

STUDIES IN PHILIPPINE LANGUAGES & CULTURES

Supplementary Series No. 2 1987 *Central Cagayan Agta texts*

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Information, Map, Introduction and Abbreviations and
Symbols



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We wish to express our appreciation to the Agta people of Cagayan, especially in the municipalities of Gattaran and Penablanca, for the welcome and hospitality extended to us to study their language and culture and for their eagerness to share their folklore, experiences, and other interesting cultural traits, some of which constitute the basis of this volume. We are indebted to Mr. Donato Salbino, Mr. Buldo Tagayun, Mr. Andas Simplicio, Mr. Pedro Cababag, and Mr. Edwardo Mondijar for their valuable assistance in providing the oral discourses for recording and/or their explanation of various linguistic or ethnographic features not obvious in the written texts. We also owe a great debt to Dr. and Mrs. Alan Healey of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, who provided us with their own invaluable research materials from the same language and culture: texts, a dictionary, a published grammar, and unpublished ethnographic notes all of which we have only been able to supplement. The responsibility, however, for any errors or omissions in the texts, analysis, notes, or appendixes is our own.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The following people have contributed texts to this volume:

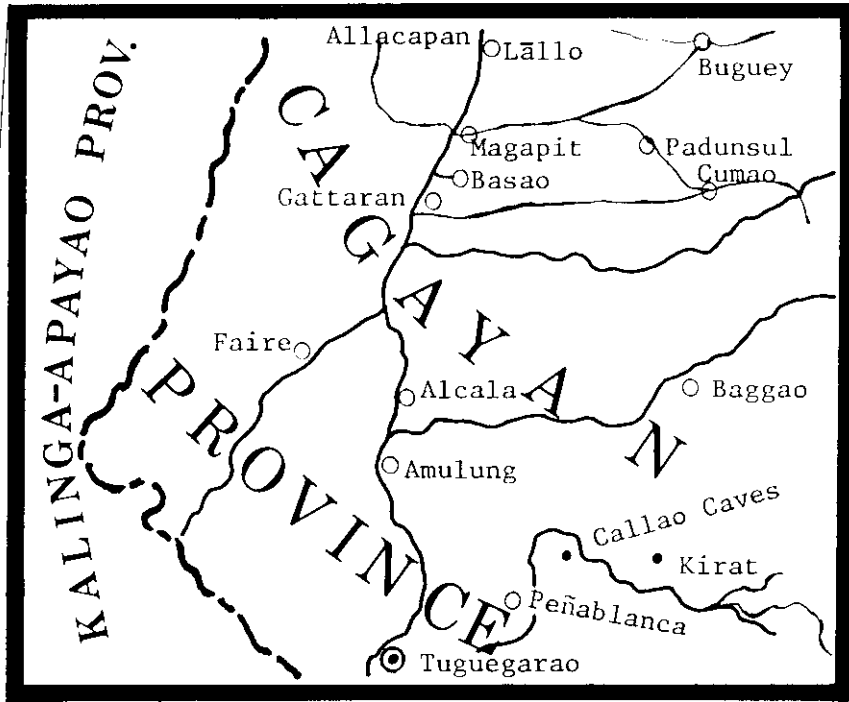
Andas Simplicio is a man in his early fifties with no formal public education. He is fluent in Ilocano as well as his own language.

Donato Salbino is a man in his early seventies, who, with no formal public education, has served as the compilers' main language assistant for a number of years. He is fluent in Ilocano as well as his own language.

Pedro Cababag is a man in his late fifties or early sixties. Like Salbino he has had no formal public education and is fluent in Ilocano as well as his own language.

Manggo Sapeda, now deceased, was a man about seventy-five years old at the time his text, "A Story about Hunting," was recorded. Fluent in Ilocano as well as his own language, he was known to function as a priest and shaman among his people. He was the recognized religious authority, noted for ability to heal people, and most versatile in singing prayers to the departed ancestors.

Texts 3, 4, and 7 were recorded by the Healeys about 1955 and the narrators are not known. The recording date of each of the other texts, where known, is indicated beneath the respective titles following the narrator's name.



Location of the
Central Cagayan Agta
Language Group.

The Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The eleven texts presented here were compiled and analyzed for the purpose of preserving evidences of the Central Cagayan Agta culture and language. The texts were collected over a thirty-year period, by Dr. and Mrs. Alan Healey during 1955-57, and the present compilers during 1958-85, under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

In the first ten texts the morpheme breaks are indicated. (In text 11 not all morpheme breaks are indicated.) The numbers of the ethnographic and linguistic notes correlate with the numbers of the sentences in the immediately preceding text in which the words discussed are to be found.

Four genres of texts are included: four narrative, two hortatory, two folklore, and three procedural. It will be observed that the procedural texts are not strictly procedural in the usual sense. Rather, there is a fair amount of narrative or history mixed in. We perceive the reason for this to be that Agtas, who are an oral society, are not accustomed to abstracting procedure from real-life contexts. Rather, their devices for memory are in oral features, such as rhythm and dialog (see Ong 1982).

The Agta language is a member of the Malayo-Polynesian (Austronesian) group of languages spoken throughout the Philippines. More specifically, it is related to the Ibanag languages found in the Cagayan Valley. It is approximately fifty percent cognate with the main Ibanag language as well as with Ilocano (Healey 1960:1).

The phonemes of Agta are: a, ǣ, b, d, e, f, g, h, i, k, l, m, n, ng, o, p, r, s, t, u, v, w, y, z, and - (glottal stop). The vowels a and ǣ are mid central and low central respectively in the phoneme chart. There is also a considerable degree of free fluctuation between h and r. We have found that all forms occurring with r may also be pronounced instead with h; however, the reverse is more restricted. Glottal stop is written only in consonant clusters. There are no vowel clusters in the language; hence contiguous vowels in text must be pronounced with an intervocalic glottal. (Morphophonemic changes occur between contiguous vowels, between vowel and consonant, and between connecting consonants; the patterns of morphophonemic change are described in Appendix C.)

The Agta are a Philippine Negrito minority people living in the central region of Cagayan Province in the northeastern part of the island of Luzon, from the Cagayan River on the west to the foothills of the Sierra Madre mountains on the east, and from the northern boundary of Lallo municipality to central Penablanca municipality in the south. Migration into Penablanca has been only very recent, since early 1984. Another small group has been living in the extreme northeast coastal area near the towns of Santa Ana and San Vicente, although Negritos in this area prior to 1981 belong to a different language group referred to in the literature as Eastern Cagayan Agta.

There has never been a completed official census of the Central Cagayan Agta. However, tentative surveys made in 1957 by Alan Healey and Dick Roe of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (unpublished data in SIL survey files) resulted in an estimate of about six hundred Agtas (see also Healey

1960:1). During 1979-80 the present compilers had regular contact with about two hundred Agtas living in the municipality of Gattaran on a three-hundred-hectare civil reservation for minority groups, particularly Agtas. It seems reasonable to assume that in the other municipalities where Agtas traditionally lived there were more than another four hundred.

Agtas have traditionally lived a seminomadic lifestyle. Marriage alliances give them reason to travel extensively throughout their language territory and sometimes even beyond it. They may remain for days or even months at a time. Every family, however, has a territory which it considers lugar mi 'our place' where they know every detail of the forest, its streams, specific trees, hills, etc., and where they have intimate trading relationships with lowland farmers living around the fringes of the forests. A familiar area may be about one hundred square kilometers, and virtually any spot not being lived on or used for farming may be selected as a building site for a small community of one to six houses. Community sites may change two or three times a year and even be revisited depending upon the form of activity that is in season for making a living. Planting and harvest seasons for the lowland farmers will find the Agtas living nearby in order to take advantage of work in these activities. Slack times for lowland farmers will find the Agtas living closer to or in the forests, hunting or gathering rattan and other salable products which they trade for rice or sell in the markets.

Prior to 1978 we knew of no literate Agtas (see also Healey 1960:1). Three separate literacy courses conducted during 1978-84 resulted in thirty-five persons acquiring varying degrees of literate ability in their own language and some ability to bridge into the Ilocano language. Of this number twelve became tutors for beginners in the latest course (1984). At present two of these tutors or "lay teachers" are employed by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports to assist in a pilot program of mobile schools for Agtas in barrio Aguggudan, Penablanca.

Traditionally, Agtas have been considered non-Christians as a cultural minority. However, since 1967 a number have embraced a Protestant form of Christian belief in response to portions of the Christian Scriptures translated into their language. A viable Christian community now exists which is completely indigenous in nature, mainly in the municipalities of Penablanca and Gattaran. Overall, approximately one hundred people have indicated in one way or another that they no longer adhere to animistic religious practices or rituals due to their conversion to faith in God and the teachings of the Christian Scriptures.

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

AB	abstract
ACF	accessory focus
ACT	active voice
AG	augmentative aspect
AGT	agent
APT	aptative mode
ASS	associate
AST	associative mode
AU	authentic
BEN	benefactive
CAS	causative voice
CERT	certainty
CJ	conjunction
CM	completed tense/completive particle
CN	continuative aspect
CNF	confirmatory
CONC	concessive
D	demonstrative
DAT	dative
DIM	diminutive
DIST	distributive
E	emphatic
EXPER	experiencer
EXT	existential
FR	fortuitous aspect
G	genitive
GN	general mode
ID	identifier
Ilk.	Ilocano borrowing
INC	incomplete tense
INJ	interjection
INS	instrument
INT	intensifier
IRR	irrealis
QT	quotation
LF	locative focus
LM	limitative particles
LO	locativizer
MAN	manner
MS	measurement
N	nominative case
NEG	negative
NP	nonpersonal
NU	neutral tense
O	oblique case
OF	object focus
OPT	optative
OR	origin
P	personal
PA	personal-associate
PAS	passive voice

x Abbreviations and Symbols

PAT	patient
PL	plural
PLE	plural emphatic
PLEX	plural exclusive
PLG	plural genitive
PLIN	plural inclusive
PLN	plural nominative
PLO	plural oblique
PO	possessive
PR	prior time
PRY	priority
PRB	probability
PRS	persistence
PS	positional aspect
PUNC	punctiliar
Q	question
QT	quotation
RCM	relative clause marker
REC	reciprocal voice
RECIP	recipient
RN	rhetorical negative
RP	repetitive aspect
RQ	request
RS	reported speech
RSL	resultant
RSM	resemblance
RSP	response
SE	singular emphatic
SG	singular genitive
SIM	simultaneity
SIN	single
SN	<i>singular nominative</i>
SO	singular oblique
SP	special mode
ST	stative
SURP	surprise
1	first person/near speaker
2	second person/near hearer
3	third person/semiremote
4	remote
=	discontinuous morpheme
:	indeterminate morpheme boundary (in gloss lines)
,	semantic, grammatical components (in gloss lines)
—	discontinuous morpheme
/	alternative related meaning
*	see note
.	compound gloss
??	undetermined meaning
...	word or words omitted