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M. Jaffe (Mesa, AZ)
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The Tagalog Language

Approximately one-hundred and seventy languages are spoken in the Philippines, eight of which are considered major. Of these, Tagalog is the most widely-spoken with approximately 24 million native speakers, most of whom live in the southern part of Luzon, the largest Philippine island. More than one third of this population lives in the metropolitan area of Manila, the Philippine capital. Tagalog is also spoken as a second or third language by almost the total population of the Philippines. Several dialects of Tagalog are spoken in different regions, but the dialect spoken in Manila dominates the Philippine media and is the dialect taught in this course.

Following a mandate of the 1935 Philippine Constitution, the National Language Institute was established in 1936 for “the study of Philippine dialects in general for the purpose of evolving and adopting a common national language based on one of the existing native tongues.” Tagalog was recommended as the basis for this national language, and in 1987 the Philippine Constitution stipulated that this language be called “Filipino.” Filipino is primarily based on Tagalog, and is sometimes described as a standardized dialect of Tagalog. Although initially unpopular among non-Tagalog speaking Filipinos, Filipino has been established, through the educational system and mass media, as the lingua franca in the Philippines and abroad.
Ten percent of the nearly 90 million Philippine population works abroad. There are over one million Tagalog speakers in the United States. It is the second most commonly-spoken Asian language and the sixth most commonly spoken non-English language in the United States. It is also a significant minority language in Canada, Guam, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, the Middle East, Hong Kong, and Singapore.

**Stress**

In Tagalog primary stress always occurs on either the penultimate (second-to-last) or final syllable. Secondary stress can also occur in a word prior to the penultimate syllable. A slight lengthening of the vowel accompanies stress, except when the stress occurs at the end of a word. In Tagalog, the location of syllable stress can determine the definition of a word. In the statement *Baka ang baka* (or *Baká ang baka*), the first *baka* is stressed on the second syllable and means “perhaps”; the second is stressed on the first syllable and means “cow.”

**Glottal Stop**

Some Tagalog words end in a quick pause or "glottal stop." But these words end in the stop only if they are followed by a pause in speech, such as
a pause indicated by a punctuation mark. In a few cases, adding a glottal stop can change the meaning of a word. For example, if the word bata is stressed on the penultimate syllable and does not end in a glottal stop, it means “robe”; if the same word is stressed on the penultimate syllable and ends in a glottal stop, it means “child.”

On its own, the word bata or “child” ends in a glottal stop. In the sentence ikaw ang bata, which means “you're the young one” or “you the child,” bata again ends in a glottal stop because it is followed by a pause. However, Bata ka pa (which means “you're still young” or “child you still”) does not end in a glottal stop because it is not followed by a pause. (The same pronunciation of bata can also mean “robe,” as mentioned above.)

A glottal stop is also used to separate adjacent vowels in Tagalog, whether they are in the same word or in adjacent words in a sentence. However, in rapid speech the glottal stop may be omitted. In this case, the adjacent vowels just run together.

A hyphen that is followed by a vowel also indicates a glottal stop, e.g. the hyphen in nag-aral.
Diacritics

Tagalog diacritics, or accent marks, are not used in everyday written Tagalog. However, you will see them in dictionaries and language instruction materials. They are used to show where the stress occurs in a word. The Reading Lessons will begin by including diacritics to help guide your pronunciation. As the lessons progress and you are reading words and phrases you have learned in the course, they will be phased out.

The Tagalog diacritics are shown in the chart that follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diacritic (shown with “a”)</th>
<th>Stress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Mark</td>
<td>Stress is on the penultimate, or second-to-last, vowel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acute Accent – á</td>
<td>If either the penultimate or the final vowel is marked, it receives primary stress. If a vowel before the penultimate vowel is marked, it receives secondary stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accent Grave à</td>
<td>This mark appears on the final vowel in a word and indicates that the penultimate vowel receives primary stress and that the marked final vowel includes a glottal stop if the word is followed by a pause.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Circumflex
â

This mark is on the final vowel in a word and indicates that the final vowel is stressed and ends in a glottal stop, if the word is followed by a pause.

- Accent marks do not distinguish between primary and secondary stress. Primary stress always occurs on the penultimate or final vowel/syllable.
- The acute accent can be used anywhere and more than once in a word.
- The grave and the circumflex accents can only be used on the final vowel and only once in a word.
- If the final vowel is not marked with an acute accent or a circumflex, the penultimate vowel is, by default, stressed, whether or not it is marked by an acute accent.
- Vowel lengthening accompanies both primary and secondary stress, except on the final vowel/syllable.

In the examples below, the stressed syllable is in bold:

- *batà* (“child”)—the stress is on the penultimate vowel and it ends with a glottal stop (if followed by a pause).
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• *bata* ("robe")—the stress is on the penultimate vowel and it does not end in a glottal stop. Traditionally, this word would not be marked with any diacritic in dictionaries, although it may be marked with an acute accent on the penultimate vowel and appear as *báta*.

• *basâ* ("wet")—the stress is on the final vowel and it ends in a glottal stop (if followed by a pause).

• *basá* ("read")—the stress is on the final vowel and it never ends in a glottal stop.

**Tapping**

In Tagalog, several words that start with a "d" undergo a change and start with an "r" if the word does not start a sentence clause and if it follows a word that ends in a vowel. These words are: *daw, din, dito, diyan, doon*.

The process is called “tapping.” It produces a sound similar to the sound of the letter “t” in the general American pronunciation of the word “water.” Often, however, particularly in slow speech, the “tapping” becomes a “rolling-r” sound.

• *Doon* ako pupunta. – Since the word in bold begins a sentence clause, it starts with a “D.”
• Pupunta ako roon. – The same word in bold follows a vowel and doesn’t start a sentence clause; therefore, it starts with an “r.”

• Pupunta ka roon, pero doon din ako pupunta. - The first word in bold follows a vowel and doesn’t begin a sentence clause, so it starts with an “r.” The second word in bold follows a vowel, but does begin a sentence clause, so it starts with a “d.” However, this rule is often broken in casual conversation.

Tagalog Alphabet

Before the arrival of the Spaniards in the sixteenth century, Tagalog was written in a script called Baybayin, which was based on the Southern Indian Brahmi script. Gradually, this script was replaced by the Latin Alphabet, which is used today for written Tagalog.

The NG, which sounds like the “ng” in “sing,” can start a Tagalog word and is officially considered a letter. In the Tagalog alphabet, it comes after the letter “N.”

The letters C, F, J, Ñ, Q, V, and Z are used primarily for proper nouns borrowed from English and Spanish. In English-derived words, these
letters are pronounced in the English manner. Similarly, in Spanish-derived words, these letters are pronounced in the Spanish manner.

**Relaxing “i”**

The Tagalog “i” is pronounced like “ee” as in the word “meet.” However, in conversational speech, the final “i” in some very commonly used words, such as hindi and kaunti, is “relaxed,” if followed by a pause. In this case, the final “i” is pronounced like the “e” in the word “bet.” In the following examples, the final “i” in hindi is relaxed because it is followed by a pause (period or comma).

\[
\text{Hindi.}
\]
\[
\text{Sabi niya, “Hindi.”}
\]
\[
\text{“Hindi,” sabi niya.}
\]

In contrast, the final “i” in hindi sounds like “ee” in the statement “Hindi ako nakakaintindi,” because it is not followed by a pause.

Some people relax every “i,” regardless of its location. This is fine in rapid speech. “Correct” speech, however, avoids relaxing the “i” unless the letter is followed by a pause. Except for hindi, never relaxing the “i” anywhere in speech is also acceptable.
From 1565 to 1898, most of the Philippines was under Spanish colonial rule. There are now about four thousand Tagalog words of Spanish origin, including many words in daily usage. Then from 1898 to 1946, most of the Philippines was under American colonial rule, so that today English words and expressions are also routinely used in everyday Tagalog. It is important to note that many of the commonly-used Tagalog words derived from Spanish or English have departed in meaning from their origins.

Tagalog also includes loan words from Hokkien Chinese, Sanskrit, Arabic, Tamil, Farsi, and other Austronesian Languages, particularly the neighboring Philippine languages and Malay.

**Numbers**

To tell time to the nearest hour, Tagalog-speakers are accustomed to using Spanish-derived words:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{alá una} & = 1 \text{ o’clock} \\
\text{alas onse} & = 11 \text{ o’clock}
\end{align*}
\]

To be more specific about time, they use either solely English words, solely Spanish-derived words, or a combination of Spanish-derived and native words:
• **twelve thirty** = 12:30
• **alas tres i medya** = 3:30
• **alas otso kinse** = 8:15
• **limang minuto bago mag-alas-diyes** = 5 minutes before it turns 10 o'clock

To count money or to measure something with a numerical value containing decimals or more than one non-zero digit (for example **2007** or **120**, but not **500**), Manilans predominantly use English numbers:

• **dalawang piso** = 2 pesos
• **two fifty** = 2.50 (more than one non-zero digit, so English is used)
• **limang daan** = 500
• **seventy-seven kilos** = 77 kilos
• **five hundred thirty** = 530
• **dos mil** = 2000
• **two thousand seven** = 2007

It’s only with ordinal numbers that native words are predominantly used:

*Ikalawa ng buwan* = the second of the month
*Pangalawa ako* = I’m second.
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Tagalog ay

Written, printed, and “formal” spoken Tagalog extensively uses the word ay, which is an artificial “to be” verb adopted to accommodate Western rhetoric. However, this isn’t a normal part of “conversational” Tagalog. In conversational Tagalog, the ay is either replaced with a pause or the interjection “e,” the Tagalog schwa.

Speaking Humbly and Intonation

Speaking humbly is central to Tagalog culture. When speaking with someone of significant seniority or authority, one usually has to use the plural “you” or “they” and speak in a certain pitch and melody that sounds “humble” to the Tagalog listeners. When approaching strangers of the same seniority or authority level, one usually uses the singular “you,” but still with a “humble” intonation pattern.

Although the rules of modesty are relaxed with close friends or close same-generation relatives, “confident” intonation patterns are used sparingly. For example, if you want to say that you speak Tagalog well, you should use humble intonation.

Few non-Filipinos speak Tagalog. Therefore, Filipinos are especially pleased when foreigners attempt to use Tagalog, and they are extra forgiving
when foreigners speak with incorrect pronunciation and/or intonation.

When Tagalog speakers speak English, it is generally with Tagalog intonation patterns.

**The Reading Lessons**

There are twenty Tagalog reading lessons, which are all recorded at the end of the program following the 30 lessons. They will introduce you to the sounds of the Tagalog alphabet. You may choose to do the readings along with the lessons, starting with Lesson Eleven, or you may wait and do them all together after completing the course. Feel free to repeat the reading lessons as often as needed for practice.
Lesson One

1. at
2. tapa
3. tapá
4. patag
5. paták
6. akap
7. alám
8. kapkáp
9. tantan
10. tampá
11. antá
12. pakakak
13. abakada
14. pagakpák
15. agapan
16. katawán
17. samantala
18. samantalá
19. kapakanán
20. apatán
Lesson Two

1. katapatan
2. nagpataká
3. akin
4. intindí
5. ring
6. katwiran
7. pakibigyán
8. para
9. Katipunan
10. inumin
11. inumín
12. bukas
13. bukás
14. ulitin
15. kumustá
16. kabukiran
17. pulitikál
18. tutubigan
19. umusisag
20. kalumbibít
Lesson Three

1. kinatawán
2. kurtinahan
3. sigé
4. pero
5. epekto
6. heto
7. ekstra
8. ermitanyo
9. tagabundók
10. organista
11. Amériká
12. ekonómiká
13. nagkonduktór
14. nagpúpulbós
15. séntimós
16. espíritú
17. álinlangan
18. pagkágustó
19. nakalílibáng
20. kalumbibít
Lesson Four

1. operahín
2. natútupád
3. uutang
4. oo
5. o o
6. roón
7. aabót
8. kain
9. uukitan
10. íinóm
11. babae
12. nakákaintindí
13. eeksport
14. íintindihín
15. pabaunan
16. páaralán
17. iaabót
18. naiikot
19. paróroonan
20. náiintindihán
Lesson Five

1. nakákainutil
2. náuunawaan
3. ngipin
4. ngayón
5. singit ngit
6. pakinggán
7. pagngibit
8. bangás
9. ngalan
10. ngasngás
11. manggá
12. nganib
13. nanganganib
14. pangungulag
15. ngulag
16. ngulngól
17. namámalengke
18. ngikiin
19. pangkasalukuyan
20. ngunit
Lesson Six

1. baga
2. bagà
3. bagá
4. yata / yatà
5. talabá
6. balità
7. nagbatá
8. ngingibit
9. makásuká
10. ngulilà
11. pagkabatà
12. kunwarí / kunwarì
13. malakí
14. tanghalì
15. dalubwikà
16. pagkausok
17. nagsusukà
18. umiihì
19. napakalabò
20. máaari
Lesson Seven

1. basa
2. basá
3. basà
4. basâ
5. basá / basà
6. kunwarî / kunwarì
tangá
tangà
ngâ
tumatawa
ginágawâ
humusgá
nagsásalitâ
nagsusukà
nagmúmulâ
salapî
panlapì
donagurî
balintunà
nangíngisdâ
Lesson Eight

1. wala / walá
2. walà / walâ
3. namámalengke
4. panahón
5. kamayan
6. kamáy
7. patáy
8. taytáy ng Maynilà
9. aksayá rin ng panahón
10. ang bertdey ni Liwaywáy
11. nabubuhay nang maaayos
13. kasóy o kasúy
14. nguyapit ng unggóy
15. May amóy ng bungang-kahoy.
17. Ang baka'y ngumungò.
18. Sino ang nandoón?
19. Tayo'y magsásalitâ.
20. Ika'y nangulughóy.
Lesson Nine

1. naghíhintáy ... 
2. ng ngutngót 
3. Waw! 
4. apaw 
5. ikáw 
6. bitíw 
7. daliw 
8. mangá 
9. mgá 
10. araw ng mgá papaw 
11. aw-áw 
13. tagaalíw 
15. naáalíw din 
16. ginágawâ 
17. aliw-íw 
19. restawrán ng mgá matatakaw 
20. Ang mgá ito’y umaaliw-íw.
Lesson Ten

1. Umaliw-íw
2. Umaliw-íw ang mga watawat.
3. hahataw
4. Ang gumágawá’y hahataw ná.
5. kapé / magkapé
6. kanan / kumanan
7. kain / kumain
8. Ang gandá!
10. Bilí tayo!
11. Itó ay mabilí.
13. Itó ang nagbilí.
14. Mabilis sila, ... 
15. at ang bilis mo!
16. Inom tayo!
17. Uminom ka na ba?
18. Anong gusto mong inumin?
19. Gusto kong uminom ng kape.
20. Sige, sa restawran ni Michelle!
Lesson Eleven

1. Ang tagál! Talagáng matagal.
2. Magalíng silá, pero ang galing mo rin!
3. Nagtagal din akó roón.
4. Kain na! Kumain ka na!
5. kain / kainin / kainan
6. bilí / bilhán / bilhín
7. aral / aralin
8. hintáy / hintayin
9. Bigáy / bigyán
10. gawâ / gawin
11. Anóng gustó kong kainin?
13. Saán ang kainán?
14. Bumilí ka na!
15. Dito mo ba gustóng bilhin?
16. Ito ang bilhan mo.
17. Heto ang sabi ng doktór.
18. Kulang ang pera ko.
19. Sino ang nagsabi?
Lesson Twelve

1. Magandang tanghali!
2. Gusto mo bang magkape?
3. Ayaw ko.
4. Sige, kape tayo.
5. Gusto mo bang pumunta?
6. Ang bilis mo naman!
7. Bilisan mo pa!
8. Mabilis sila.
9. Anong gusto mong kainin?
10. Kumain ka na ba?
11. Ang tagal mo!
12. Ayaw kong magdala ng kanin.
14. Ang ganda ni Liwayway!
15. Sabi nino?
16. Sabihin mo sa akin.
17. Ayaw nilang magsabi.
18. Anong gusto mong bilhin?
19. Hintayin mo ako.
20. Magaling! Ang galing mo!
Lesson Thirteen

1. Ala una na pô.
2. Bigyán po kita ng sampû.
4. Mámayâ.
5. Nabábalíw ang mgá kalabáw.
6. Oo ngâ.
7. Malayo nga ito.
8. Hindi po malayo.
9. Ang layo ng bahay!
10. Lagyán ko nga ng sampu.
11. Mamaya na lang.
13. Tanghalí na kami kumain.
14. Kain tayo mamaya!
15. Kauntî.
17. Mamayang tanghalì.
18. Marunong ako ng kaunting Tagalog.
20. Tanghalí na ba?
Lesson Fourteen

1. Ang galíng mo!
2. Gusto ko pang magtagál.
3. alás otso
4. ang mga kotse nilá
5. Bawal ang pamimistá.
6. tsinelas
7. Pakilagyán ng tsaá.
8. ang tsupér ng milyonaryo
10. tiyahin ni Liwaywáy
11. Tiyempuhan na lang.
14. ang biyaya ng bayan
15. Deretso lang ang tiyanggê.
16. Bigyan mo ng tiyan ng kalabáw.
17. Tsismoso ang mga tsupér nilá.
18. Gágawíng tsítsarón ang tiyán.
19. May mga kutsarita ba kayó?
20. Ang saráp ng atsara!
Lesson Fifteen

1. tiyagâ
2. siyám
3. siyá
4. diyán
5. diyáryo
6. kásiyá
7. diyaket
8. disgrasya
9. masiyado / masyado
10. tiyubibo
11. aksyón
12. diyis
13. siyempre
14. alkansyá
15. dyip
16. tsitsiryá
17. ambisyoso
18. estudyante
19. diyós
20. rebolusyunaryo
Tagalog 1

Lesson Sixteen

1. aksiyunán / aksyunán
2. diyús / diyusan
3. huwag
4. puwede / pwede
5. kuwento
6. guwantes
7. kuya
8. kuwarta / kwarta
9. buwaya
10. suwerte
11. Huwag alas nuwebe.
12. puwersa
13. buwan
14. Mga alas kwatro pa.
15. suweldo
16. buwisit
17. Dumeretso tayo!
18. Mga alas otso na lang.
19. Puwede ako bukas.
20. at huwag doon
Lesson Seventeen

1. Alas kuwatro pa ako kakain.
2. Puwede bang magtanong?
3. iyon
4. Pakinggán mo iyan.
5. mayroón
6. aywan
7. Mayroon akong kaibigan doón.
8. Kailan mo gusto?
11. Sa iyo ang pata.
12. Iyon ang Tagaytáy.
13. Mayroon ka bang pera?
15. Kanino iyong bag?
17. Kailan ka aalis?
18. Malakíng bahay ba iyon?
19. Iyan ang nakákatakot!
20. Sa iyo yata iyan.
Lesson Eighteen

1. Hindi ako nakákaintindí.
2. Kaunti lang.
3. Hindî, hindi akó nakákaintindí.
5. Hindî, hindi sir.
6. Marunong ako ng kauntì.
8. Sino ang harì?
11. Puwede bang magtanong?
12. Nasa Amerika ...
13. ang mga babae.
14. Ilang dolyar mayroon ka?
15. Marami ako.
16. Bigyan kita ...
17. ng anim na dolyar.
18. Wala ka bang pesos?
20. Maraming salamat.
Lesson Nineteen

1. Ito ang magandá.
2. Magandá ito.
4. Ito'y kumakain ng tinapay.
5. Mabilís talagá ito.
6. Gusto ba ninyóng uminóm?
7. Gusto ninyó báng uminóm?
8. Pupuntahán ninyó ho bá?
9. Pupuntahán ba ninyó?
12. Ayaw ninyó bá ng tubâ?
13. Ayaw ba ninyó ng lambanóg?
14. Umínom palá itó.
15. Ayaw ng pamilya ko.
16. Ayaw ba ninyóng uminóm?
17. Kulang ba ito?
18. Ayaw ninyó báng uminóm?
19. Ayaw kitáng bigyan.
20. Para sa akin ba itó?
Tagalog 1

Lesson Twenty

1. Bili tayo ng malaking kotse.
2. Bibili kami ng kanin.
3. Gusto ring bumili ...
4. nina Liwayway at Isagani.
5. Anong binili ninyo?
6. Alas nuwebe na po.
7. Gusto niyang puntahan ...
8. ang papuntang Maynila.
9. Hihintayin ko ng kaunti.
10. Gusto mo bang ...
11. magtrabaho sa amin?
12. Magtatagal yata ako.
13. Kain nga tayo!
14. Anong gusto nilang kainin?
15. Kumain na ba kayo?
17. Kumakain pa lang siya sa restawran.
18. Magagaling na talaga sila ngayon.
19. Pupuntahan ninyo po ba?
20. Marunong na akong mag-Tagalog!