JUDGING PERSONALITY FROM LANGUAGE USAGE: 1971 SAMPLE

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THE PROBLEM

The present study is a follow-up of one which G. Richard Tucker did in 1968. In his experiment, he used 80 female subjects (Ss), divided into 40 Tagalogs and 40 non-Tagalogs, their task being to judge the personalities of the female speakers whose voices they heard on tape. These were a) four Americans reading an English passage, b) four Filipinos reading the same English passage, and c) four Filipinos reading the Tagalog translation of the passage. All in all, the Ss listened to 12 voices. Although the speakers in groups b) and c) were actually four bilinguals who read the passage once in English and again in Tagalog (their first language), the Ss were under the impression that they were listening to 12 different speakers.

Using a series of 12 semantic-differential bipolar adjective scales, the Ss evaluated the speakers as patient or impatient, successful of unsuccessful, pleasant or unpleasant, etc. Each rating scale had eight points from the positive to the negative end.

Tucker's data revealed the following: First, the Ss rated the American group reading English most favorably, the Filipino group reading English next favorably, and the Filipino group reading Tagalog least favorably. Second, the non-Tagalogs rated the Filipino group reading Tagalog more unfavorably than did their Tagalog counterparts.

The kind of study done by Tucker at the Philippine Normal College and subsequently replicated in some non-Tagalog-speaking areas has been considered a very effective measure of biases which members of one social group hold of members of a contrasting group. The technique, called the "matched-guise" technique, obtains results which otherwise would not be obtained using direct-attitude questionnaires. While the Ss believe that they are simply reacting to the voices of certain people, the investigators discover the real attitudes of the judges toward the group or groups represented by the speakers whose voices have been put on tape.

This technique has been used in several studies done at McGill University in Canada. Some experiments reviewed in Lambert (1967) include those done by Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner, and Fillenbaum (1960), by Preston (1963), and by Lambert and Anisfeld (1964).

Tucker's experiment conducted in the Philippine setting intrigued the present investigators. They asked: a) Would the results have been different had Tucker also used Americans reading Tagalog (assuming that they have had training and experience in the use of the language)? b) Would the judges have given a more favorable rating to the Filipino group reading English had Tucker used Filipinos whose speech in English closely approximates that of Americans? c) Would non-Education students, who are supposedly less conservative than Education students, give the same ratings as Tucker's Ss did?

When the challenge of replicating Tucker's experiment presented itself, the investigators decided that for purposes of comparing their results with Tucker's, they would introduce only one new variable: the American group reading Tagalog.

THE PROCEDURE

The reading scripts in Tagalog and English were put together by transcribing Tucker's master tape, which is in the possession of the PNC Language Study Center. For the American exemplars, three mature American ladies with formal training and ample experience in speaking Tagalog were chosen. Each of them was asked to read the English passage and the Tagalog passage. The Filipino voices were simply dubbed from Tucker's tape. These 12 readings were dubbed into one tape with the English and the Tagalog readings of each speaker spaced as far from each other as was possible. Each reading was repeated with two seconds provided between repetitions. The voices were separated from each other by a gap of 10 seconds.

The Ss used were female BSEEd sophomores from the University of Santo Tomas. Of these, 15 were Tagalogs (average age: 18.2 years) and 15 were non-Tagalogs (average age: 18.9 years). The latter group actually comprised the whole female non-Tagalog population of the BSEEd sophomore class; thus a bigger sample could not be obtained. The native languages of the 15 in the non-Tagalog group were Ilokano (3), Pampangan (3), Pangasinan (2), Bikol (2), Chinese (2), Surigaonon (1), Cebuano (1), and Aklanon (1). Before the experiment started, the Ss were asked to fill out a language background questionnaire.

The experiment was administered at the Speech Laboratory of the UST College of Education. The standard instructions of Tucker were given and explained. A "practice" voice was played twice to allow the Ss to try out the ratings in a practice semantic-differential scale. Questions raised were answered and the investigators went around to make sure that all the Ss were filling out the rating scale properly. With all this done, the experiment was conducted without interruption. After each voice, the Ss guessed at the speaker's income and her occupational level. The experiment took approximately 90 minutes to administer.

THE METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Following Tucker, the investigators assigned the value 8 to the positive end of the adjective scale and the value 1 to the negative end. The ratings of the Ss were tabulated separately for each of the 12 scales. All the responses by the Tagalogs were entered first and then all the responses by the non-Tagalogs. All ratings assigned by each S to the three exemplars of each of the four language groups were combined to provide an overall rating for each group corresponding to every adjective.

The data were analyzed via 2 x 4 analysis of variance, with repeated measures on the last factor. The independent variables in each analysis were regional group (Tagalog or non-Tagalog) and voice group (American-English, American-Tagalog, Filipino-English, and Filipino-Tagalog). The ANOVA 2 program prepared by R. C. Gardner for PNC, together with the data punched into cards, was fed into the computer at the University of the Philippines Computer Center.

The program printed out the summary table of the analysis of variance and the table of means for each of the 12 adjective scales.

Table 1 presents a summary of the 12 tables of means. Table ? is derived from the 12 analyses of variance, omitting all data except for the F ratios[1] relevant to this study.

TABLE 1

MEAN RATINGS OF EACH SPEECH GROUP

Rating Scale	American-English		American-Tagalog		Filipino-English		Filipino-Tagalog	
	Tag	Non-Tag	Tag	Non-Tag	Tag	Non-Tag	Tag	Non-Tag
Active (Passive)	5.753	6.330	3.909	4.129	5.663	4.997	6.197	5.531
Healthy (Sickly)	6.286	6.455	5.108	4.685	5.908	5.330	6.153	5.199
Honest (Dishonest)	6.887	7.087	5.709	6.197	6.219	5.919	6.086	5.219
Industrious (Lazy)	6.220	6.752	5.041	4.953	6.197	5.731	6.219	5.265
Intelligent (Unintelligent)	7.308	7.464	4.697	4.222	6.085	5.439	5.819	4.796
Light (Dark)	6.220	7.065	4.974	5.153	4.775	4.285	5.019	4.264
Patient (Impatient)	6.263	6.997	5.440	5.729	5.263	4.997	5.308	4.387
Pleasant (Unpleasant)	7.086	6.997	4.863	4.108	5.818	4.997	5.197	5.219
Self-confident (Not self-confident)	6.710	7.465	4.942	5.130	6.097	4.675	6.131	4.818
Reliable (Unreliable)	5.997	7.376	4.731	5.019	5.109	5.063	5.241	4.685
Religious (Irreligious)	6.842	6.641	5.797	5.552	6.152	5.519	6.487	5.531
Successful (Unsuccessful)	7.353	7.509	4.463	4.530	5.841	4.953	5.641	4.619

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[1]The F ratio is used in a test of significance for results obtained in an analysis of variance. The values obtained with this test should be equal to, or greater than, the critical values of F required for significance at the 5 and 1 percent levels.

TABLE 2

SUMMARY OF F RATIOS

Rating Scale	Regional Groups Tag x Non-Tag 1,28	Voice Groups AmEng x AmTag x FilEng x FilTag 3,84
Active (Passive)	0.172	13.313*
Healthy (Sickly)	0.842	10.157*
Honest (Dishonest)	0.227	11.893*
Industrious (Lazy)	0.598	7.789*
Intelligent (Unintelligent)	3.985	36.830*
Light (Dark)	0.034	17.382*
Patient (Impatient)	0.041	11.597*
Pleasant (Unpleasant)	1.589	23.835*
Self-confident (Not self-confident)	1.902	15.471*
Reliable (Unreliable)	0.673	15.976*
Religious (Irreligious)	3.638	7.704*
Successful (Unsuccessful)	1.865	22.623*

$F(1,28): p < .05 = 4.20 \quad p < .01 = 7.64$

$F(3,84): p < .05 = 2.71 \quad p < .01 = 4.02$

*means significant at the $p < .01$ level

THE RESULTS

The statistical analysis of the data reveals that there were no significant differences between the ratings assigned by the Tagalogs and those assigned by the non-Tagalogs. The analyses of variance did not produce significant F ratios for regional groups on any of the 12 scales. It can therefore be said that the fact that the Ss came from either the Tagalog or non-Tagalog regions did not substantially affect the ratings they assigned to the four voice groups.

The findings were significant for the ratings on the four voice groups. The analyses of variance produced significant F ratios for the voice groups on all 12 scales at the $p < .01$ level. This means that Americans reading English were rated differently from Americans reading Tagalog, from Filipinos reading English, and from Filipinos reading Tagalog.

DISCUSSION

The first significant finding is that there is no statistical difference in the ratings given by the Tagalog group and the non-Tagalog group. This was not the case in Tucker's study. In his experiment, he found that the non-Tagalogs, compared with the Tagalogs, were more ruthless in their "downgrading" of the Filipino-Tagalog exemplars.

It may be that for the present limited sample, there is little of what Tucker called "linguistic ill will" between ethnic groups. The fact that the non-Tagalog Ss had been interacting for some time with their Tagalog classmates in Manila may account for the absence of any pronounced rejection of Filipino-Tagalog.

Another significant finding is the differences between the ratings given by the Ss to the four groups. The Americans reading English received significantly higher ratings than the Filipinos reading English and Tagalog (the scores of these two groups clustered together), who in turn received generally higher ratings than the Americans reading Tagalog. It can be seen that Tagalog has a status comparable to English when these two languages are spoken by Filipinos. The "general downgrading" that Tucker observed in his experiment no longer seems to hold true. The question now arises: Why did Tagalog as it was spoken by Americans receive the least favorable ratings? This question can be answered by another question: Why did English as it was spoken by Filipinos not receive the high ratings that English did when it was spoken by Americans? Proficiency seems to be the factor that can account for these findings. The factor of linguistic skill would seem to explain why American-English was rated more favorably than Filipino-English and why Filipino-Tagalog was rated more favorably than American-Tagalog.

It is a remarkable fact that the Ss gave Filipino-English and Filipino-Tagalog statistically similar ratings. One explanation that some may offer is that the Filipino has attained the same degree of proficiency in English as he has in Tagalog. But general observation and experience show this claim to be contrary to fact. A more plausible explanation is that the language itself — Tagalog — is catching up with English in status, rather than that the Tagalog speaker is catching up in English proficiency. In other words, while Tagalog has gone up in level of prestige and acceptability, English has not gone up any higher from where it used to be.

One more question comes up: Why was English in general rated more favorably than Tagalog? Perhaps Tucker's "harsh economic reality" is still a valid reason. He wrote:

> In the Philippines, social mobility now depends upon the acquisition of skill in English. Higher education, better employment opportunities, and travel abroad are easily accessible only to those who possess the necessary skills in English (37).

The quotation above seems to provide a logical answer to the question raised earlier. That is, although the Ss have come to accept Tagalog as a language one need not be ashamed of, they still realize that English continues to be the key to a better economic, intellectual, and social life. This analysis is supported by the data which reveal that the F ratios for the intelligent-unintelligent and successful-unsuccessful scales are much greater than the other F ratios. Furthermore, in the experiment, the Ss indicated that American-English and Filipino-English speakers held better jobs and earned higher salaries than their Tagalog-speaking counterparts. The data show that the American-English group was thought to be predominantly composed of professionals and executives; the Filipino-English group, of professionals and housewives; the Filipino-Tagalog group, of professionals and housewives (a greater percentage of professionals is found in the Filipino-English

group than in the Filipino-Tagalog group); and the American-Tagalog group, predominantly of housewives. High in the salary scale is the American-English group; next, though not very close, comes the Filipino-English group; and trailing behind are the Filipino-Tagalog and American-Tagalog groups.

To sum up, the present investigators have found that for the sample used in this study:

a) Tagalogs and non-Tagalogs do not differ significantly in the ratings they assign to voice exemplars of contrasting groups;

b) Tagalog has improved its acceptability status since 1968; and

c) English is still regarded as the language for better education and better jobs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The research design employed in this study presents a host of possibilities. For instance, the experiment can be done with:

a) a larger sample of students from the different colleges and universities in Manila.

b) a group of non-Education students, who are reputedly less conservative than Education students.

c) a group of non-Tagalogs residing in Manila and a group of non-Tagalogs residing in the non-Tagalog regions.

d) a group of Tagalogs residing in Manila and a group of Tagalogs residing in the non-Tagalog regions.

e) a group of Tagalogs residing in Manila and a group of non-Tagalogs from Cebu (assuming that Cebuanos constitute the group most strongly opposed to making Tagalog the basis of the national language).

When this is done, more definitive conclusions can probably be reached.

Studies on attitudes such as those recommended here will certainly help policy-makers map out a hierarchy of priorities for their language planning efforts.

APPENDIX

Instructions Given to the Judges

(Patterned after Tucker)

We are conducting research to determine how people react to the voices of others. You do this every day – for instance, when you hear an unfamiliar voice on the telephone, you try to imagine what type of person is speaking.

We would like you to listen to a series of taperecorded voices and evaluate, or make certain judgments about, each voice that you hear. As you listen to the first speaker, we want you to evaluate this speaker on each of the dimensions or traits that are listed on your questionnaire. Each line contains an adjective followed by eight spaces and then another adjective. Your job is to evaluate the speaker whose voice you hear on each of the dimensions by placing the mark X somewhere along the line which represents each of

these dimensions. You must *not* mark more than one blank on any particular line and you *must* mark one on every line.

Each speaker will repeat his message twice. You may begin evaluating a voice any time you wish following the beginning of the message. You will have sufficient time between speakers to complete your ratings.

When you finish rating one speaker on the adjective scales, then indicate on the space provided the average monthly salary that you think this person earns. Also mark with an X the probable occupational level of the speaker. When you finish these ratings, turn to the next page of your questionnaire and wait until you hear the announcement for the second speaker. You will now have a chance to evaluate a "practice" voice.

Self-confident									Not self-confident
Light									Dark
Dishonest									Honest
Reliable									Unreliable
Passive									Active
Religious									Irreligious
Pleasant									Unpleasant
Successful									Unsuccessful
Healthy									Sickly
Patient									Impatient
Lazy									Industrious
Intelligent									Unintelligent

Salary: ₱_____ per month

Occupational level: _____Housewife   _____Professional   _____Executive

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