

# **Tagbanua Language in Irawan in the Midst of Globalization**

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the Tagbanua language as a potentially endangered language in Irawan alone. Focusing on the language attitude, language use and actual language proficiency of the Tagbanua inhabitants, the researcher was interested in determining how these may be affected by the respondents' characteristics such as age, sex, education and geographical location. Social factors such as intermarriage and stereotyping which may influence the perpetuation or decline of the language were also examined. The respondents included young and adult speakers from Sitio Iratag, Sitio Taga-ud and lowland Irawan. To determine the language attitude and language use of the respondents, the researcher administered a set of questionnaire. For actual language proficiency, two native speakers of Tagbanua were hired to do interviews with the respondents. The paper ends with an outlook of how the Tagbanua language can be maintained by its speakers.

## **1.Introduction**

A surge of interest in sociolinguistics has been taking place during the past decades. Among the focus of many studies from different parts of the world are language loss, language identity and language survival. Despite the tug of war between the value of bilingualism and the survival of minority languages, supporters of indigenous language survival remain very vocal in their call for the continuous widespread of the language. This is due to the fact that "the threat to linguistic resources is now recognized as a worldwide crisis" (Crawford, 1998, [http://our.worldcompuserve.com/homepages/JW\\_CRAWFORD/brj.htm](http://our.worldcompuserve.com/homepages/JW_CRAWFORD/brj.htm)). Krauss (1992, cited in Crawford, ) claimed that as many as half of the estimated 6,000 languages spoken on earth are considerably dying. As a response to this alarming phenomenon, several researches from abroad have rallied to save minority languages. One is that of Myhill (1998, <http://www.multilingual.matters.net/jmmd/020/jmmd0200034.htm>) Another still is that of Norris (2004) who explored the survival and maintenance of aboriginal languages in Canada, zeroing in on critical factor of language transmission through generations within the context of family and community. Likewise, the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival (AICLS) has been working with California Indians to reverse language loss within the people's communities, which is crucial in understanding both history and culture of the indigenous communities (<http://www.actaonline.org/grants-and-programs/TADT/20001-grants/AICL.htm>). But the largest sociolinguistic effort conducted (cited by Polome', 1982a:265, as cited by Quakenbush,1989), is the Survey of

Language Use and Language Teaching in Eastern Africa. Carried out from 1968 to 1971, it had been described as unparalleled in “size, impact, financial support, and manpower”.

In the Philippines, similar efforts have been conducted though maybe not in the same magnitude and scale. Even in Palawan, right here in the Philippines, efforts are ongoing.

Through the support of the Linguistic Society of the Philippines (LSP), many sociolinguistic efforts were given due recognition. The most notable is a large-scale sociolinguistic survey on language use and attitudes known as the Language Policy Survey conducted by the Language Study Center of the Philippine Normal University (PNC then) in 1968. A year after followed other sociolinguistic studies in some parts of the country.

In Palawan, some researches done were those by foreign linguists. One is that of Dr. John Stephen Quakenbush, from Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), who conducted a sociolinguistic survey of Agutaynen speakers in Palawan in 1989. Another researcher who had frequented the place these past years is Dr. James F. Eder, anthropology professor at Arizona State University. His valuable contribution is on Cuyuno language and culture, particularly the Cuyunon Ethnic Identity, which was published in the Journal of Asian Studies in August 2004. The most recent published research made in Palawan is entitled: “Central Tagbanua: A Philippine Language on the Brink of Extinction” by Robert Scebald (2004), a member of the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

Quakenbush (1989) noted the dearth of studies on the cultural communities despite the abundance of data on language use in the Philippines. Hence, Gonzales and Bautista, from Linguistic Society of the Philippines, recommended that future sociolinguistic surveys especially on the area of language proficiency be conducted.

In one research conducted at Palawan State University, students made use of interviews to determine how the Tagbanua residents of Sitio Iratag and Sitio Taga-ud in Barangay Irawan of the City of Puerto Princesa, do their request and responses in Tagbanua discourse. It was observed that the young respondents could hardly speak the Tagbanua language. Although it has not been established that Aborlan Tagbanua is an endangered language (since many Tagbanua communities in southern Palawan still speak it) this researcher considered the possibility of its extinction in Irawan alone, owing to some social factors such as education, age, intermarriage, language attitude and location. Thus, this research was undertaken.

This paper aimed to investigate the sociolinguistic factors affecting the use of the Tagbanua language in Irawan. Specifically, it sought to :

1. assess/determine the following
  - a. language attitude
  - b. language use
  - c. and actual Tagbanua language proficiency of the Tagbanua respondents across age, sex, location and education
2. determine the interrelationship of language attitude, use and proficiency

3. determine the possible effect of intermarriage and stereotyping on attitude of the respondents towards the Tagbanua language

### **1.1 Methodology**

This study made use of quantitative and qualitative approaches. It was undertaken for six months, starting July 2005 until the last week of December 2005. Respondents were composed of 38 minors (6-17 yrs old), 61 single and married adults (18 years and older) residents of Sitio Iratag, Sitio Taga-ud and lowland Irawan, who were of either mixed or pure Tagbanua ancestry.

Personal interviews to gather the data were divided into three stages:

Stage One-An initial interview was done in Tagalog in July 2005. The purpose of the interview was to establish camaraderie with the respondents, inquire about their language used at home and their perception about the Tagbanua language.

Stage Two- The second interview was conducted last November 2005 using the Tagbanua survey method patterned after Quackenbush's modified questionnaire. This contained 16 questions that aimed at determining language attitudes and language use.

Stage three- This interview conducted in December 2005 was done because the second interview proved unreliable in getting the respondents' language proficiency. To determine actual Tagbanua language proficiency, an interview by two native speakers of the Tagbanua language was conducted on a scale of 0 to 5, following the guidelines used by Quackenbush (1998).

The interviewers then made an independent evaluation for each respondent in order to compare respective ratings. In case of a mismatch, a final ranking would be decided by listening to the taped interview, discussing the respondent's performance in greater detail and arriving at a single rating.

Statistical treatments on the variables were made with the help of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Descriptive Statistics such as frequency and percentage and cross tabulations were also employed to determine relationships between two variables.

### **1.2 Results and Discussions**

The main findings of the study are presented in this section consisting of three main parts. The first part deals with language attitudes, which provides understanding of the next two parts, language use and language proficiency.

From the interviews, data on the four characteristics of the respondents such as sex, age, education and location, have been analyzed. Age refers to which of two age groups the respondent belongs-young respondents (6-17 years old) or adults (18 years and older). Education refers to whether the respondent has had any formal education categorized into elementary, secondary, and postsecondary level or none at all. Location refers to whether the respondent lives in Sitio Iratag, Sitio Taga-ud or lowland Irawan.

Wherever variables have been of direct significance to language attitude, language use and language proficiency, they are measured using the SPSS and chi square. Qualitative data are included to expand, confirm, or illustrate patterns evident in the quantitative data.

From Iratag, 40 samples of adult respondents, each representing one household, comprised 69% of the total number (58) of households. The 38 young respondents all came from Iratag. From Taga-ud were twelve households; eight samples comprising 67% were interviewed. From the lowland Irawan came thirteen respondents comprising 52% of the 25 Tagbanua households. These 25 households were former residents of Sitio Taga-ud in the past one to ten years. The young respondents were limited to Sitio Iratag because of these reasons: Firstly, between Sitio Iratag and Sitio Taga-ud, the former has the greater number of households and a greater number of young residents. Secondly, the children of the residents in Taga-ud are all 18 years and older (with the exception of one 15 and 11 years old and three younger than 5 years old) have families of their own and are now settled in lowland Irawan.

As to the educational level of 61 adult respondents, 2 had no formal education, 35 had schooling on the elementary level, 22 on the secondary level and two on the post-secondary level. As to sex, 26 (42.6%) of the total respondents are male and 35 (57.4%) are female.

On the part of the young respondents, 17 (45%) are male and 21 (55%) are female. 31 are elementary pupils and seven are secondary school students. Location is not considered a variable in young respondents' language attitude, use and proficiency because they all came from Iratag. As to the effect of age on attitude, use and proficiency, the adult respondents and the young respondents were compared.

### Language attitudes toward the Tagbanua language

To reflect the respondent's attitude toward the language, two questions were asked of the adult respondents: "What language do you like the most?" and "What language do you want your children to learn first?" Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents according to the language they like most against the language they prefer for their children.

Language respondents preferred for their children	Tagalog	Tagbanua	Both	Tagalog & Cuyunon	Total
Language respondent like most					
Tagalog	12 (80%)		3 (20%)		15 (24.6%)
Tagbanua	15 (36%)	16 (39%)	11(26)		42 (68.9%)
Both	3				3 (4.9%)
Tagalog& Cuyunon				1	1 (1.6%)
Total	30 (100%)	16 (100%)	14 100%)	1	61 (100%)

**Table 1. Distribution of language one likes most against language preferred for one's children.**

As reflected on the table, 15 (36%) of those who claim they like Tagbanua as a language do not prefer the same for their kids, while 3 (100%) of those who said they like both Tagbanua and Tagalog prefer only Tagalog for their kids. The most common reasons for this are: (1) for the children to communicate with non-Tagbanua speakers, and (2) Tagalog is useful/used more often. Preparing the children for school and the inability of the husband to speak Tagbanua language and incompetence were the least of the reasons given. The reasons given illustrate the dominance of Tagalog language in the life of these people. Even if the parents prefer the Tagbanua language for themselves, they hardly use it at home if it is in conflict with the language they prefer for their children. The researcher, in the course of her interview with some of the respondents whose language at home is purely Tagalog, learned that mothers believe it is in the best interest of the children if they learn Tagalog as a first language. For them, the kids should be taught the language used in school, and learning Tagbanua first might interfere with the learning of Tagalog. Most parents believe that Tagbanua is best learned when the children are older.

Language attitude	Education				Total
	None	Elementary	secondary	Post secondary	
Preferred Tagalog language only		3	12	1	16 (26%)
Positive toward Tagbanua language	2	33	9	1	45 (74%)
Total	2	36	21	2	61 (100%)

**Table 2 . Distribution of respondent’s language attitude with education as variable.**

As reflected in Table 2, thrice as many as the respondents have positive attitude toward the Tagbanua language. The figure is based on the responses of the interviewees to the first question “What language do you like most?”. The three interviewees who answered that they like both Tagbanua and Tagalog are classified among those who have positive attitude toward the Tagbanua language. Together with the 42 who liked Tagbanua language most, they make up 74% who have positive attitude toward the language. As can be noted, 33 (54%) of the respondents, whose attitude toward the Tagbanua language were positive, were of elementary level. It can be noted also that 12 (57%) of the respondents who were of the secondary level have no preference for the Tagbanua language. Chi square shows a 0.5 level of significance between education and language attitude.

**Table 3 shows the distribution of 16 respondents who liked Tagalog the most**

Reasons for preferring Tagalog	Frequency
1. Tagalog was learned first	1

2. I am not proficient in Tagbanua	4
3. Tagalog is husband's language	1
4. spouse is not proficient in the language	1
5. We are Filipinos	1
6. Tagalog is taught in school	1
7. I grew up using the language	2
8. Tagalog is easier to learn than Tagbanua	2
9. I can communicate with neighbors easily	1
10. I find Tagbanua race inferior to Tagalog and Cuyunon	1
11. I like Tagalog better than Tagbanua	1
Total	16 (100%)

Table 3. Distribution of respondents according to language attitude.

As shown above, respondents prefer Tagalog for many different reasons and they are almost evenly distributed except the four (4) who admitted that they are not proficient in the language. The one who asserted that Tagbanua race is inferior to Tagalog and Cuyunon was a Cuyunon herself. She was interviewed because the husband who is a Tagbanua was not around. Said respondent is among the 25 households who have established residence in the lowland Irawan. Another young adult who has a negative attitude toward the language maintained that he likes Tagalog better than Tagbanua, asserting that he is not interested in learning the language nor does he care for even if it dies. There was even one female adult who is a pure Tagbanua but refused to admit and be interviewed.

Language attitude	Location			
	Iratag	Taga-ud	Lowland Irawan	Total
Preferred Tagalog language only	8 (20%)	2 (25%)	6 (46%)	16 (26%)
Positive toward Tagbanua language	32 (80%)	6 (75%)	7 (54%)	45 (74%)
Total	40 (100%)	8 (100%)	13 (100%)	61 (100%)

Table 4. Distribution of respondents according to language attitude and location.

As can be seen, more respondents in each location have positive attitude toward the Tagbanua language other than those who prefer Tagalog only. Chi square finds no significant relationship between language attitude and location.

Among the young respondents, 29 (76%) have positive attitude toward the Tagbanua language while 9 (24%) have negative attitude.

Attitude	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	29	76%
1. likes to learn more of the Tagbanua language	21	
a. for socialization/communicate with other Tagbanua	18	
b. it is a beautiful language	2	
c. identifies with father/mother	1	
2. Is proud of his/her ancestry	4	
3. Does not want the language to die	3	
4. likes the language because it was learned first	1	
Negative	9	(24%)
1. Does not want to learn the language anymore		
a. parents don't teach the language to children nor encourage them to learn it	1	
2. Tagalog is the only language learned	2	
3. Tagalog is easier to learn	1	
4. Tagalog is used everyday	1	
5. It feels good to speak with others in Tagalog	1	
6. Tagalog is being taught in school	1	
7. I don't know how to speak Tagbanua	1	
8. Tagalog was learned first	1	

**Table 5. Distribution of the respondents according to their attitude toward the Tagbanua language.**

As shown on table 5, a little more than three fourth of the young respondents have positive attitude toward the Tagbanua language. In addition, it can be noted that children's desire to learn more of the language was motivated by the desire to identify with the community and to socialize with them. Those who have more preference for the Tagalog language do not necessarily have negative perception toward the Tagbanua language, but chose Tagalog because the communicative situations they engage in require its use. The researcher had noted stereotyping when she went to Irawan national High School to interview Tagbanua speakers. Some boys would tease some girls that they are Tagbanua and the latter would retort angrily looking deeply offended. One even refused to be interviewed because according to her, she is not a Tagbanua though most of her classmates say she is. It took some encouraging from the researcher before some of the respondents agreed to be interviewed. It was found that most of these high school respondents are low level proficient in Tagbanua language<sup>3</sup>.

## Language Use of the Tagbanua

To elicit response about the language use of the Tagbanuas, only two questions were given: *What language/s do you use at home?* and *How often do you use Tagbanua at home?* Tagbanua use Tagalog in any other communicative venues aside from home, when they communicate with non- Tagbanua speakers or even within ethnolinguistic groups. It seems that the home is the only place where the Tagbanua language can be nurtured and be learned by the younger members of the community. Table 6 presents distribution of the respondents according to language use and location.

Cross-tabulation of Language use and Location

Language used at home	Location			
	Iratag	Taga-ud	Lowland Irawan	Total
Tagalog language only	12 30%	2 25%	10 76.9%	24 39.3%
Tagbanua language only	13 32.5%	1 12.5%		14 23.0%
Both	15 37.5%	5 62.5%	3 23.1%	23 37.7%
Total	40 100%	8 (100%)	13 (100%)	61 100%

**Table 6. Distribution of respondents according to language used at home and location.**

It can be noted from the table that there is a remarkable decline in the use of Tagbanua language in the lowland Irawan. If the figures of language used at home in the different locations will be compared as a whole to the figures of language attitude, there is a difference of 13.3% between those who still use Tagbanua at home and those who use only Tagalog. In lowland Irawan alone, 46% have expressed preference for Tagalog only for language attitude but in the language used at home, 76.9% admitted they only use Tagalog at home. There is a remarkable 30% difference. The mismatch seems to imply that there is a tendency for the respondents to overstate their attitude toward the Tagbanua language and that positive attitude toward the language does not follow it would be used at home.

In the case of the Tagbanuas in lowland Irawan, it is understandable that since they have joined the mainstream, there would be a greater demand for the use of the Tagalog language outside the home though Tagbanua can still be spoken there. Most Tagbanua parents in lowland Irawan admitted that Tagbanua is used only when talking with Tagbanua visitors or relatives who speak the language. Most children never bother to learn the language and parents oftentimes feel it is unnecessary to teach it to their



children. Chi square establishes a significant relationship between language used at home and the location of the speaker.

Table 7 presents language used at home according to the ethnic background of the Tagbanua couples

Language at home	Tagalog	Tagbanua	Both	Tagbanua & Cuyunon	Total
Spouses' Ethnic Background					
Pure + pure	2	4	5	1	11
Mixed + mixed		1		1	2
Mixed + pure	4	4	7		15
Pure + non	9		4		13
Mixed + non	9	5	5		20
Total	24	14	21	2	61

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**Table 7. Distribution of language use at home according to the couple's ethnic background.**

It can be noted that between a pure and non-Tagbanua couples, more than twice the number of couples who speak both Tagbanua and Tagalog speak only Tagalog at home. Between a mixed and non-Tagbanua couple, 15% more use Tagalog at home than those who use Tagbanua. Overall, there are 33 cases of intermarriage among the respondents. 45% of them are males while the female are 55%. It was found that 40% of the couples whose male spouse is a non-Tagbanua tend to use Tagbanua at home, while 67% of the female spouse who is a non- Tagbanua tend to use Tagalog at home. Though the figures cannot be taken as conclusive, these suggest that in the case of intermarried couples in Irawan, female do not seem to assimilate the Tagbanua culture as easily as male does.

Tagbanua Use					
Mother tongue	Concomittant	Sometimes	Infrequent	None (Uses tagalog only)	Total
2 (5%)	5 (13%)	6 (16%)	4 (11%)	21 (55%)	38 (100%)

**Table 8 . Distribution of the young respondents according to the frequency of Tagbanua use**

As shown on the table, 45% of the young respondents admitted that Tagbanua is used in their home with the 4 using it rather infrequently. The greater majority have gravitated towards Tagalog. The young interviewees have illustrated that despite the positive attitude of the 76%, the 34% never really use Tagbanua at home.

Language Used At home	Location				
	None	elementary	secondary	Post secondary	Total
Use Tagalog language only	1	8	14	1	24 (39.3%)
Tagbanua only	0	13	1		14 (23.0%)
Both	1	15	6	1	23 (37.7%)
Total	2 (100%)	36(100%)	21 (100%)	2 (100%)	61 (100%)

**Table 9 shows frequency distribution of adult respondents according to education.**

As can be seen, only 92% of those who use Tagbanua only at home are elementary educated, while those who use both Tagbanua and Tagalog, 65% are elementary educated. Among the secondary level respondents, only 25% speak Tagbanua at home. This somehow implies less preference for the language as the educational level increases. Chi square finds a significant level of 0.05 between education and language use. Sex and age on the other hand, have no significant effect on language use.

#### Language Proficiency of the Tagbanuas

#### Crosstabulation of Sex and Language proficiency

Sex	Proficiency				Total
	0-no proficiency	Level 1-2 Low level proficiency	Level 3- intermediate proficiency	Level 4-5 High level proficiency	
Male	4 44.4%	0	2 15.4%	20 51.3%	26 42.6%
Female	5 55.6%	0	11 84.6%	19 48.7%	35

					57.4%
Total	9 100%	0	13 100%	39 100%	61 100%

**Table 10. Proficiency of the adult respondents in Tagbanua language by sex**

As clearly shown, 9 (15%) of the adult respondents have no proficiency in the language at all. It is remarkable that none of the respondents falls under low level proficiency, while 39 (64%) of the respondents are highly proficient in the language. No relationship, however, was found between sex and proficiency in the language.

Cross-tabulation of location and Language proficiency

Proficiency	Location			
	Iratag	Taga-ud	Lowland Irawan	Total
0 proficiency	5 12.5%	1 12.5%	3 23.1%	9 14.8%
Low level	0	0	0	0
Intermediate	8 20.0%		5 38.5%	13 21.3%
High proficiency	27 67.5%	7 87.5%	5 38.5%	39 63.9%
Total	40 100%	8 100%	13 100%	61 100%

**Table 11. Distribution of respondents according to proficiency by location**

As can be seen, 77% of the respondents in lowland Irawan are highly proficient in the language despite the fact that some of them have joined the non- Tagbanua speakers for almost ten years. Test on significance of location to proficiency finds no relationship between the two. Age, on the other hand, was found significant to proficiency.

Tagbanua use	Tagbanua Language Proficiency					Total
	0	1	2	3	4	

Mother tongue					2		2
Concomittant			3	2			5
Sometimes	1	4		1			6
Infrequent		4					4
None (Tagalog only)	14	5		2			21
Total	15	13	3	5	2		38

**Table 12. Distribution of young respondents according to proficiency and Tagbanua use.**

As illustrated on the table, two thirds of those who use only Tagalog at home have no proficiency in Tagbanua at all while the few who speak the language as mother tongue are highly proficient. Those who speak the Tagbanua language at home as often as Tagalog are between level 2 and level 3 proficient. This implies how important language used at home is in developing the language proficiency of the children. As to the five respondents who are level 1 proficient, though Tagalog is the only language spoken at home, data show that just because parents do not speak Tagbanua at home, the children will not eventually learn Tagbanua at all. In fact, according to these children, they have learned Tagbanua from listening to conversations of neighbors. Said children have positive attitude toward the tagbanua language. Test on significance finds relationship between language use and proficiency.

Interrelationship among language attitude, use and proficiency.

Language at home	Tagalog	Tagbanua	Both	Tagbanua & Cuyunon	Total
Language Preferred					
Tagalog	13	0	1	0	14
Tagbanua	7	14	20	2	44
Both	2		1		3
Tagalog & Cuyunon	1				1
Others					
Total	23	15	22	2	61

**Table 13. Distribution of respondents according to language attitude across language used at home.**

As can be seen, 72% of the respondents said they prefer to use the Tagbanua language at home, but in reality, only 48% use the language at home. The 24% difference between the language preferred (attitude) and the language used at home seem to suggest that there is a tendency for a speaker to overstate his/her preference for the Tagbanua language but may not really be using the same at home. To reflect the language attitude

of the interviewees, they were asked to give the language they prefer for themselves and the language they prefer for their children. It is remarkable that out of the thirteen (13) respondents who use only Tagalog at home, ten (10) came from the barangay site. The other four use Tagbanua and Tagalog at home and one claimed to use only Tagbanua at home.

As previously illustrated, positive language attitude does not follow that a language will be used at home. For the children, however, Tagbanua used at home is very significant in developing their proficiency

**Table 14. Percentage distribution of respondents according to attitude across language proficiency**

Language attitude	Proficiency				Total
	0 proficiency	Low level proficiency	Intermediate proficiency	High proficiency	
Preferred Tagalog language only	9 100%	0	4 30.8%	2 5.1%	15 24.6%
Positive toward Tagbanua language	0	0	9 69.2%	37 94.9%	46 75.4%
Total	9 100%	0	13 100%	39 100%	61 100%

**Table 14. Distribution of respondents according to language attitude across proficiency.**

As shown on table 11, not one from the respondents has positive attitude toward the language (0 or level 1 proficient. It can be noted that the highly proficient respondents are four times as many as the intermediate proficient. It can be noted, too, that out of the 15 respondents who have negative attitude toward Tagbanua, 9 are 0 proficient. Test on significance finds relationship between language attitude and proficiency. It is not conclusive whether it is the attitude that influences proficiency or vice versa, but it is likely that those who are proficient in the language will have positive attitude toward the language.

Based on the analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire and interviews, the researcher has arrived at the following conclusions:

Firstly, it is clear that Tagalog has taken the place of the Tagbanua language at home and has become the Tagbanua speakers' first vernacular. Owing to this, the Tagbanua language is considered an endangered language in Irawan, the fact that barely one fourth of the children know the language.

As was shown in the case of the Tagbanua in Irawan, positive attitude toward Tagbanua language does not follow that the language will be used at home and neither does it guarantee proficiency in the language. Despite the fact that 85% of the adults are between intermediate to high level proficient in the Tagbanua language, 61% only use the same at home. Since home is considered to be the language nest where children can learn the language at its best, if parents would choose not to speak the Tagbanua language at home, there would be less chances that it would be learned by their children. That is proven by the fact that the 20% of the young respondents who are intermediate and high level proficient in Tagbanua are those whose mother tongue is Tagbanua and those who use it at home as frequently as Tagalog.

Education and migration from the Tagbanua community to the mainstream society have undoubtedly debilitating effects on the respondents' attitude toward the Tagbanua language and education. Because of the constant exposure with the non-Tagbanua speakers, the respondents who may not have established a strong ties with the ingroup and their ancestral language have the tendency to identify more with the outgroup. Awareness of the low status which the non-Tagbanua speakers either directly or indirectly ascribed to the Tagbanua may discourage its speakers to speak or even learn the language; likewise, migration limits the demand for the use of the Tagbanua language as shown in the case of the Tagbanua in the lowland Irawan. These respondents being proficient in Tagalog will definitely prefer the same as they are surrounded by non-Tagbanua speakers. Again, the desire to belong might prompt them to refuse to admit their real identity (as was done by one who refused to be interviewed) or show unconcern for the language.

Though there was no established correlation of intermarriage and stereotyping on language attitude because of insufficient number of samples, the possible effect of the two on the attitude of the respondents toward the Tagbanua language cannot be neglected.

At the time of completing this paper, most of the handful of elders in Taga-ud have already been relocated and joined the non-Tagbanua speakers. With the present status of the language, the only hope for its survival, as it seems, lies in the hands of the Iratag residents. Firstly, if the adults and children alike will realize how significant their role is in perpetuating the language and out of that, a strong enthusiasm in speaking the Tagbanua language at home with their children and the other members of the community, there is still hope that this language will survive into the succeeding generations. Secondly, if these people would realize that they continue to aspire for their dreams, even live in the city, without losing their own culture and identity, and lastly, if the school would realize that love of national language and ethnic language are equally important in building nationalism and stress the negative effects of stereotyping in orienting their pupils, perhaps, the Tagbanua language will still survive into the succeeding generations, despite globalization.

## Endnotes

1. The primary purpose of the last interview was to see how well the Tagbanua interviewee can carry a conversation in Tagbanua language on different topics. This language proficiency interview was originally developed by the language training program of the U.S. Foreign Service institute, revised and adapted by Quakenbush (1989) for his sociolinguistic survey of Agutaynen speakers. The interview has three stages: (1) exploratory, (2) analytical, and (3) easing up. The first stage aims to put the interviewee at ease (e.g. "How are you?", "Where are you from?") The second stage is the most complex part of the interview in which the interviewer steers the conversation in different areas to test for knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, fluency, pronunciation, and comprehension. The third stage is the easing up in which a few simple questions are asked once again to reassure the interviewee that he has communicated successfully on at least some level. All the interviews were tape recorded.
2. The proficiency levels 0,1,2,3,4 and 5 characterize spoken language use. Each higher level implies control of the previous level's functions and accuracy. The designation 0+, 1+, 2+, etc., would be assigned when proficiency substantially exceeds one skill level but does not fully meet the criteria for the next level.

The actual language proficiency levels are described as follows:

Level 0- for respondent who basically has no proficiency in Tagbanua. May know isolated words or rehearsed phrases, but no real communicative ability in the language.

Level 1- is for survival Tagbanua. The respondent is able to satisfy routine travel needs and minimum courtesy requirements. Able to maintain very simple conversation on familiar topics. This proficiency level is indicated by slowed speech, repetition, paraphrase, or a combination of these to be understood. Similarly, the interviewer needs to strain to understand even simple statements or questions from a level 1 speaker.

Level 2- able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can understand and make self understood, although often with some difficulty. In more complex tasks, language usage generally disturbs the native speaker. Can handle with confidence but not with facility, most normal high-frequency social situations, including extensive, but casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family and autobiographical information. Controls simple grammatical constructions.

Level 3- is able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social and professional topics. Uses the language acceptably, but with some noticeable imperfections. Errors virtually never interfere with understanding and

rarely disturb the interviewer. The interviewee can effectively combine structure and vocabulary to combine meaning accurately. In face-to-face conversation with native Tagbanua speaking at a normal rate of speech, comprehension is quite complete. Rarely has to grope for a word when discussing topics of a particular interest. Has basic control of grammar.

Level 4- able to use the language fluently and accurately on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. Language is only very rarely a hindrance in performing any task. Speaks effortlessly and smoothly and is able to use the language with high degree of effectiveness, reliability, and precision for all purposes within the range of personal and professional experience. Can explain processes, defend a course of action, persuade, direct and discuss feelings and emotions in detail.

Level 5- has a speaking proficiency equivalent to a native speaker. There is complete fluency, along with complete breadth of vocabulary, idioms and colloquialism.

3. There are two elementary schools in Irawan but the researcher included only the data from Iratag Elementary School, where half of the students' population were Tagbanua. The respondents from Valentin Macasaet Memorial Elementary School were very few, most of whom are residents in the lowland Irawan and do not speak the Tagbanua language though one or both of their parents are Tagbanua (former residents of Taga-ud). Though the data from these pupils were not included because they were not subjected to the actual language proficiency interview owing to lack of time) it is worth mentioning that this is the group who according to the teacher would not want to be referred to as Tagbanua but "katutubo," and two pupils from here at least requested the interviewer not to divulge to their classmates their real identity for fear of being teased.

A good number of adult respondents, (two from council of elders) commented that many of the young Tagbanua are just too shy, even to the point of being ashamed to speak Tagbanua with adults when they are out in the market or meet them outside of Iratag. They added that the young speakers though fluent in the language would tend not to speak the language for they do not want the non-Tagbanua to know that they are Tagbanua.



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## Appendix 1 Biographical Data and Language Use Questionnaire

Republic of the Philippines  
**PALAWAN STATE UNIVERSITY**  
Puerto Princesa City

Pakikipanayam sa mga Residenteng Katutu  
Tagbanua ng Sitio \_\_\_\_\_

Petsa \_\_\_\_\_

Pangalan ng kinakapanayam (katutubo) \_\_\_\_\_ Edad \_\_\_\_\_ Lahing  
katutubo (e.g. Tagalog, Ilocano,

Tagbanua) \_\_\_\_\_ Relihiyon \_\_\_\_\_

Antas ng edukasyon \_\_\_\_\_ Tirahan \_\_\_\_\_ Unang  
lenguwaheng natutunan \_\_\_\_\_;

Ikalawang lenguahe \_\_\_\_\_ Lenguwahe/ mga lenguwaheng ginagamit sa bahay  
1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Gaano kadalas ginagamit ang salitang Tagbanua? (bilugan ang letra ng sagot) a. ito lang ang ginagamit sa bahay b. ginagamit madalas katulad ng Tagalog c. Ginagamit din

pero paminsan-minsan d. bihirang-bihira ginagamit e. di ginagamit sa bahay Bilang ng taong pinamalagi sa Tagaud/

Iratag \_\_\_\_\_ Pangalan ng  
kabiya \_\_\_\_\_ Edad \_\_\_\_\_

Lahing katutu \_\_\_\_\_ kabiya (e.g. Tagalog, Ilocano, Tagbanua) \_\_\_\_\_ Antas ng  
edukasyon \_\_\_\_\_ Bilang ng

taong pananatili sa lugar ng asawa Unang lenguwaheng natutunan \_\_\_\_\_; Ikalawang  
lenguwahe \_\_\_\_\_

Pangalan ng mga anak at iba pang impormasyon  
2<sup>nd</sup> Degree

3<sup>rd</sup> Degree  
(grandchildren of the  
interviewee) Write NA if not applicable

Pangalan, tirahan, edad at estado (binata/dalaga/me asawa, salitang	Marunong bang magsalita ang anak ng salitang	Pangalan ng kabiya ng anak (kung	Salitang ginagamit ng asawa sa bahay	Salitang ginagamit sa bahay	Pangalan ng mga apo (mula pangnanay	Pangalan ng napangasawa ng mga apo (itapat sa pangalan ng	Unang salitang natutunan ng asawa ng apo	Salita/mga salitang ginagamit sa bahay (ilagay

unang natutunan	Tagbanua? Oo o hindi? Gaano kadalasan ito gamitin?	me asawa)			hangang bunso at kanilang edad at estado	apo)		kung gaano kadalasan gamitin)
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								

## Appendix 2

### Tagbanua Language in Irawan in the Midst of Globalization

#### A. Biographical Data Form

Pangalan (Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Unang lengwahe ng ina (Mother's first language) \_\_\_\_\_

Unang lengwahe ng ama (Father's first language) \_\_\_\_\_

Unang lengwahe ng asawa (Spouse's first language) \_\_\_\_\_

Salitang kinagisnan (Language of childhood home) \_\_\_\_\_

Salitang ginagamit sa tahanan sa ngayon (Language of home now)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Petsa ng kapanganakan (Date of birth) \_\_\_\_\_

Lugar ng kapanganakan (Place of birth) \_\_\_\_\_

Tirahan sa kasalukuyan (Present Location) \_\_\_\_\_

Hanapbuhay (Occupation) \_\_\_\_\_

Kasarian (Sex) \_\_\_\_\_

Antas ng edukasyon (Education completed) \_\_\_\_\_

#### B. Language Attitude Questionnaire

1. Anong salita ang pinakagusto mong gamitin? Bakit?
2. Anong lengwahe ang gusto mong unang matutunan ng iyong mga anak? Bakit?
3. Sa palagay mo matututunan pa ba nila ang salitang katutubo? (itanong lang kung ang sagot sa tanong na nauna ay di sa salitang Tagbanua.)

### C. Language Use Questionnaire

1. Anong lengguahe ang ginagamit ninyo sa bahay?
2. Gumagamit ba kayo ng salitang Tagbanua sa bahay. (Itatanong lang kung di Tagbanua ang sagot sa unang tanong)
3. Gaano kadalas gamitin ang salitang Tagbanua sa bahay sa pakikipag-usap sa kasambahay?

### Appendix 3

#### Actual Tagbanua Language Proficiency Evaluator's Notes

Note: All questions were asked by the interviewer in Tagbanua language.  
Some sample questions for young respondents:

1. Uno'y inyong pagbuwatan para masuportahan e pagaadal me kat pang aldaw-aldaw meng gastos? (Ano ang inyong ginagawa upang masuportahan ng inyong pamilya ang iyonh pag-aaral?)
2. Unuka irog mo makatapos kat pagaaral? (Bakit gusto mong makatapos ng pag-aaral?)
3. Irog mo bang sito na lang pumirmi? Kaye? (Gusto mo bang doto na lang sa inyo pumirmi? Bakit?)
4. Kat unong paraan ka puwedeng makatabang sito't inyong lugar? (Sa anong paraan sa palagay mo makakatulong ka sa inyong lugar?)
5. Uno'y mga karanasan mo ka't buhay nga ega mo maglipatan? Puwede mo itultul? (Anong mga karanasan sa buhay mo and hindi mo malilimutan? Maari mo bang ikuwento?)

Some sample questions for adult Tagbanua speakers:

1. Siyo e mga pinakamatalik me mga iba-iba sito? (Sino ang itinuturing ninyong pinakamatalik na kaibigan dito?)
2. Anoy mga problema me nga magkaingkuwentro nga pirmi sitot Iratag/Taga-ud/Sentro? Uno'y pagbuwatan me para mapagaan ito? (Anu-ano ang mga suliraning kinakaharap ninyo madalas dito sa Iratag/Taga-ud/Sentro? Ano ang ginagawa ninyo para mapagaan ang mga problemang yun?)
4. En paampangen kamo kat adap et dakel mga tao, unong bagay e erog meng aten kanira? (Kung pagsasalitain kayo sa harap ng maraming tao, anong mga bagay ang gusto ninyong sabihin sa kanila?)

5. Magbasa ba kamo et diyaryo semangkaano? Uno'y maat me kat mga magpangyari kat ka bansa? Erog me ba e pamumuno ni Pres. Arroyo? (Nagbabasa ba kayo ng diyaryo paminsan minsan? Ano ang masasabi ninyo sa mga nangyayari sa paligid natin? Sa bansa? Gusto nyo ba ang pamumuno ni pres. Arroyo?)
6. May urot ba kamong mga kuwentong bayan nga taal na sito et Iratag/ Taga-ud? Puwede ba nameng pagnigan? (May mga kuwentong bayan ba kayong alam na taal doto sa inyo? Maari po ba ninyong ikuwento sa amin?)
7. Uno'y mga pangarap kamo kat buhay nga ereg meng matupad? Unoy mga problema? (Anong mga pangarap ninyo sa buhay na gusto nyong matupad? Anong mga hadlang dito?)

Questions adapted from Quakenbush's sample questions:

8. Magtrabaho ka pa ba kayte kat uma? (Did you ever worked in the ricefields?)
9. Puwede mo bang e-at et aken en uno'y mga pagbuwatan mo doon? (Can you explain in detail what you did there/)
10. Puwede mo bang e-at et aken et detalyado en uno'y pagbuwatem et mga sumusunod:  
(Can you describe in detail how to make)  
Pagpatindig et bahay? (build a house?)  
Managsida? (go fishing?)  
Linisan e seda? (clean a fish?)  
Wash clothes? (pagtalpok et badyo?)
11. Kaya mo bang ekuwento in detalye in papaano buwaten e:  
(Can you describe in detail how to make)  
kopras?  
tuba?  
basket?  
siopao?  
O en uno'y paborito mong pangain? (What's your favorite recipe?)



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