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The Phonology of Hiligaynon

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Introduction

Hiligaynon
- Spoken in the central region of the Philippines
- 5th most widely spoken language among Filipinos
- Linguistic literature on the language is sparse

Why I am Interested
- I lived in the Philippines and learned Hiligaynon
- Lots of language contact and yet still distinct features are present
- Document the phonology language further
- Understand specific features of the language that has not been identified

The Philippines
- The Philippines are made up of 7,107 islands
- Land mass is about the size of Nevada
- There are three Regions: Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao
- There are 170 other languages spoken
- Filipino is the national language of the Philippines
- Spoken in school, TV broadcasts and local newspapers
- The most widely spoken language among Filipinos
- Expected to be 21.5 million speakers of Tagalog, 15.8 million speakers of Cebuano, 6.92 million speakers of Ilocano, 5.77 million speakers of Hiligaynon with 30.14 million speak the rest of 166 languages.

Comparison to Other Languages
- Language contact is prevalent in the Philippines resulting in languages being similar to one another. Due to colonization, other languages have also influenced Hiligaynon. The numbering system in Hiligaynon shows Spanish influence.
- Nine - Spirantization has occurred in Spanish while Hiligaynon has not been influenced by this phenomenon.
- Seven - /j/ + /l/ cluster is not common in Hiligaynon
- Nine - /n/ is not the case with all Filipinos
- Nine - /s/ + /j/ cluster is not common in Hiligaynon
- Nine - Possible word stress shifts have occurred in Spanish
- One - Hiligaynon shows no similar traits to the Vulgar Castilian Hinoes.

Comparison with 'small'

Numbering System

Vowel Deletion Rule

Comparison with 'egg'

Consonants

Diphthongs

The Phonemic Inventory

There are 22 distinct phonemes in Hiligaynon: 17 consonant phonemes and 5 vowel phonemes. When comparing Hiligaynon with English we find similarities in how many stops and nasals there are and the differences in how few fricatives there are in Hiligaynon.

(3) Consonants

(4) Vowels and Diphthongs

- Labiodental Fricatives are replaced with Bilabial Plosives
- Influence from Spain and America
- /l/ and /w/ are not found in the final position of words
- Surface as the vowels [i], [u], and [u:j]

Test for Objective Focus

All languages have a morphophonemic rule for object focus when any suffix that causes stress to shift is added to the root word.

(6) Numbering System

Selected Morphophonemic Rules

Morphophonemic rules determine way certain sounds are pronounced in different word formation processes.

(10) Stressed Vowel Deletion Rule

(11) Nasal Place Assimilation Rule

(12) Nasalized Alveolar Stop Rule

Word-initial alveolar stops become nasalized when the preceding affix ends in a nasal.

Conclusion

Hiligaynon is in a unique position. With so many different languages influencing the development of Hiligaynon, it still keeps key attributes that natives are able to identify as distinct to that language. Further research and documentation will identify additional unique features of Hiligaynon and allow the language to be accurately described and analyzed linguistically.

A lot of the references used in this research are found on the handout and the paper associated with this poster.