

TERESITA V. RAMOS and MARIA LOURDES S. BAUTISTA. 1986. *Handbook of Tagalog Verbs — Inflections, Modes and Aspects*. University of Hawaii Press Pp. 300.

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This *Handbook of Tagalog Verbs* was designed to supplement textbook in beginning and advanced level Tagalog (page v). It also intends to supply the lack of a reference book that specializes on the Tagalog verb for students. As stated in the Introduction, it is 'a reference work which gives a concise, easy-to-understand description of Tagalog verbal inflection together with tables showing all the necessary forms of the most important and widely used Tagalog verbs'.

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Upon perusal of this *Handbook of Tagalog Verbs*, the reader notices the lack of a Table of Contents. Nevertheless, after reading the Introduction, he realizes the reason why there is not a real need for a Table of Contents. The *Handbook* has a listing of approximately 200 verbs, selected for being high frequency words according to the authors' consensus; and arranged according to well-explained and well-arranged inflectional features.

The explanation of the roles played by the affixes in indicating which complement of the sentence is in focus, such as: the *actor*, the *object*, the *direction*, the *instrument*, or the *beneficiary* of the action, is commendable. Nevertheless, there should have been a clear dichotomy between affixes in the active voice and affixes in the passive voice, especially in the translations for the benefit of non-Tagalog students. For example, on page vi, we see the following:

2) IN verbs usually indicate that the *object* of the sentence is in focus: *Bilhin mo (ang tinapay) sa tinadahan para sa akin*. This was translated as: 'Buy (bread) at the store for me'. Technically, IN verbs which are in the passive voice never pass their action to an object. Thus, the afore-mentioned sentence should be translated as follows: 'Bread should be bought by you at the store for me'.

6) PAG — AN verbs usually indicate that the location or place is in focus: *Pinagtutuan niya ng kanin (ang lumang palayok)*. This was translated as: 'He cooked rice in the old pot'. AN verbs are also in the passive voice. Thus, for the sake of consistency, this sentence should have been translated as: 'The old pot was used by him for cooking rice'.

This observation is sustained by the proper translation of the sentence making use of the passive IKA-verb, as follows:

7) IKA — verbs usually indicate that the reason for the action is in focus: *Ikinagaling niya ang gamot na ibinigay ng doktor*. This was properly translated as: 'The medicine given by the doctor made him get well'. This also maintains the passive form of the I-verb, *ibinigay*.

According to Mildred L. Larson in her book, *Meaning-based translation: A guide to cross-language equivalence* (page 15), "An interlinear translation is a completely literal translation. For some purposes, it is desirable to reproduce the linguistic features of the source text, as for example, in a *linguistic study* of that language". Thus, I hold that the translations found on page vi of the *Handbook of Tagalog Verbs* should have taken into consideration the active or passive character of the affixes attached to the root words.

On page xvi of the *Handbook*, we notice the following statement: 'Note the change of IN to HIN or AN to HAN when the root ends in a vowel sound'. For the benefit of beginners in the study of Tagalog, there should have been a further amplification of that observation. According to *Balarilang Pinagagan* by Antonia F. Villanueva et al. (1948:

162): a. AN and IN are suffixed to root words that end in consonants and the glottal vowel (a vowel followed by a glottal stop) — *Balutan*, *bilangin*, *batiin* while b. HAN and HIN are suffixed to root-words that end in the liquid vowel (a vowel not followed by a glottal stop) — *samahan*, *ubuhin*.

It is common knowledge among Tagalog grammarians that UM verbs are used to express internal action while MAG verbs are used to express external action. In case a root word like *sulat* (page vii) is used once as an UM verb and is used at another instance as a MAG verb, it is well to guide a non-Tagalog student about the change in the meaning of the verb. *Sumulat* simply means 'to write' or 'wrote' while *magsulat* means 'to write habitually' or 'wrote habitually'.

In spite of my minor observations which might have gone beyond the parameters of the *Handbook* concerning Tagalog Verbs — Inflections, Modes, and Aspects, I would like to commend both authors for their assiduous preparation and meticulous selection of their materials from basic inflections of Tagalog verbs in the body of the book and from English to Tagalog in the Index. On the whole, I consider this work as an invaluable reference to students of beginning and advanced-level Tagalog — and certainly a valuable contribution to scholarship in Pilipino.

REFERENCES

- LARSON, MILDRED L. 1984. *Meaning-based translation: A guide to cross-language equivalence*. New York: University Press of America, Inc.
- VILLANUEVA, ANTONIA F. et al. 1948. *Balarilang pinagaan*. Manila: Committee on the National language Textbook Preparation, Comlan Press.