.

There are some points, however, where improvements can be made. These may be minor details but the suggested changes may add clarity to the work.

Symbol for Glottal Stop

The glottal stop is symbolized in two ways: zero (i.e. absence of a symbol) when intervocalic and an apostrophe in all other positions. Being counter to the principle of economy, the decision is justified by the authors on two grounds. The first is current usage and the second is related language use. The first reason given is good for Tausug in terms of stabilizing its orthography. But the second reason assumes that the language of the dictionary user is similar to Tausug or Tagalog wherein vowel sequences are always disrupted by glottal stops. In this sense, this dictionary may not be so useful to a user who intends to pursue detailed linguistic investigation and not only to list down meanings. For consistency and simplicity, I suggest that only one symbol be used for the glottal stop.

Diphthong Formation

In Section 7 (page 6a), an explanation is given regarding the symbolization of high vocoids. The explanation was considered necessary by the authors in view of the linguistic fact that all semi-vowels develop from high vocoids. This is all very neatly explained in the low and high vocoid combinations. But in both high vocoid combinations, the authors write: 'it seems best to treat the sequence as a single vowel-consonant sequence *uy* for *ui* . . . and *yu* for *iu*'. My opinion is that the formation of *uy* and *yu* is not a matter of choice to be made by a linguist but that it requires an analysis based on the phonological material.

In *ui*, *i* becomes non-syllabic, thus *uy*, but if *u* becomes non-syllabic, the result is *wi*. In the same way, if *u* is non-syllabic in *iu*, the combination becomes *iw*. I suggest that the generalized rule should state that when two high vowels are adjacent, the non-syllabic vocoid becomes a semi-vowel; *y* if the vocoid is *i* and *w* if the vocoid is *u*.

Use of Hyphen

In most grammar notes, a hyphen is used to indicate the position of a possible affix: -root for prefix, r-root for infix and root- for suffix. In this dictionary, the initial hyphen is used to indicate that the entry occurs only in an affixed form. In short, it is a bound morpheme. There should be a better notation than the use of the hyphen.

Word Stress Not Indicated

The stress of word entries is not indicated; in this sense, this dictionary falls short of one of the basic goals of dictionaries, which is to guide the user in realizing the phonological pattern of the language.

Borrowing

This dictionary does not distinguish between borrowed and native words. Some of the loan words are: *milikan* 'American' (page 409), *bumba* 'bomb' (106), *sakulati* 'chocolate' (478), *makina* 'machine' (376), *balbira* 'barber' (58), **gubnul* 'governor' (236).

In these words, the donor language is not indicated. In my opinion, such additional data is enlightening to a non-linguist and even more so for a linguist. To a non-linguist, an aspect of culture can be added interest. The Arabic culture by way of religious influence is noteworthy in some words like:

rajab — 'seventh month of the Arabic calendar having thirty days. It is characterized by the celebration of the Miradz, Muhammad's ascension into heaven'. (471).

rasul 'apostle, used to refer to the Prophet Muhammad' (472).

To a linguist, borrowing plays an important role in language analysis. Except for *gubnul* 'governor' and *ap'ap* 'white blotches on the skin', the rest of the words listed are undoubtedly borrowed because the concepts are not native to Philippine culture. But in *gubnul* 'governor' and *ap'ap* 'white blotches on the skin', the concepts are not foreign. The phonological structure is not unusual either, but there exists the possibility that these are borrowed; *gubnul* from 'governor' and *ap'ap* from the medicative solution *apap* used to cure *tinea flava*. This leaves the reader in a dilemma.

In an interview with two Tausug speakers, both acknowledge the etymological development of *gubnul* from 'governor'. For *ap'ap*, no other form for *tinea flava* is known although both informants are doubtful whether *ap'ap* is native to Tausug.

Model Used

Finally, I would like to make a comment on the tagmemic model which is used. In the first place, no attempt was made to explain the model. Related material could have been cited for further reference.

Secondly, for a reference book like a dictionary, the presentation of data should be understandable to readers for whom the book is intended. The authors of the dictionary do not mention any special group, but considering the features present, I suppose the non-linguist would find more use for it than the linguist. It is only the section on verb stem classification that a linguist can best profit from. But it should also be mentioned that every linguist can make full use of the data on verb stem classification. Only the tagmemicist or a semanticist can fully capture the generalizations. In this sense, the model used limits the full utilization of the data.