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On the Influence of English
on the Tagalog Language

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On the Influence of English on the Tagalog Language

BY CONSUELO JIMÉNEZ

To speak of the influence of one language upon another is to speak of the influence which one group of men exercises upon another such group of different speech. It need hardly be said that this influence presupposes contact of some kind, nor does it require any further explanation that, if such contact takes place under the distinct predominance of one group over the other in political, intellectual, or economic respect, the influence will be almost wholly one-sided.

These general considerations apply to the influence of English upon the Tagalog language. The ascendancy of the former in the Philippines began at the time when considerable bodies of men from both sides first came into contact after Dewey's victory in Manila Bay on May 1, 1898. This contact having now lasted, in ever increasing degree, for fully a quarter of a century, we may well pause a moment by the side of the road—so to speak—which the representatives of both peoples concerned have since then been traveling together, in order to review the changes wrought upon the speech of the younger wayfarer by his contact with the older traveling companion and guide.

A treatment of the question as to the degree in which the older comrade has been able to teach his language to his younger companion in substitution of the latter's native tongue, is not here attempted. I circumscribe my task to treating the influence of English on Tagalog as it expresses itself by the pre-

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sence in the latter of loan-words and colloquialisms taken from the former.

For a proper appraisal of my study I should make it clear that the collection of my material was made exclusively in Manila. While it thus cannot be claimed that all expressions listed by me are equally current in all parts of the Tagalog provinces, it should not be overlooked that the capital Manila acts as the intellectual distributing center in political, commercial, scholastic, and general social regard for the whole archipelago; that thruout the latter it has made Tagalog to a certain degree the leading native language; and that linguistic innovations begun at Manila are thus apt to find their way to quite remote districts.

The principal sources from which my material was drawn were:

- (a) the general native public of Manila;
- (b) the vernacular press ("Patnubay nang Bayan", "Taliba", "Liwayway");
- (c) student circles;
- (d) that part of the population of our city which is apt to be most heard on streets and busy places.

I have no doubt that from soldiers, mechanics, stevedores, and other special groups of people, not heard by me, more loan-words pertaining to their particular occupations could be recorded.

In laying the material so collected before the reader, I group the words under such headings as are naturally given by their import, or by the class of persons from whom they are most often heard. This arrangement, in which an occasional arbitrariness could not well be avoided, will show which special sides of Tagalog life have most felt the influence of English.

A few words of comment may here find place regarding the spelling of the loan-words.

As the stock of ~~words~~^{lexical} at the command of one language is rarely wholly congruent to that of another, so those who speak Tagalog, in taking over English words, have recourse to the usual expedient of substituting to the unwont foreign sounds those of their mother-tongue which most nearly approach the English ones. In other cases, the obstacle presented by a dif-

difficult combination of consonants is overcome by either eliding one of these, or by the interposition of a vowel. To this natural process, which from the standpoint of the foreign language is generally stigmatized as corruption, have to submit also those who have acquired a correct pronunciation of the foreign tongue but who do not wish to appear to their countrymen as affected. The sound-substitution, now, as well as all other phonetic changes which, as just mentioned, frequently characterize loan-words, find, of course, their reflection in the reproduction of such words by writing. In this connection it may be recalled that the first to put Tagalog orthography on a phonetic basis, freeing it from its former unnatural Spanish norms, were Dr. Pardo de Tavera and Dr. José Rizal, and it is but natural that the spelling of the loan-words collected by me should follow their precepts. Thus the diphthong *ay* sounds as *y* in Engl. *lye*; the diphthong *aw* as *ow* in Engl. *how*.

An accent has been employed by me only where the emphasis falls on the last syllable; in other cases the chief emphasis may be taken to rest on the penult where it expresses itself mostly by a greater or lesser lengthening of the vowel carrying the syllable. English suffix *-er* (as for instance in *speaker*) is heard in the corresponding Tagalog loan-words sometimes actually as *e* followed by *r*, sometimes (as mostly in English) as the indistinct vowel.

Sport and Athletics

ampáy	umpire	bólibol	volley ball
aperkát	upper cut	espesyal ibén	special event
(or aprakát)		gem	game
awt on pos	out on first	golp	golf
basketbol	basket ball	hia	here
bat (or: bet)	bat	homran	home run
bata	batter	indorbesbol	indoor base ball
(or: bater)		ining	inning
bek on sekón	back on second	iskór	score
besbol	base ball	islayd	slide
boksing	boxing	islip	slip

istrét	straight	pitser	pitcher
kamon	come on	plebol	play ball
kaptin	captain	posbes	first base
(or: kapten)		preliminari	preliminary
katser	catcher	putbol	foot ball
kuntés (or:	contest	raket	racket
kontés)		ring	ring
nakáwt	knock out	seconbes	second base
noboreáwt	nobody out	semi-paynal	semi-final
pait (or:	fight	sep	safe
paet)		sep on tod	safe on third
paltik	foul tip	swing	swing
paraktis	practice	taym	time
parbol (or:	foul ball	tenis	tennis
pawl-bol)		terbes	third base
pawl	foul	tim	team
pilder	fielder	welter	welter

Student Life

Absen	absent	eskól (or:	school
adrés	address	iskól)	
anser	answer	eskursiún	excursiún
antusyam (or:	enthusiasm	espeling	spelling
antusyasam)		estuden	student
Arbor Dey	Arbor Day	garden	garden
atén	attend	gred	grade
balediktoryan	valedictorian	homework	homework
bere	very	huskol (or:	high school
brayt	bright	hayskol)	
buk	book	istori	story
domestic	domestic	kamia (kamie)	come here
sayan	science	kek	cake
dril	drill	klas	class
droing	drawing	kukung	cooking
ekspérimen	experiment	laber	lover
(or: espéri-		leson	lesson
men)		mágasin	magazine

miting	meeting	raber	rubber
naep (naip)	knife	rebyu	review
oret (or: orait)	all right	reses (rises)	recess
pakulti	faculty	reding (or: riding)	reading
pawnten pen	fountain pen	repót	report
pensil	pencil	sikret	secret
peper	paper	siro	zero
plawer	flower	superbaysor	supervisor
prawd	proud	swithart	sweetheart
presen	present	titser	teacher
program	program	tri	three
propesór	professor	tumoro	to-morrow
pulis	foolish		

Social Life

agli	ugly	litson parti	roast pig party
bisit	visit	tiparti	tea party
bodebíl	vaudeville	pastrat	fox trot
bulebár	boulevard	piknik	picnic
si Dyane	Johnny	poka (poker)	poker
dyas	jazz	pritti	pretty
si Dyo	Joe	propesión	profession
estebol	stable	relihiyón (or: relidyón)	religion
hula-hula dans	hula-hula dance	Red Kros	Red Cross
istár	star	sermon	sermon
kabarét	cabaret	tosmasta	toastmaster
Mis	Miss	(tosmaster)	
parti	party		

Home Life

angkel	uncle	ayskrim	ice cream
basket	basket	espón	spoon
bebi	baby	granmader	grandmother
broder	brother	granpader	grandfather

ispót	sport	nidel	needle
kálendar	calendar	pader	father
mader	mother	pulis	police
nars	nurse	tebøl	table

Business Life

kostomháws	customhouse	suskrayber	subscriber
manedyér	manager	tarák	truck
opis	office	tsofér	chauffeur
opisyál	office	tsip	chief
posopis	postoffice	wasing	washing
posmasta	post-master		

Political Life

espiker	speaker	lider	leader
kandidét	candidate	si Tap	Mr. Taft
kombensión	convention	si Ud	Mr. Wood
kuworum	quorum		

Strong, Language, Exclamations etc.

Aigaret	I got it	gerit	Get it
beregúd (or: brigúd)	very good	getbek	get back
bulakbol	black ball (1)	gorchéł	Go to hell
dyobon	jaw-bone (2)	hariáp	Hurry ap
enihaw	anyhow	herim	Hit him
gardemyo	god damn you	herit	Hit it
gardemet sa-	God damn it,	holit	Hold it
lambabit	son of a bitch	istrakawt	struck out
gerarehi	Get out of here	sanamagen	Son of a gun
geráp	Get up	serapio	Shut up you
gerawé	Get away	wetamomen	Wait a momen
geráwt	Get out	watsimare- betyo	What's the matter with you

(1) Used of one playing the truant.

(2) Said to have been introduced by American soldiers with the meaning of 'on credit'.

How English loan-words appear in the mouth of Manila students

(Loan-words: atén, program, miting, dro, droing, Meri, plawer, espésimen)

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Umatén ka ba nang program? | Did you attend the program? |
| 2. Aatén ka ba nang program? | Shall you attend the program? |
| 3. Umatén akó nang aming miting. | I attend our meeting. |
| 4. Nakaatén ka ba nang ating miting? | Could you attend our meeting? |
| 5. Umaatén ka ba nang miting araw-araw? | Do you attend the meeting every day? |
| 6. Umatén ka nang ating miting bukas. | Attend our meeting to-morrow. |

-
- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Nagmimiting pa ba silá? | Are they still holding a meeting? |
| 2. Magmimiting kamé bukas. | We shall have a meeting to-morrow. |
| 3. Nakapagmiting na ba kayó? | Have you had a meeting? |
| 4. Magmiting kayó bukas. | Hold a meeting to-morrow. |
| 5. Nagmiting kame kahapon. | We had a meeting yesterday. |
| 6. Nakapagmiting ba kayó? | Could you hold a meeting? |
| 7. Bakit ba kayó miting nang miting? | Why do you always meet? |

-
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Anó ba iyang idinodró mo? | What are you drawing? |
| 2. Nagdodroing ka ba nitó? | Are you drawing this? |
| 3. Naidró mo na ba itó? | Have you drawn this? |

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 4. Magdodró ka ba nito? | Shall you draw this? |
| 5. Nagdodroing si Meri
nang plawer. | Mary is drawing a flower. |
| 6. Idinró ko itong espésimeng
ito kahapon. | I drew this specimen yesterday. |
| 7. Idodró ba nating itó? | Shall we draw this? |
| 8. Bakit ba tayo droing nang
droing nitó? | Why do we always draw this? |
| 9. Nakapagdroing ka na ba
nitó? | Have you drawn this? |
| 10. Kay ganda mong magdodroing. | How nicely you draw. (1) |

Sound Changes

For the linguist one of the most interesting phenomena to be observed in the borrowing of English words by Filipinos is the way how these adapt such words to their particular 'basis of articulation'. A study of the phonetic changes thus arising should prove of interest also to the teacher of English in these islands, since it naturally leads him to the most frequent sources of mispronunciation on the part of his native pupils.

The following are the principal changes of simple sounds to be found in the preceding lists of loan-words from English:

long English vowel-sounds are shortened; e. g.

'safe' becomes 'sep'

'fielder' becomes 'pilder'

'drawing' becomes 'droing'

English 'f' becomes 'p' (fight: pait; foul: pawl)

" 'd' and 't', in intervocalic position, become 'r' ('nobody out': 'noboreáwt'; 'get up': 'geráp')

(1) The language here illustrated by the author as in current use among those who by their schooling as by contact with American life in Manila, are expected to replace, more readily than others, their vernacular by English, shows very clearly how, thru affixation with Indonesian particles and reduplication of certain syllables, English is, on the contrary, absorbed by the vernacular which readily covers English tenses and other grammatical forms, including modal auxiliaries, by genuinely native equivalents. ED.

- English 'th' becomes, if voiced, 'd' ('mother': 'mader'), if unvoiced, 't' ('three': 'tri')
- " 'v' becomes 'b' ('very': 'bere')
- " 'j' becomes 'dy' ('Joe': 'Dyo')
- " 'w' becomes 'u' ('Wood': 'Ud'), unless preceding or following a different vowel, when it sounds as in English ('washing': 'wasing'; 'flower': 'plawer').
- " 'sh' becomes 's' ('washing': 'wasing').

Vocalic diphthongs call for no special remark, while English consonantal combinations within a syllable show themselves mostly unpronounceable for the Tagalog tongue and may require a reduction or alleviation of the awkward juxtaposition:

1) by addition of a vowel so as to form, or complete, a syllable with one of the consonants:

initial English	'sp'	becomes	'es-p'	('speaker'	: 'espika')
"	"	'sk'	"	'es-k'	('school' : 'eskúl')
"	"	'sl'	"	'is-l'	('slide' : 'isláyd') (1)
"	"	'st'	"	'is-t'	('story' : 'istori')
"	"	'pr'	"	'para'	('practice' : 'paraktis')
"	"	'tr'	"	'tara'	('truck' : 'tarák')
final	"	'ble'	"	'bol'	('table' : 'tebol')

2) By elision of one of the consonants:

final English	'nd'	becomes	'n'	('second'	: 'sekon')
"	"	'nt'	"	'n'	('absent' : 'absen')
"	"	'rd'	"	'r'	('third' : 'ter')
"	"	'rt'	"	't'	('report' : 'repót')
"	"	'st'	"	's'	('contest' : 'kuntés')
"	"	'rst'	"	's'	('first' : 'pos')
"	"	'ld'	"	'l'	('hold it' : 'holit')
"	"	'sm'	"	'm'	('enthusiasm' : 'añtúsyam')
"	"	'ft'	"	'p'	('Taft' : 'Tap')

3) by sound-substitution:

the English consonantal diphthong 'ch' becomes 'ts'
('chief' : 'tsip')

(1) 'e' and 'i' are often not clearly distinguished.

No hardship appears to be caused by the liquid 'r' following dental, or velar stop at the beginning of a syllable, as shown by such loan-words as 'dril', 'tri', 'gred', 'brayt', 'prelimina-ri', altho against this last combination of 'pr' we find 'para' in 'paraktis' (practice). Also other combinations are to be found in the lists that do not seem to conform to the phonetic laws established by the examples given above; such exceptions may, however, have to be explained by inexact hearing and recording, or by a more accomplished stage of English pronunciation on the part of some speakers.

Causes of word-borrowing

The principal and most plausible reason for the adoption of foreign words into the vernacular is necessity: objects and concepts newly introduced into a speech-community lack here a customary denomination and are given the foreign name they already possess. In a more or less original form such loan-words remain thenceforth in the adopting language as witnesses for the influence exercised, in whatever regard, by one people upon the other. Examples for this are in our case:

tenis	domestic sayan	kworum
basketbol	mágasin	espiker
golp	bulebár	bodebíl

Besides loan-words for completely new ideas there are to be found in modern Tagalog words of American origin for institutions already well-known in Spanish times and under Spanish terms, such as "kostomháws" (customhouse) and 'posopis' (post-office), in which case the displacement of the older terms '(aduaná', 'correo') is to be explained by the very considerable advance of commerce, traffic, etc. since advent of the American régime.

Another and less compelling cause for the adoption of foreign words into the mother-tongue is the higher appreciation in which the former are held, if they strike the ear, or impress the mind, as especially forceful, distinguished, or pretty. This is why we hear our drivers addressing their teams, instead of by some inarticulate outcry, now in English with: 'Geráp!' and 'Hariáp!' In a similar way, tho in a different social circle, we have to ac-

count for the growing tendency among our younger people towards the Americanizing of petnames: against the old 'Charing', 'Loleng', and 'Neneng' our ears are now greeted by such terms as 'Betty', 'Rosy', and 'Margie'.

If this little study may serve, then, in a way as a mirror in which my countrymen may see reflected, to a certain degree, the influence exerted upon their mind by foreign ideas, manners, activities, and institutions, they will, no doubt, be glad with me to find that the great numerical preponderance of loan-words pertaining to the two spheres of athletics and scholastic life bears witness to the fact that the greatest responsiveness has been shown by us to impulses having for object a healthy physical and mental development.

