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Waray Visayan Morphemes in the Lense of Dialectal Variations

Maria Lucil Dollado^{1*}

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ABSTRACT

Waray Visayan is one of Philippine languages spoken by most of the people in Eastern Visayas Region, Philippines. However, this language is spoken variably in the different provinces of the region. This study was conducted to find out the morphemic dialectal variations of Waray Visayan language between Catarman and Calbayog City speech communities in terms of content words and function words. It was assumed that morphemic dialectal variations exist in Waray Visayan language between Catarman and Calbayog City speech communities in Samar Island. This assumption was supported by the theory of language variation by Parker and Riley and the theory of geographic dialect continuum by Chamber and Trudgill. To prove the assumption, the linguistic analysis method was used wherein five literary pieces written in Waray Visayan language served as sources of verbal data. These literary pieces were considered as corpora of the study because they deemed to represent the Waray Visayan language being expressions of man's feelings and thoughts. The findings revealed that the morphemic variations between the two dialects occurred in contextual variation, clipping, and syllable shifts. With these findings, it was concluded that morphemic dialectal variations exist in Waray Visayan language between Catarman and Calbayog City speech communities in Samar Island.

INTRODUCTION

One of human's characteristics which make him totally superior in the animal kingdom is his language. Language which has been defined variably by different linguists boils down to being a system of arbitrary signs and symbols, a medium of communication, and an identity marker. It is possible to build social ties with other people and accomplish specific social functions via language. Animals have their own language, although it is not nearly as complicated and intricate as human language.

Language unites people; in the Philippines for example, Filipinos understand each other even if they have their own native language because they speak in one national language which is Filipino. In the macro scenario, people around the globe communicate and transact business and diplomatic affairs through the English language. However, even if language unites people, linguistic variation continues to surface. Within a large complex society individuals from different social classes and different ethnicities live in close proximity but they speak their language variably (Rosales, 2015)). Filipinos speak their national language which is Filipino in order to understand each other. However, when they speak the national language, they speak variably because their regional language affects the way they speak. Similarly, people around the world speak English in order to understand each other. However, an American speaks English differently from an Australian. Even Filipinos whose English is patterned from the Americans speak differently from the Americans. The variation is most likely common in the choice of words, pronunciation, sound system, word formation and even sentence formation. Variability can be observed everywhere in

language, at all levels, in different dialects and different registers (Holyk).

Wardhaugh (2006) underscored that regional variation or how a group of people speak their language variably provides one of the easiest ways of observing language variation. Budiarsa (2018) pointed out that dialect is a variation of one language used by one speech community whose difference lies on linguistic features like syntax, morphology, and phonology. Dialects may be classified into regional dialect and social dialect.

According to Parker & Riley (2005) linguistic variations may occur even within the same place of different regions. This variation is known as regional dialect which is a product of multiple factors like politics, geography and culture. They further explained that dialects vary because of different reasons. First, the early settlers of one place leave its cultural heritage including language once they leave it. Second, migration routes tend to delineate dialect boundaries. Third, politics and religion contribute to regional dialect differences. Fourth, physical geographical boundaries segregate groups of speakers resulting to regional dialects. As a whole, regional varieties of a language are reflective of a place settlement history and geography.

A parallel situation is observed in the Philippines; words such as biyahe, bintana, and sundalo are of Spanish origin viaje, ventana, and soldado respectively; counting words such as uno, dos, tres are also of Spanish root. This fact can be attributed to three centuries of colonization.

In Region 8, the Eastern Visayas Region, the speech communities speak three languages, Cebuano, Waray Visayan, and Abaknon. Cebuano is spoken in western, central and southern parts of Leyte including Southern

¹ Northwest Samar State University, Philippines.

* Corresponding author's e-mail: lucil.dollado@nwssu.edu.ph

Leyte. Speech communities facing Cebu in Biliran Island speak Cebuano while those facing Samar speak Waray Visayan which is the language of the people of Samar Island, Tacloban City, and north-eastern Leyte. A unique language which is not part of the Visayan languages known as Abaknon or Inabaknon is used by the people of Capul, an island in Northern Samar.

One Waray speech community knows that their dialect is different from other speech communities in terms of prosody and lexicon. This is their observation whenever they meet a Waray speaking person speaking a different variant. This common observation of them become noticeable when the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented the Mother Tongue Based - Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE). This orders of DepEd has made mother tongue or the native language be used as medium of instruction at the same a subject area in primary grades (Grades 1 to 3). With these changes in education, instructional materials were developed regionally using the dialect of the people in the capital of the region which is Tacloban City. However, their dialect is quite different from other Waray dialects; thus, teachers have complained with the materials since they still need to translate other terms to their own dialect to make their learners understand the content. Thus, the need to conduct a dialectal variation is seen important by the researcher in order to determine the differences so the academic community of each speech community will design and develop an instructional material suited to their own dialect. Also, this study is hoped to shed light to the people that all languages as well as dialects are equal; there is no better or inferior dialect. Whatever variations there are, these are merely variations due to several factors. These do not make the dialect or the speakers superior or inferior from the others.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language is a finite system of elements of principles which make possible for speakers to construct sentences and to perform certain communicative tasks (Fasold & Linton, 2006). With language, people can express their feelings and emotions; they can also perform tasks or speech acts through language. Rosales (2015) underscored the importance of language among humans by stipulating that language is the best means of communication among people; without it, the mastery of the phases of education and life itself is considered meaningless.

Fasold and Linton (2006) discussed seven universal properties of languages: modularity, constituency and recursion, discreteness, productivity, arbitrariness, reliance on context and variability. According to them, languages around the globe have these properties. The last property, variability, considers the difference of one language from the other despite sharing the same properties. They emphasized that variability in language allows people to convey not just the semantic thought of the words and sentences they express but also their social identities (geographical, social status, ethnicity and

gender).

For Wardaugh (2006) all languages have internal variation, in fact, language exists in a number of varieties and is in one sense the sum of those varieties. This means that one language can possibly have several varieties. Thus, a geographical variety of a language, spoken in a certain area, and being different in some linguistic items from other geographical varieties of the same language is called dialect. Dialect is a variation of a certain language which is used by a particular speech community marked with linguistic features such as syntax morphology, phonology (Budiarsa, 2018)). In other words dialectal variations occur when speakers of one language differ on their sound production, word formation, vocabulary or sentence structure.

Moreover, the mental system involved in word formation or the branch of linguistics that deals with words, their internal structure, and how they are formed is termed morphology (Aronoff and Fudeman, n.d.). A major process in which morpho linguists investigate words, their structure, and their process of formation is through the identification and study of morphemes, the smallest meaningful unit of a language. Morphemes are classified into: free morpheme, and bound morpheme. Free morphemes can stand alone as words like read and print. On the other hand, bound morphemes are unable to function as free-standing like -er in reader and re- in reprint Radford, et al).

Fasold & Linton (2006) categorized morphemes into: content and function morphemes. Nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs are classified as content morphemes and also often referred to as open-class morphemes. On the other hand, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and articles are referred to as function morphemes. They are also called closed-class morphemes, because they belong to categories that are essentially closed to invention or borrowing.

In linguistic variation study conducted by Caraballe (2018), results show that eighty (80) sociolect variants are frequently used by the millennials out of one hundred (100) content words. There are twenty-two (22) noun variants out of thirty (30), thirty-three (33) verb variants out of thirty-five (35). The variations are shown using synonymous words, code switching and code mixing, from Hiligaynon Visayan to standard English, syllables and vowel shift, affixation, clipping, metathesis and borrowing from Spanish.

Likewise, Chavez (2018) examined the morphologic variations of Hiligaynon Visayan's lexicon in the Sixth District of Negros Occidental. She discovered that morphologic variations in Hiligaynon-Visayan content words in terms of orthography, affixation, lexicon and borrowed words are evident. Variation in terms of word orthography appears in the shifting of I to e, e to I, o to u, duplication of g, and adding of y. In terms of affixation, variation is shown in the prefix PA - to mark noun form class; PAG-, clipping of prefix KA - and suffix -AN, clipping of prefix NA- and suffix -AN,

suffixes –AN, –ON, and –HON, metathesis with the loss of vowels o and a, signal verb form class; the prefix MAKA- and clippings of prefix MA- and suffix –ON. HON-, –AN, indicate the adjective form class and the prefix PAGKAMA- indicates adverb form class. In terms of lexicon, variation manifests in the complete change of word, and in terms of borrowed words, variation is observable in the borrowing from Spanish, English, Tagalog, Kinaray-a, and Cebuano-Visayan languages.

Similarly, Bautista (2018) investigated the morphologic variations of Cebuano-Visayan and Hiligaynon-Visayan languages. Her analysis shows that Cebuano-Visayan and Hiligaynon-Visayan languages have similarities and differences in meaning, spelling, and speaking as used in the local dailies. Further the two languages share common free and bound affixes and the morphologic process mostly observed is borrowing from Spanish and English, reduplicating words, spelling modification, and code mixing.

The literature presented in this chapter are deemed relevant to the present study because these have given the researcher clear understanding of the topic under investigation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This linguistic investigation is a descriptive qualitative analysis which emphasizes the qualities of entities and processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. It uses the linguistic structural method of analysis. This method examines the nature of the linguistic units such as phonemes, morphemes, and syntax and their structure or peculiar systematic arrangement based on a collected corpus. Wisegeek.com defines linguistic analysis as the scientific analysis of a language sample. It involves at least one of the five main branches of linguistics: phonology, morphology, syntax,

semantics, and pragmatics. Linguistic analysis can be used to describe the unconscious rules and processes that speakers of a language use to create spoken or written language.

The verbal data which served as basis of this linguistic study were generated from a collection of corpus outsourced from published materials. There were five (5) literary pieces written in Waray Visayan language using Calbayog dialect which served as corpora of the study. One of the corpora was “Calbayog”, written by Jose Gomez and it is considered as the official hymn of Calbayog City. Other sources of verbal data were the poems “O Bulan” by Benjamin Ayong, Sr, and “Ayaw Pagpudla an Tuog” by Phil Harold Mercurio, the song “Nalimot Ka na Ba” by Tomas Gomez, and a fiction story “An Estatwa nga Babaye” by Ofelio Sarzata. The poem, the song as well as the fiction story mentioned above were taken from the book of Merle Alunan “Sa Atong Dila” Introduction to Visayan Literature. Mercurio’s poem is part of his book “Ayaw Pagpudla an Tuog ug Iba Pa nga mga Siday” published by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA). The function and the content words were identified from the corpora; they were translated to English and were subjected to expert validation by language teachers to check the accuracy of translation as well as the classification. After validation, the informants who were residents of Catarman, Northern Samar translated the words to Catarman Waray dialect.

These literary pieces have been considered as corpora of the study because they deemed to represent the Waray Visayan language being expressions of man’s feelings and thoughts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 discloses the morphemic variation of Catarman and Calbayog City in terms of function words. Most

Table 1: Calbayog – Catarman Morphemic Variation of Function Words

Calbayog Waray Dialect	Catarman Waray Dialect	English	Morphemic Variation
bisan	biskan	even if	clipping
mong	mo	your	clipping
nakon	akon	my	clipping
sinin	inin	this	clipping
sugad	mala	like	contextual variation
ug	ngan	and	contextual variation
aber	hala daw	hey	contextual variation
agud	para	so that	contextual variation
igbaw	bawbaw	above	contextual variation
kanda	kanra	their	shift: last syllable
ngay-an	balitaw	really	contextual variation
samtang	mintras	really	contextual variation
tagsa-tagsa	kanya-kanya	everyone	contextual variation
tag usa	tag sayo	each one	contextual variation
iya	kanya	his/her	shift: first syllable

of the words vary contextually, four of the words vary through clipping and two through shift.

According to Geeraerts (2016) contextual variation occurs when referents of the same type may be named variably due to formality of speech situation, or the geographical and sociological characteristics of the participants in the communication process. In the case of Calbayog and Catarman, geography is the main factor for the variation.

Based on the verbal data in Table 1, nine words show contextual variation.

Aside from contextual variation, the verbal data in Table 2 also show variation through clipping. According to the Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics, clipping is a process of word formation in which the existing form is abbreviated or part of the word has been removed. Just like the following words:

Table 2: Calbayog – Catarman Morphemic Variations of Content Words (Nouns)

Calbayog Waray Dialect	Catarman Waray Dialect	English	Morphemic Variations
adlaw	sudang	sun	synonymous words
adlaw	adaw	day	clipping
bingalog	sapa	stream	contextual variation
kahintang	kamutangan	situation	contextual variation
panamilit	panbilit	farewell	contextual variation
sidlangan	sirangan	east	Shift: first syllable
baba	hiwa	mouth	contextual variation
bulig	ayuda	help	contextual variation
hitsura	kahimo	face	contextual variation
kahakog	kahaklab	selfishness	contextual variation
lumulupyo	mulupyo	residents	clipping
pintor	para pintar	painter	contextual variation
katahuran	pagtahud	respect	contextual variation
purtahan	sada	door	contextual variation
lamrag	sun	light	contextual variation

Table 2, above displays the morphemic variations of Calbayog – Catarman Waray Visayan content words in terms of nouns. The morphemic variations evident are contextual variation, clipping, and shift.

Just like the case of British English and American English, the choice between nappy and diaper, elevator and lift, and others is considered contextual variation because geography is a factor of the variation. Likewise, Calbayog

and Catarman Waray dialects manifest contextual variation as shown in Table 2.

The results of the morphemic analysis are in consonance with the theory of Parker & Riley (2005) which states that language variation studies linguistic features that differ systematically as different groups of speakers or the same speakers in different situations are compared. Here, two speech communities are compared and morpheme is the

Table 3: Calbayog – Catarman Morphemic Variations of Content Words (Verbs)

Calbayog Waray	Catarman Waray	English	Morphemic Variations
hiusa	nahimangraw	be surprised	contextual variation
iguinatangis	iguinhahaya	crying	contextual variation
kamatyan	ikamatay	die for	shift: first and last syllables
magtambal	maghuwas	to heal	contextual variation
mawad-an	mawaraan	lost	shift: second syllable
nabiling	naghanap	look for	contextual variation
nag-inampo	nagpinangadye	praying	contextual variation
nagkalakat	nagkalakaw	walked	shift: last syllable
pagpasipara	pagkasi	ever try	contextual variation
pagsangpit	pagban-o	to call	contextual variation
sangyaw	ipabantog	proclaim	contextual variation
sumidlit	siplat	peep	contextual variation
bilangon	hanapon	find	contextual variation
gumawas	ginawas	go outside	shift: first syllable
ginbutang	ginhulag	lay down	contextual variation

ginsaka	gindara sa bawbaw	brought upstairs	contextual variation
iginsaysay	igin istorya	tell	contextual variation
igpupulong	igbabagaw	to say	contextual variation
kahipausa	kahimangraw	shocked	contextual variation
kaugdang	kaugdang	burned to ashes	shift: last syllable
maglakaton	maglakawon	to travel	shift: last syllable
magyayakan	magbabagaw	say something	contextual variation
maka-agi	makahanap	find	contextual variation
mangaro	mag-aro	to ask	clipping
magpipirok-pisuk	pisok-pisok	blinking of eyes	clipping
mapakadto	makadto	go somewhere	clipping
nag-abot	inabot	arrived	shift: first syllable
nagbibiling	naghahanap	looking for	contextual variation
naghuhulat	naghinulat	waiting for	clipping
nagkakirita	nagkatarapo	saw each other	contextual variation
nagpakanhi	nagpakadi	come here	shift: last syllable
nagayakan	nagbagaw	said	contextual variation
nahapon	hinugpo	perch	contextual variation
nahikit-an	naimdan	saw	contextual variation
nahimata	nagimata	awakes	shift: second syllable
pagkurukayakan	pag uro-istorya	discuss	contextual variation
pukanon	wakayon	terminate	contextual variation
tindog	tugbos	to stand	contextual variation
tumangdo	tumuyang	confirmed	contextual variation
umundang	tinuok	to stop	contextual variation

linguistic feature which are variantly spoken.

Table 3 indicates the morphemic variations of Calbayog – Catarman Waray Visayan content words in terms of verbs. Based on the data the morphemic variations are contextual variation and shifts.

These results concur the findings of Blust (Asia-Pacific Linguistics: Open Access Monograph) stating that Philippine language including Waray Visayan can be characterized as agglutinative-synthetic, meaning, there is a relative abundance of affixes and at the same time the morpheme boundaries are usually clear. For example the words IGPUPULONG (from pulong), NAGKAKIRITA (from kita) and PAGKURUKAYAKAN (from yakan) from Calbayog Waray dialect, the presence of the affixes ig-, nag- and pagkuru- are evident. In the same case that Catarman verbs IGBABAGAW (from bagaw), MAWARAAN (from wara), and MAGLAKAWON

(from lakaw) show the presence of affixes: ig-, ma-, mag-, -an, and –on.

Table 4 reflects the morphemic variations of Waray Visayan adjectives spoken in Calbayog City and Catarman. All the data above indicate contextual variation in which the words vary significantly in their form but referring to the same thing because of geography as stated by Parker & Riley (2005) particular lexical items and phonological forms are associated with specific geographical areas .

The findings of the present study is very related to the findings of Cerbito (2017) stating that adjectives undergo morphemic variation when spoken in standard Waray through synonymous word variants, shifts and clipping. Table 5 discloses the morphemic variations of Waray Visayan content words in terms of adverbs.

The variation evident among all the words indicated in the table is contextual variation. Consistent with the

Table 4: Calbayog – Catarman Morphemic Variations of Content Words (Adjectives)

Calbayog Waray	Catarman Waray	English	Morphemic Variations
bulanon	kadayaw	full moon	contextual variation
bulahan	angay	worthy	contextual variation
sadang	sakto	enough	contextual variation
usa	sayo	one	contextual variation
lagas	arug	old	contextual variation
kahimyang	mamingaw	peaceful	contextual variation

Table 5: Calbayog – Catarman Morphemic Variations of Content Words (Adverbs)

Calbayog Waray	Catarman Waray	English	Morphemic Variations
katakip	hipid	neighboring	contextual variation
makausa	makasayo	once	contextual variation
aanhi	adi	here	contextual variation
apurado	nagdadagmit	hasty	contextual variation

results above is the statement of Wardaugh (2006) that all languages exhibit internal variation and language exists in a number of varieties. The varied term indicated in the table above only show that Calbayog waray and Catarman Waray are varieties of Waray language. Though there is variation of morphemes still the speakers understand each other making the two variants as mutually intelligible. They are mutually intelligible because they are dialects of Waray and their distance is not that wide. As stated by Chamber and Trudgill (1998) in their theory of geographic continuum the differences are sometime smaller and sometimes larger; the greater the geographical separation is, the greater the difficulty of comprehension.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results and findings of the study it can be concluded that contextual variations, syllable shifts, and clipping are the morphemic dialectal variations which exist between Catarman and Calbayog City Waray speech communities in Samar Island.

Based on the findings and conclusion, these recommendations are hereby offered:

1. Conduct further studies on the genealogy of Waray Visayan language
2. Conduct a similar dialectal variation study among other Waray Visayan dialects
3. Conduct an in-depth investigation of the phonological variations of Waray dialects
4. Form a local linguistic association which will conduct further studies on Waray language and preserve it

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