

MORPHOLOGICAL TAPESTRY OF BISAYA: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF BUKIDNON AND DAVAOÉÑO DIALECTS

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ABSTRACT

Language serves as a foundation for communication and cultural identity, reflecting the diversity and culture found around the globe. Morphology plays a significant role in this process, as it offers a structural foundation for word formation and meaning-making within a language. This study analyzes the morphological structures of Bukidnon and Davaoeño Bisaya, exploring the similarities and differences in word formation processes, with a focus on derivational and inflectional morphemes, as well as the linguistic differences that affect everyday communication and language learning for speakers of these dialects. Results show that the use of prefixes like –gaka and –na, along with the application of directional suffixes, illustrates how each dialect conveys nuances in meaning and action. The phenomenon of reduplication further enriches the expressive capacity of these dialects, with examples such as uli-uli and gauli demonstrating differing emphases on habitual versus completed actions. Additionally, directional words differ between the two dialects in terms of suffixes or inflectional morphemes; for instance, the addition of –h is common in both dialects, while the addition of –a is more prevalent in Davaoeño. These linguistic distinctions can lead to misinterpretations and cross-linguistic transfer among speakers, as identical words may carry different meanings across dialects. Furthermore, the influence of Spanish and Tagalog on vocabulary complicates communication, reflecting the historical and cultural contexts that shape each dialect. Overall, understanding these differences is essential for fostering clearer interactions and enhancing language acquisition among speakers of the dialects. Thus, it is encouraged to create cross-dialect learning opportunities, such as language exchange programs or workshops that allow speakers from both regions to interact and learn from each other's dialects, promoting mutual understanding.

Keyword: *cross-linguistic transfer, Bisaya, Bukidnon, Davaoeño, misinterpretation, morphology*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language serves as a foundation of communication and cultural identity that reflects diversity and culture around the globe. Each language encapsulates the linguistic variation offering unique folds of traditions, history and cognitive framework. The interplay between language and culture is significant considering the unique experiences and worldview of a society. As the society evolves, so as the language. This evolution can lead to the advent of new dialects, enriching the linguistic landscape.

An essential aspect of language that contributes to its richness is morphology. Abastillas (2019) described the contribution of understanding the language dynamics of every community. Language practices has been the ultimate indicator of expression in navigating social contexts. Morphology plays a significant role in this process,

as this offers structural foundation for word formation and meaning-making within a language, (Sieras, 2020). By analyzing morphemes, it will uncover how different societies leverage specific linguistic elements to convey cultural nuances and societal identities. It was further emphasized that morphological structures reflect adaptability in different settings showcasing formal and informal registers of a language demonstrating the powerful interplay between language structure and dynamics.

Nwokigi (2024) examined the morphological structures and process in the language structure in a global scale. It underscores the importance of local linguistic contexts exhibiting the unique linguistic heritage of African language. The study also showed how morphological awareness influences in the language acquisition and comprehension across linguistic backgrounds.

However, despite the contributions, there remains a gap in exploring the morphological process which could further show its word formation and processes.

Globally, morphological analysis was conducted to various countries, like Japan, India and Pakistan contributing the understanding across different linguistic contexts by Gandhi (2022), Hussain (2024) and Matsumoto (2020). The articles emphasized understanding language structure, highlighting its applicability beyond specific languages by focusing on the role of morphology in language acquisition, illustrating how morphological awareness guide the learners in grasping vocabulary and grammatical structures, which is vital for effective communication. However, despite their contributions, a notable gap remains in exploring how these morphological process interacts with other linguistic elements across various languages such as the impact of the multilingual contexts where language contact occurs.

In the Philippines, several studies collectively contribute to the understanding of morphological structures, revealing how language is used to convey information and emphasizing the importance of local language structures in educational settings (Abiog et al., 2020; Dorias, 2023; Madeja, 2024; Mancao et al., 2024; Pedroza, 2016; Reponte-Sereño, 2023). These studies collectively highlight the rich morphological features of local and indigenous languages, showcasing the complexity and diversity within Philippine linguistic landscapes. Additionally, it is further illustrated how morphological processes adapt to contemporary needs in specific regions, impacting the language-speaking community differently.

With the aforementioned researches, each examining the tapestry of language. A notable research gap emerges on morphological process specific to these dialects. While others provide insights into morphological features of Philippine languages, they overlook the unique word formation processes that will differentiate Bukidnon and Davaoeno Bisaya. Specifically, there is limited studies exploring the derivational and inflectional morphemes within these dialects and their implications for everyday communication. Addressing these gaps could enhance the understanding of linguistic diversity in the Philippines that will accommodate the

morphological nuances of both Bukidnon and Davaoeno Bisaya.

Hence, this led the researcher to compare and analyze the morphological structure in Bukidnon Bisaya and Davaoeno Bisaya. Specifically, this sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the similarities and differences in word formation processes between Bukidnon and Davaoeno Bisaya in the use of derivational morphemes?;
2. What are the similarities and differences in word formation processes between Bukidnon and Davaoeno Bisaya in the use of inflectional morphemes?; &
3. How do the linguistic differences affect the everyday communication among the speakers?

2. METHODOLOGY

This section presents the approaches and procedures that were used in conducting this study. Specifically, it described the research design and the participants of the study. The data collection methods and the data analysis plan.

2.1. Research Design

This study was a qualitative research design in nature. Jain (2023) defined qualitative research that explores to determine and understands a phenomenon and the meanings recognized to an individual or a group. By applying this, the researcher analyzed the morphological structures of Bukidnon and Davaoeno Bisaya, exploring the similarities and differences in word formation processes, focusing on derivational and inflectional morphemes, and the linguistic differences that affect the everyday communication and language learning for speakers of the dialect.

2.2. Participants of the study

This study was participated 5 speakers who are living in Bukidnon and from Davao de Oro, to ensure a comprehensive representation of the linguistic features. They will be chosen purposively, the criterion of the participants is that they are residing in Lantapan, Bukidnon and in Compostela, Davao de Oro.

2.3. Corpora of the study

The corpora consisted of written texts collected from 18 social media posts of texts from Bukidnon and Davao de Oro. This provide a rich data set for analyzing morphological structures in natural language use.

2.4.Data collection methods

The collection of data involved the process of gathering and measuring information, (Bhandari, 2022). This study followed a formal communication procedure when conducting the research. A permission letter was sent to the 5 participants, who are from Bukidnon and also from Davao de Oro. Then, once approved, informed consent was given to the participants to conduct the semi-structured interview. Also, the researcher got 18 Facebook posts of Bukidnon bisaya and Davaoeño Bisaya

2.5. Data analysis plan

Data analysis utilized a thematic approach focusing on identifying patterns in morphological structures related to derivational and inflectional morphemes. A comparative analysis was conducted to categorize and quantify the morphological features observed in both dialects from the written texts from the local news and social media posts. Then, semi-structured interview was conducted to the participants to explore their experiences regarding the impact of morphological differences on communication.

3.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the exploration of participants' morphological structures of Bukidnon and Davaoño Bisaya, specifically on formation processes, focusing on derivational and inflectional morphemes and the linguistic differences that affect the everyday communication among the speakers. The information was gathered through in-depth interview and from the corpora of the study.

This study had three research questions, with three sub-questions that will act as guiding questions during the interview. The following research question: What are the similarities and differences in word formation processes between Bukidnon and Davaoño Bisaya in the use of derivational morphemes; What are the similarities and differences in word formation processes between Bukidnon and Davaoño Bisaya in the

use of inflectional morphemes; & How do the linguistic differences affect the everyday communication among the speakers. Each participant has given time to answer the questions in order to collect the necessary data for the in-depth interview. For the corpora of the study, data were gathered from social media posts. All participants' responses to this survey were recorded, and they were guaranteed that their identity and information would be kept absolutely anonymous.

Below presents the Table 1 and the extracted data from the interview and corpora that shows the data gathered for the similarities and differences in word formation between Bukidnon and Davaoño Bisaya in the use of derivational morphemes.

Table 1. Bukidnon and Davaoño Bisaya Derivational Morpheme

Root words	English	Derivational Words in Bukidnon Bisaya	English	Derivational Words in Davaoño Bisaya	English
Lagot	Annoy	<i>Gakalagot</i>	Annoyed (present)	<i>Nalagot</i>	Annoyed (past)
Dungog	Hear	<i>Gakadungog</i>	Heard (present)	<i>Nadungog</i>	Heard (past)

In Bukidnon, the word –gaka means the word is in present tense and when compared to Davaoño Bisaya it means the word is in past tense.

SMP1 presents the –gaka in present tense.

For the go kaayu si Sisi uy. gakalagot man ko ani niya sa UAAP.

(Sisi is going into it, I am annoyed to her in UAAP)

SMP2 presents the –na in past tense.

Nalagot nami ha our kind of chill/rest.

(We are annoyed, our kind of chill/rest.)

This indicates that the Bisaya dialects spoken in Bukidnon and Davaoño exhibit distinct differences. In Bukidnon, words beginning with –gaka denote ongoing situations, whereas in Davaoño and Bukidnon, the equivalent prefix –na refers to past events. Additionally, the –gaka prefix is absent in Davaoño, while the Bukidnon Bisaya –na signifies past occurrences.

This conforms with the study of Reponte-Sereño (2023), it suggests that these morphological variations are indicative of broader sociolinguistic dynamics at play in the region. The absence of certain morphemes in Davaoño compared to

Bukidnon may point to historical language contact and cultural exchanges that have influenced the evolution of these dialects.

Below presents the Table 2 and the extracted data from the interview and corpora that shows the data gathered for the similarities and differences in word formation between Bukidnon and Davaoño Bisaya in the use of inflectional morphemes.

Table 2. Bukidnon and Davaoño Bisaya Inflectional Morpheme

Root words	English	Inflectional Words in Bukidnon Bisaya	English	Inflectional Words in Davaoño Bisaya	English
Anha Anhi	Come	Anha / Anhaa Anhii / Anhia	Come / To come	Adtoa	Come
Adto	Go	Adtoa / Adtoi	Go / To go	Adtoa	Go (Far)
Dinhi Diri	Here	Dinhi Diri	Here	Dinhia Diria	Here
Dira	There	Dira	There	Diraa	There

Words that are directional are different in Bukidnon and Davaoño Bisaya, both differs in the suffix or the inflectional morpheme, addition of –h is both common in two languages, however addition of –a is more common in Davaoño.

SMP3 presents the Bukidnon anha, which means come

Meeting mi sa among laag puhon. Anha mi dinha dude..

(Meeting for out travel soon. We will come there dude.)

SMP4 presents the Davaoño adtoa, which means come

Unexpected nga pagka adtoa nako but worth it and thankful kay

naka attend jud ko sa big day sa ako best

(It is unexpected to go there but worth it and thankful that I attended the

big day of my best.)

SMP5 present the Bukidnon dinhi, which means here

Usa ranako ka damgo way back then nga maka mark ug legacy dinhi sa Lantapan and now, I am proud to present to you...

(Way back then, it is one of my dreams to mark a legacy here in Lantapan and now, I am proud to present to you.)

SMP6 presents the Davaoño dinhia, which means here

Kyuta nako dinhia uii HAHAAH. Throwback.

(I am cute here HAHAAH. Throwback.)

SMP7 present the Bukidnon diri, which means here

Lami ilang kape diri! A must visit coffee shop here in Bukidnon.)

(The coffee here is delicious. A must visit coffee shop here in Bukidnon.)

SMP8 presents the Davaoño diria and diraa, which means here

Due to today's bad weather and lack of electricity, we will reschedule the game. Mag update rami guys diria sa page po if kanus.a ang next game. Relax lang mo diraa.

(Due to today's bad weather and lack of electricity, we will reschedule the game. We will update here in our page for the next game. Just relax there.)

In relation to the study of Madeja (2024), both Bukidnon and Davaoño Bisaya share the suffix –h, that indicates direction. This suffix is commonly applied to verbs and adjectives to convey movement of orientation towards a specific location. However, the addition of –a is more prevalent in Davaoño compared to Bukidnon Bisaya. This suffix often modifies the meaning of directional words, adding nuances that are specific to the Davaoño dialect. For instance, while both dialects may use a base word for go, the inflection with –a in Davaoño can imply a more specific direction or intention than its counterpart in Bukidnon.

In addition, Araneta et al. (2022) emphasizes the importance of these suffixes in understanding the functional dynamics of each dialect, illustrating how subtle variations can significantly impact

communication. Other notable difference of both languages is the reduplication of words. It is a morphological process involves repeating of a root word, either fully or partially to create new words. Below shows the extracted data that shows reduplication common in both languages.

Table 3. Reduplication of Words in Bukidnon and Davaoño Bisaya

Root words	English	Reduplication	Dialect	English
Uli	Come Home/Return	Uli-uli	Bukidnon	Come Home (Frequent)
Uli	Come Home/Return	Gauli	Davaoño	Come Home (Seldom) / To Return

Another notable difference of Bukidnon and Davaoño bisaya is the reduplication of words that shows frequency. With the root word uli, in Bukidnon, uli-uli that means frequent that describes something that occurs often or repeatedly within a given timeframe, whereas in Davaoño, gauli refers to seldom or rarely, that suggests that an occurrence happens in rare occasions.

SMP9 shows uli-uli, which means frequent occurrence.

haha uli2 (uli-uli) man lagi tagams fines sa department.

(haha ‘always’ going home. Deserve, I have fines in the department.)

SMP10 shows gauli, which means seldom occurrence.

Gauli pa mo sa inyo kung kalag2? HAHA

(Do you come home every all soul’s day? HAHA)

The term uli-uli is an example of full reduplication, where the root word uli meaning to return, is repeated. This word emphasizes the action of returning or suggests a habitual aspect, indicating that someone returns frequently or repeatedly. On the other hand, gauli is derived from the root word uli but incorporates a prefix –ga which indicate a completed action and mean to return/to come. Thus, both uli-uli and gauli relate to the concept of returning, their morphological structures reflect different nuances: uli-uli emphasizes repetition and frequency through reduplication, whereas gauli conveys a more straightforward action without that repetitive emphasis. This distinction highlights how reduplication in Bukidnon and

Davaoño Bisaya not only modifies meaning but also enriches the expressive capacity of the language

Abiog et al. (2020) emphasized that the ability to modify meaning through morphological structures like reduplication is significant in understanding cultural and contextual nuances in language use. In Bukidnon and Davaoño Bisaya, such linguistic features may reflect social practices or cultural values surrounding the concept of returning, whether it be in physical movement or metaphorical contexts such as relationships and commitments. Thus, exploration of these terms underscores the importance of morphological analysis in linguistics, revealing how language not only serves as a means of communication but also as a reflection of cultural practices and cognitive processes. The study of such linguistic features contributes to a deeper understanding of language dynamics within specific cultural contexts.

Below presents the extracted data from the interview and corpora that shows the data gathered on how the linguistic differences affect the everyday communication among the speakers:

Misinterpretation

One of the morphological differences between Bukidnon and Davaoño Bisaya that affect everyday communication and language learning for speakers is misinterpretation. Table 4 presents the misinterpretation that affect the everyday communication and language learning of the speakers.

Table 4. Misinterpretation Affects Everyday Communication Among Speakers

Bukidnon Bisaya	English	Davaoño Bisaya	English
Lapwa	Pour hot water	Lapwa	Boil
Bukal	Boil	Bukal	Boil
Lutya	Taro	Karlang	Taro
Kalha or Kalaha	Cooking Pan	Karahay	Cooking Pan

SMP11 presents lapwa as poured hot water in Bukidnon.

Lapwa nga bottle feed for newborn...

(Poured hot water in the bottle feed for newborn...)

SMP12 presents lapwa as boil in Davaoño.

Lapwa nga talong, yummy...

(Boiled eggplant, yummy..)

SMP13 shows the term lutya in Bukidnon as taro.

Isagol ang lutya sa karne nga sabaw..

(Mix the taro in the meat soup.)

SMP14 shows the term karlang in Davaoeño as taro.

Aha mn ta kakita karlang sa palengke guys?

(Where can we find taro in the market?)

SMP15 presents the kalha as the term for cooking pan in Bukidnon

Kalha for sale naa pud paluwagan.

(Cooking pan for sale and can have lay away.)

SMP16 shows the karahay as the term for cooking pan in Davaoeño

Mao lagi ni akong giingon mang hiram ug karahay dili mauli.

(That is what I said, when borrowing a cooking pan and cannot be returned.)

One linguistic differences that affect the everyday communication of speakers of both languages is misinterpretation. Although the same Bisaya language, both dialects have different terms for some words which cause the speakers to be misinterpreted. Words may have different meanings or usages in various dialects. A Bukidnon and Davaoeño Bisaya may use the same word lapwa but differs in meaning.

In relation to the study by Abiog et al. (2020), which explores the implications of linguistic diversity on communication among Bisaya speakers, it becomes evident that such variations can significantly impact interpersonal interactions. The researchers emphasize that effective communication requires not only a shared language but also an understanding of the regional nuances that influence meaning. It was further argued that awareness of these dialectal differences is crucial for fostering clearer communication and reducing

misunderstandings among speakers from different regions. This study underscores the importance of promoting linguistic awareness and

sensitivity, particularly in multicultural settings where diverse dialects coexist, thereby enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation among Bisaya speakers.

Cross-linguistic Transfer

Table 5 presents another morphological differences between Bukidnon and Davaoeño Bisaya that affect the everyday communication and language learning which is cross-linguistic transfer.

Table 5. Cross-linguistic Transfer Affects Everyday Communication Among Speakers

Bukidnon Bisaya	English	Davaoeño Bisaya	English
hulam	Borrow	Hiram (Filipino)	Borrow
Merkado (Spanish)	Market	Palengke (Filipino)	Market
Naug	Go down	Baba	Go down

SMP14 shows the term palengke in Davaoeño as market which is from Tagalog Filipino.

Aha mn ta kakita karlang sa palengke guys?

(Where can we find taro in the market?)

SMP17 presents merkado in Bukidnon as market from Spanish Language

Mahala na sa pamilite pa merkado ui.

(Fair is expensive going to the market.)

SMP16 shows the hiram as the term for borrow in Davaoeño

Mao lagi ni akong giingon mang hiram ug karahay dili mauli.

(That is what I said, when borrowing a cooking pan and cannot be returned.)

One clear effect of everyday communication and language learning in Bukidnon and Davaoeño is the influence of Spanish and Tagalog-Filipino languages. In Bukidnon, the term hulam, meaning borrow, contrasts with the Davaoeño equivalent hiram, which is derived from Tagalog-Filipino. Additionally, the Spanish language has notably influenced Bukidnon Bisaya; for instance, merkado (market in English) is referred to as

palengke in Davaoeño, also naug (down) on Bisaya is baba in Davaoeño showcasing the distinct linguistic influences on each dialect. Consequently, while Bukidnon Bisaya shows a stronger influence from Spanish, Davaoeño Bisaya is more significantly shaped by Tagalog.

In relation to the study by Dorias (2023), which examines the impact of these linguistic influences on communication patterns among Bisaya speakers, it becomes evident that the integration of Spanish and Tagalog terms reflects broader historical and sociolinguistic dynamics. It highlights that the borrowing of terms from these languages not only enriches the vocabulary of each dialect but also creates potential barriers in mutual understanding due to differing word choices. The study emphasizes that speakers often encounter challenges when interacting across dialects, particularly when they are unaware of these lexical differences. This underscores the necessity for language learners and speakers to develop an awareness of dialectal variations and their origins to facilitate more effective communication. By recognizing how historical influences shape contemporary language use, speakers can navigate conversations with greater sensitivity and clarity, ultimately enhancing intercultural dialogue within the Bisaya-speaking community.

4.CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the research highlights the distinct morphological differences between the Bisaya dialects of Bukidnon and Davaoeño, which significantly influence everyday communication and language learning for the speakers. Key variations, such as the use of prefixes like –gaka and –na, as well as the application of directional suffixes, illustrate how each dialect conveys nuances in meaning and action. The phenomenon of reduplication further enriches the expressive capacity of these dialects, with examples like ululi and gauli demonstrating differing emphases on habitual versus completed actions. Additionally, directional words differ between the two dialects, with variations in suffixes or inflectional morphemes; for instance, the addition of –h is common in both dialects, while the addition of –a is more prevalent in Davaoeño. However, these linguistic distinctions can lead to misinterpretations and cross-linguistic transfer among speakers, as identical words may carry different meanings across dialects. Furthermore,

the influence of Spanish and Tagalog on vocabulary complicates communication, reflecting the historical and cultural contexts that shape each dialect. Overall, understanding these differences is essential for fostering clearer interactions and enhancing language acquisition among speakers of Bukidnon and Davaoeño Bisaya. Therefore, it is encouraged to create cross-dialect learning opportunities, such as language exchange programs or workshops that allow speakers from both regions to interact and learn from each other's dialects, promoting mutual understanding.

5.RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations can be made to enhance communication and language learning:

- Educational programs may implement focus on the unique morphological features of each dialect;
- Develop and distribute culturally sensitive learning materials that reflect the specific vocabulary and grammatical structures of both dialects;
- Foster community engagement initiatives that involve native speakers in the teaching process;
- Encourage cross-dialect learning opportunities, such as language exchange programs or workshops that allow speakers from both regions to interact and learn from each other's dialects to promote mutual understanding;
- Provide ongoing training for educators in both regions to equip them with effective teaching strategies for multilingual classrooms.

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