

Revising the *Chamorro-English Dictionary*:

Aims and Goals

September 2008

Topping, Ogo, and Dungca's 1975 *Dictionary*

- Approximately 9,700 entries
- Formatted by a suite of computer programs written by Robert Hsu (University of Hawaii)
- Published by the University of Hawaii Press; still in print
- The most comprehensive Chamorro dictionary to date

What Has Changed?

- The situation of the Chamorro language
 - no longer actively learned by children; about to become endangered?
- The computational tools
 - SIL's Toolbox and Multi-Dictionary Formatter (MDF)

Goals of the NSF Project

- Reformat the Dictionary in Toolbox
- Revise the entries to meet the needs of future generations
- Add as many new entries as possible, including specialized words and words of cultural significance

Goal 1

Every word of the language should have a dictionary entry.

What is a Word?

- **Pega** (p. 166) and **po'lo** (p. 170) are *different* words
- **Po'lo**, **mamo'lo** (p. 133), **pine'lo** (p. 168), **manmamo'lo**, **pine'lo-ku**, **mapo'lo** are forms of the *same* word: **po'lo**
- **Åpmam** (p. 17), **åtmam**, and **åtman** are pronunciations of the *same* word (listed as **åpmam** in the 1975 Dictionary)

Goal 2

The dictionary entries should have a consistent structure.

The Parts of a Dictionary Entry

- The Chamorro word
- Its part of speech
- Its English definition
- One or more Chamorro sentences illustrating its use
- Other pronunciations
- Related words (such as synonyms)

More on the Dictionary Entry

- If a word has more than one part of speech, each part of speech is defined and illustrated with one or more Chamorro sentences

Other Parts that Could be Added

- The word's pronunciation (**håyi** (p. 89) is pronounced [hadzi])
- Its morphological breakdown (**chatsaga** (p. 40) has two parts: chat-såga)
- Other morphological information (which suffix meaning “my” is used, *-hu* or *-ku*? Compare *tatå-hu* and *kattå-ku*)

Other Parts that Could be Added

- Other information about usage: is the word slang, taboo, formal, informal? (For instance, does **uyu** (p. 212) also have a taboo meaning?)
- Its history: if borrowed, what language is the word borrowed from? (For instance, **kåtne** (p. 106) is borrowed from Spanish *carne*)

Goal 3

Each meaning of a word should be illustrated by one or more Chamorro examples.

Example: **adåpta** (p.5)

- “adopt, select”

Ha adåpta i patgon. She adopted the child.

- “adapt, adjust”

In adåpta ham gi kleman Hawaii. We adapted to the climate in Hawaii.

More on Goal 3

Some of the examples should be brief and simple. Others should be more complex, to illustrate the many ways in which the language can be used.

Why: The Dictionary should help preserve the full richness of language use for future generations.

Example: **langak** (p. 121)

- “strong enough to (do something)”

I sapatos-hu ha langak sumungon yo' kãsi dos meses ta'lo. My shoes can last me maybe two more months.

Example: **malåktos** (p. 131)

- “stern, severe, serious”

**I lahi ti siña ha dingú i asaguã-ña na
maisá sa' mampos malåktos inigo-ña.**

The man cannot leave his wife alone
because of his severe jealousy.

Goal 4

Every word should have its part of speech identified.

Example: **gacha'** (p. 74)

gacha' *vt.* catch up with, detect.

Hu gacha' hao mo'na gi karerå-ta. I
caught up with you in our race.

vt. is the abbreviation for “transitive verb”

More on Goal 4

Sometimes a word has more than one part of speech. Each part of speech should be given its own definition, and illustrated with one or more Chamorro examples.

Example: **bålas** (p. 26)

bålas *vt.* whip, spank.

Ha bålas i aguaguat na pátgon. He whipped the naughty child.

n. riding whip, stick

Malingu i balas. The whip is lost.

Q and A

Q: If some Chamorro words have more than one part of speech, does this mean that Chamorro has **no** parts of speech, or **different** parts of speech from English?

A: Not really. Many English words have more than one part of speech. But this doesn't mean that English has no parts of speech.

Some English Examples

- *Google* is a noun and a verb.

Google is a very large company.

I'm going to google him.

- *Brush* is a verb and a noun.

She shouldn't brush you aside.

That brush needs cleaning.

- *Take over* is a verb and a noun.

The government will take over the bank.

The take-over of the bank was disturbing.

The 1975 Dictionary's Parts of Speech (p. xx)

- “1” transitive verbs; any word that can take the passive **ma-** or **-in-**
- “2” any word that can take **-um-** or **ma-** when used as a predicate
- “3” “defective verbs” (not actually used)

- “Unclassified” all other words

A Revised List of Parts of Speech

adj - adjective

adv - adverb

cnj - conjunction

dem - demonstrative

intj - interjection

n - noun

name - name

num - numeral

prep - preposition

pro - pronoun

vi - intransitive verb

vt - transitive verb

The Advantages of the Revised List

- Every word will have a part of speech; no words will be unclassified
- Because the revised list is more detailed, each part of speech **says more** about how a word is used
- The revised list makes a connection to parts of speech in other languages

Goal 5

All words should be spelled in the latest version of the Chamorro orthography.

This Orthography

- Gives a uniform representation to the word in all its forms
- Distinguishes between the two low vowels, **a** and **ǎ** (so it is phonologically more accurate than previous orthographies)

More on Goal 5

- The spelling of every word should be checked for accuracy
 - **a** versus **á**
 - Doubled (geminate) consonants should be spelled: **tommo** (p. 205) as well as **danña'** and **enno** (which the 1975 Dictionary spells as **daña'** (p. 46) and **enno** (p. 58))

Still More on Goal 5

- “Superfluous” consonants should be spelled
 - **gacha**’ “catch up with” (p. 74) and **gatcha**’ “step on” (p. 77)
 - **patcha** “touch” sounds more like **gatcha**’, but the 1975 Dictionary spells it as **pacha** (p. 159)

Still More on Goal 5

- Another example:
 - **ayao** “borrow” (p. 24) has a **y** sound that is different from the **dy** sound of **adya** “match” and **adyo** “that”, but the 1975 Dictionary treats all these sounds the same; it spells “match” as **aya** (p. 24) and “that” as **ayu** (p.24))

Still More on Goal 5

- ***Why should we spell “superfluous” consonants?***
 - They aren't really superfluous
 - If we don't spell them, future generations won't know that they're actually there

Conclusion

The more information that the dictionary entry of a word contains (examples, parts of speech, sound structure), the more we preserve that information for future generations.

Si Yu'us Ma'åse' !