Contrastive Analysis of True and False Cognates in Filipino and Cuyonon
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Abstract

This research is a contrastive analysis of true and false cognates in Filipino and Cuyonon. It is based on the assumption that languages can be compared and the best teaching materials are based on the analysis of the native language and the target language. The study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To list the true and false cognates of Filipino and Cuyonon.
2. To compare, analyze and present the implications on teaching.
3. To illustrate by means of sample drills and lessons how the result of the analysis would be useful to teachers.

The words given or presented are roots, however, derivatives, reduplications, and variants of stress are included when they throw light on the comparison.

The basis of grouping cognate items is phonetic-semantic resemblance, which may be subdivided into the following layers:

1. Total phonetic-semantic resemblance, e.g. Filipino and Cuyonon kambing, goat.
2. Semantic and partial phonetic resemblance, e.g. Filipino and Cuyonon adlaw, day, sun.
3. Seemingly divergent phonetic-semantic resemblance which possibly appear far-fetched but which may be justified by further study, e.g. Filipino alin Cuyonon adin, which some of were drawn from the dictionary of San Juan (1974) and the researcher’s knowledge as a native speaker of Cuyonon.

The analysis, as a whole, shows that pronunciation is the problem of Cuyonon teachers and students in the study of Filipino. Sample lessons in phonetic drills are included as a guide to show how the study would be of help to language teachers.

I Introduction

Palawan is the third largest island in the Philippines. It is composed of 1,780 islets. Most of these are found in the Calamian group of islands in the North, Cuyo-Dumaran in the Northeast and Balabac-Bugsuk in the Southwest. It is a part of southern Tagalog Region, Region IV.

Cuyonon, the native language of Cuyo is spoken by more or less 88,284 citizens of Palawan.

Cuyo is the oldest town in Palawan. It was the second capital of the province after Taytay. This town is the point of origin of the most number of residents of other towns throughout Palawan. This group of islands is composed
of 45 small islets with an area of 50 square miles and is 156 miles away from the city of Puerto Princesa. Residents of Cuyo are called Cuyonon and speak the Cuyonon language.

However, at present, the province of Palawan is already inhabited by people with different cultures and languages like Tagalog, Visayan, Kapampangan and Ilokano among others, yet the Cuyonon are able to preserve their language as evidenced by a number of Cuyonon families who do not grant the needs of their children unless they express their demands in Cuyonon.

In the place where the researcher resides, 90% of the residents are Cuyonon.

II. Methodology

The researcher considers this study as a great contribution for the advancement of education in the province particularly in the field of linguistics.

The researcher was able to list down more or less 2,000 pairs of true and false cognates in Filipino and Cuyonon of which 699 were taken from San Juan’s dictionary and the rest from her knowledge as a native Cuyonon speaker.

True cognates are words which are similar in form, pronunciation and in meaning. False cognates are words which are similar in form and pronunciation but completely different in meaning.

The listed words are grouped into two. The first part is the true cognates and the second part is the false cognates. They were arranged in alphabetical order in Filipino and Cuyonon with correct pronunciation indicated in the phonemic transcription followed by the meaning in English.

III. Findings

Through thorough analysis and interpretation of the listed words, the following are the findings in true cognates.

1. There are words in Filipino and Cuyonon which are exactly the same in form, spelling, pronunciation and meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ex.</th>
<th>Filipino</th>
<th>Cuyonon</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/'Abril/</td>
<td>/'Abril/</td>
<td>‘April’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/'armas/</td>
<td>/'armas/</td>
<td>‘weapon’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/'bakyasa/</td>
<td>/'bakyasa/</td>
<td>‘wooden shoes’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. There are words in Filipino with a final sound of phoneme /h/ while in Cuyonon, it is a glottal stop /′/.  
   Ex. | Filipino | Cuyonon | Meaning  
   --- | --- | ---  
   /′aboh/ | /′abu′/ | ‘ash’  
   /′alima:ŋoh/ | /′alima:ŋ′/ | ‘crab’  
   /ba:lah/ | /bala′/ | ‘bullet’  

3. The initial and medial /h/ sound is deleted in most Cuyonon words.  
   Ex. | Filipino | Cuyonon | Meaning  
   --- | --- | ---  
   /′ami:han/ | /amyan/ | ‘east wind’  
   /′aŋ hit/ | /′aŋit/ | ‘repulsive body odor’  
   /hilaw/ | /′ilaw/ | ‘unripe, uncooked’  

4. There are words in Filipino with slight stress in the second to the last syllable while the same words in Cuyonon are not stressed.  
   Ex. | Filipino | Cuyonon | Meaning  
   --- | --- | ---  
   /a:gaw/ | /′agaw/ | ‘take by force’  
   /balu:tan/ | /balutan/ | ‘package’  
   /ba: ta′/ | /bata′/ | ‘child’  

5. The phoneme /i/, /o/ and /u/ in Filipino words become /’/ or the schwa sound in Cuyonon.  
   Ex. | Filipino | Cuyonon | Meaning  
   --- | --- | ---  
   /a:nim/ | /‘an′m/ | ‘six’  
   /aŋkin/ | /aŋk′n/ | ‘claim, usurp’  
   /′a: lon/ | /′ak′n/ | ‘small wave’  
   /gutm/ | /g′t′m/ | ‘hunger’  
   /kadyos/ | /kady′s/ | ‘pigeon pea’  

6. Filipino language has separate phoneme of /o/ and /u/ while in Cuyonon it is only the phoneme /u/. There are words spelled with O but the O is pronounced as /u/.  
   Ex. | Filipino | Cuyonon | Meaning  
   --- | --- | ---  
   abot /′abot/ | abot /abut/ | ‘reach, attain’  
   ampon /′ampon/ | ampon /ampun/ | ‘adopted’  
   bangko /bar′ko′/ | bangko /bar′ku′/ | ‘bench, bank’  
   kuko /kukoh/ | koko /kuku′/ | ‘finger/toe nails’  

7. The lateral /l/ in Filipino words becomes dental /r/ in Cuyonon.  
   Ex. | Filipino | Cuyonon | Meaning  
   --- | --- | ---  
   /′asu : kal/ | /asukar/ | ‘sugar’  
   /bali : ta′/ | /barita′/ | ‘news, information’  
   /′ilorŋ/ | /iruŋ/ | ‘nose’
8. The phoneme / r / in some Filipino words becomes / d / in Cuyonon.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ a:rəl /</td>
<td>/ adal /</td>
<td>‘study, learn’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ laga : ri /</td>
<td>/ lagadi /</td>
<td>‘saw’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ pa : ri /</td>
<td>/ padi /</td>
<td>‘priest’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. The phoneme / i / and some Filipino words becomes / u / in Cuyonon.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ binyag /</td>
<td>/ bunyag /</td>
<td>‘baptism’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ dilaw /</td>
<td>/ dulaw /</td>
<td>‘yellow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ sinaw /</td>
<td>/ surjaw /</td>
<td>‘vapor’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. There are some words in Filipino with a glottal stop / ’ / on the second to the last syllable, the same glottal stop is not found in Cuyonon.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ da ’ın /</td>
<td>/ dayn /</td>
<td>‘dried fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ su ’ot /</td>
<td>/ sut /</td>
<td>‘wear’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ ma ’is /</td>
<td>/ mays /</td>
<td>‘corn’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. There are more or less one hundred pairs of the listed words in which the phoneme / e / in Filipino becomes / i / in Cuyonon.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ be : ses /</td>
<td>/ bisis /</td>
<td>‘times, frequent’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ bute : te ‘ /</td>
<td>/ butiti ‘ /</td>
<td>‘puffer fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ ’edad /</td>
<td>/ ’idad /</td>
<td>‘age’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Some words in Cuyonon have an additional lateral / 1 / or syllable.

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<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ ba ‘on /</td>
<td>/ balun /</td>
<td>‘provision’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ sampu ’ /</td>
<td>/ sampulu ’ /</td>
<td>‘ten’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ tainجا /</td>
<td>/ taliجا /</td>
<td>‘ear’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. There are some words in Filipino with phoneme / y / that are cancelled in Cuyonon.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ Bye : rnes /</td>
<td>/ Birnis /</td>
<td>‘Friday’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ balye : nah /</td>
<td>/ balina ‘ /</td>
<td>‘whale’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ gye : rah /</td>
<td>/ gira ‘ /</td>
<td>‘war’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. Some Filipino words contain the consonant cluster / ts /, but the / t / is cancelled in Cuyonon and only / s / remains.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ mantsah /</td>
<td>/ mansa ‘ /</td>
<td>‘stain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ plantsah /</td>
<td>/ plansa ‘ /</td>
<td>‘iron, sheet’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ tsine : las /</td>
<td>/ sinilas /</td>
<td>‘slippers’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15. In the false cognates, there are two hundred thirty pairs listed. As mentioned earlier, they are similar in form and pronunciation but totally different in meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Cuyonon</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/laŋgam/</td>
<td>‘ants’</td>
<td>/laŋgam/</td>
<td>‘bird’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/haːpis/</td>
<td>‘sorrow, anguish’</td>
<td>/’apis/</td>
<td>‘fly’s eggs’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/makatiθ/</td>
<td>‘itchy’</td>
<td>/makatiθ/</td>
<td>‘ebb tide’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. Teaching implications

In the final analysis it was observed that Cuyonon teachers and students are having a hard time in the pronunciation of the target language, thus, to make the listed words meaningful, it could be printed into phonics flip charts for drill purposes before the start of any Filipino subject in all grade levels particularly in school and districts where Cuyonon speakers are still greater in number.

For the false cognates, it is a must for teachers and students to identify the right word to be used in Filipino which should not be confused with the native term.

Samples and phonics drill charts and lesson plans are presented in the study showing how the listed words could be given emphasis especially in the primary grade levels.

V. Conclusion

As a conclusion in the true cognates of Filipino and Cuyonon, the changing, canceling or adding of one or two phonemes in a word does not affect its meaning except the problem in pronunciation of some Cuyonon teachers and students.

On the false cognates, a rigid mastery of the right word to be used to refer to the right thing is required particularly of the Cuyonon speakers.
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This is Palawan : The New Frontier, 1969.


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