

## ARTICLES

### **Morphological Borrowing: A Linguistic Ethnographic Study of Cagay-anon Sebuano Verb Affix Adaptation**

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*“Nag-lukso lukso gyud mi human sa amo exam ganiha.”*

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*“Nagluksohá mi human sa final exam gahapon.”*

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#### **Abstract**

This study examined the verb affix adaptation of suffixes *a*, *ay* and *ha* of the Sebuano language. Using the Verb Affix Adaptation Theory and the Linguist Adaptation Theory, the study revealed that both extra-linguistic and intra-linguistic factors influenced the adaptation of the

three Higaonon suffixes into the standard Sebuano language of the Cagay-anon.

### **Keywords**

Morphology, affixes, verb affix adaptation, Higaonon, Sebuano

### **Introduction**

The foregoing quotes are authentic utterances which expressed synonymous ideas in two different situations. Looking closely into these utterances, one would notice that there is a slight variation in a way the verb “lukso” (jump) has been formulated to express the act of jumping. The first statement bears the usual or unmarked way of progressive and intensive form in the standard Sebuano language where the root of the main verb “lukso” has been duplicated (lukso-lukso). The second is a variation, which is usually associated among Cagay-anons when they express actions in the progressive form (and the intensive mood) where they would add the suffixes *a*, *ay* and *ha* to the main verb as in *luksoha*.

Having visited the places where Sebuano is the dominant language, it has been observed that this Cagay-anon verbal affixation is a peculiar and unique phenomenon. Though the same usage has been heard in the neighboring places in Misamis Oriental and Camiguin Island, the fact remains that when people in other places hear such usage, they would usually point to it as Cagay-anon Sebuano. The variation created by the Cagay-anons here may look slight, but it has to be noted that the suffixes *á*, *áy* and *há* do not exist in standard Sebuano morphology and usage of most Sebuano speakers in the Visayas and Mindanao regions, where the use of reduplication or the adverb in transforming verbs into the progressive or intensive mood is the unmarked procedure.

An ethno-history of Cagayan de Oro would show that even before the coming of the Spaniards in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Bisaya or Binisaya (*Sebuano* to be more accurate) had already taken its root as the dominant language in Cagayan de Oro (Madigan, 1976; Montalvan, 2006). Though the early inhabitants of Cagayan de Oro are not Sebuano speakers, the proximity of Cebu to northern Mindanao must be a factor due to trade relations and the massive migration of Sebuano speaking migrants, specifically in Cagayan

de Oro. With this, the indigenous inhabitants who speak the Proto-Manobo language were pushed to the hinterlands as the increasing Cebuano settlers took the coastal areas. This was further heightened with the ensuing period of Spanish colonization for the next three hundred years. Whether the language and cultural contact between the Cebuanos and Manobos is a factor to the language change exhibited in the morphosyntactic innovation to be investigated here is something that needs to be considered.

As this linguistic phenomenon has already gained wider usage among the Cagay-anons, it is now high time that this morphosyntactic innovation be studied and investigated. This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What brought about the phenomenon of verb affix adaptation in Cagayan de Oro among its Sebuano speakers?
2. How are the adapted verb affixes integrated as a constitutive element of Cagay-anon Sebuano on the verbal and sentential levels?
3. Are there specific forms of verbs where these adapted affixes were being applied or used?
4. Do the Cagay-anons who adapted these affixes view themselves as a distinct group of Sebuano speakers?
5. How is the use of these adapted affixes perceived by the informants and randomly chosen respondents?

### **Theoretical Framework**

The Verb Affix Adaptation Theory (VAAT) that is being proposed here is developed to specifically address the phenomenon of adaptation among Sebuano-speaking Cagay-anons. The Cagay-anon adaptation of Manobo verb affixes is quite unique as it does not fit the typology of adaptation identified by Myers-Scotton (2006) in her massive book, *Multiple Voices: An Introduction to Bilingualism* where she elucidated that most adaptation is almost entirely one-directional, that is, from the more dominant language to the less dominant one; she further stressed that languages that are widely spoken as L2 become the source of adaptation. According to her, in a case where the less dominant language is the source of adaptation, which she aptly calls “Reverse Core Borrowing,” with the purpose of promoting their unique identity, speakers of the dominant

language take up a word or words from the less dominant language. But the borrowers here are temporary residents, which is not the case of the Cagay-anons. Since Myers-Scotton's typology cannot account for the Cagay-anon adaptation, VAAT proposes that adaptation is multi-directional, that is though the more dominant language usually takes the lead of being the donor language, there could be an instance when the less dominant language of an indigenous people long displaced could still exert the role of being the donor language to the more dominant one. This is where Cagay-anon VAA is situated as it has adopted affixes belonging to the Manobo language.

VAAT is grounded on two theories; first, Linguistic Ethnographic Theory (LET) and second, Language Adaptation Theory (LAT). Since the primary data of this study was based on the list of authentic utterances, conversations and interviews, VAAT has a strong affinity with LET which according to its proponent B. Rampton (2004) is the newest development in ethnographic study which holds that language and social life are mutually shaping and that close analysis of situated language use can provide both fundamental and distinctive insights into the mechanism and dynamics of social and cultural production in daily activity. Under the influence of LET, VAAT will look into the **inter-linguistic** factors involved in the VAA usage of Manobo morpheme by Sebuano speaking Cagay-anons. A **Preference Test** survey form has been purposely prepared here to come up with significant information relevant to the issues of competition and innovation.

VAAT as a theory is also grounded on the Language Adaptation Theory (LAT) proposed by Jef Verschueren (1987) in his book *Pragmatics as a Theory of Linguistic Adaptation*. Verschueren, whose work is oriented towards pragmatics, expounded that LAT does not emerge out of nowhere but has solid theoretical ground on Darwin's Evolutionary Epistemology, Piaget's Psycholinguistic Theory and Giles' Speech Accomodation Theory. Verschueren believed that language use must consist of the continuous making of linguistic choices, consciously or unconsciously for language-internal (structural) and/or language-external reasons. Out of this insight, VAAT used a two pronged procedure in its analysis of the Cagay-anon VAA. First, is the **Extralinguistic** strains and second, the **Intralinguistic** strains which

brought about the process of adaptation. Extralinguistic strains will investigate into the geographical/physical world, socio-historical/cultural world, politico-economic, and the Cagay-anon sense of identity that affected the adaptation. Intralinguistic strain will delve into the factors of language contact, language change and assimilation of the adaptation process.

### Definition of Terms

Some of the important terms defined here are based on their operational meanings as used in this study.

**Adaptation.** This term refers to a linguistics phenomenon or process where elements of one language are used in another language; just like the usage and application of a Manobo-Higaonon morpheme into the Sebuano language in Cagayan de Oro (Myer-Scotton, 2006). The term **adaption** is a diminutive of adaptation, which basically means the same. **Adoption**, on the other hand, is seen as synonymous with borrowing, but Myers-Scotton looked at it as a more appropriate term than borrowing in a linguistic context.

**Affix.** This is the collective term for the types of formative that can be used only when added to another morpheme (the root or stem), that is, affixes are a type of “bound morpheme” (Crystal, 2008). Affixes are generally classified into three types, depending on their position with reference to the root or stem of the word; those which are added to the beginning of the root/stem are called **prefixes**, those in the middle of the root are called **infixes** and those that are found after the root are **suffixes**. Less common terms associated with it includes **circumfix** or **ambifix**, which is a combination of the prefix, infix and suffix. The morphological process whereby grammatical or lexical information is added to a stem is known as affixation. From an alternative perspective, affixes may be divided into inflectional and derivational types. As explored in this study, affix/es can be adapted or borrowed directly/ indirectly from one language to another.

**Cagay-anon Sebuano.** This is considered as one of the dialects of the Sebuano language. This refers to the Sebuano language spoken and used by the Cagay-anons being their L1 as shown in the NSO survey data that 85% of CDO’s inhabitants are Sebuano-speaking. Its distinction from

other Sebuano dialects can now be detected with its peculiar innovation of the adaption of suffixes *a*, *ay* and *ha* in the progressive and intensive form which is non-existent in the standard Sebuano grammar.

**Language Change.** This is a language phenomenon, which bespeaks of its dynamism. This is usually seen as a consequence of language contact in a multicultural and multilingual setting. Its specific phenomena may include adaptation, code-switching, variation, innovation, bastardization and even the extinction of a language. Language change may take time and its intricate process is language-specific.

**Language Contact.** This takes place as a result of language spread caused by migration, colonization, and socio-economic mobility. Even before the coming of the Spanish colonizers in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, northern Mindanao, particularly CDO, was already a stage of contact between the Sebuano language and the Manobo language by its original inhabitants. The consequences of contact may range from the trivial to the far-reaching. In the simplest level, this may result in borrowing or loan words in the receiving language. But it can also go as much as affecting grammar and pronunciation. The borrowing and adaptation of the suffixes *a*, *ay* and *ha* by the Cagay-anons from the Manobo may look minimal but its effect may break the rule of Sebuano reduplication via affixation.

**Morpheme.** This refers to the minimal distinctive unit of grammar, which is also considered as the central concern of morphology; accordingly, it is seen primarily as the smallest functioning unit in the composition of words (Crystal, 2008). Morphemes are commonly classified into *free forms* (morphemes, which can occur as separate words) and *bound forms* (morphemes, which occur mainly as affixes to a root word).

**Morphology.** This term is derived from the Greek *morphe*, which means form. It is the branch of grammar, which deals with the structure or forms of words, primarily through the use of the morpheme construct. Though traditionally distinguished from syntax, which deals with the rules governing combinations of words in sentences, it is now essentially linked with syntax as it could affect the sense and structure of a sentence.

**Morphosyntactic Innovation.** This is an innovation brought about

by grammatical categories or properties whose definition criteria of morphology and syntax both apply, as in describing the characteristics of verb morphology and its effect in sentence form (Booij, 2005).

Sebuano (Sebwano) Language. This is one of the more than a hundred Austronesian languages in the Philippines (D. Zorc, 1976). Among the Philippine languages, it has the largest number of speakers in terms of its being considered as L1 (D. Crystal, 2008); the speakers come from the provinces of Cebu, Negros Oriental, Bohol, and the greater part of Mindanao.

Usage. This refers to the collective speaking and writing habits of a particular group of people as that of Sebuano among the Cagay-anons, which may exhibit variation or peculiarity in contrast to the Sebuano of Cebuanos, Iliganons, Boholanos and Davaoñeos.

Utterance. RL Trask (2007) defines this term as a particular speech produced by a particular individual on a particular occasion. In this study, it refers to listed utterances of various Cagay-anons, which were gathered as pertinent pieces of data for this study. Trask further added that when we speak, we do not strictly produce sentences: instead we produce utterances; a sentence in linguistics is an abstract linguistic object forming one part of the total expressive resources of a given language.

Verb Affix Adaptation. This refers to the process of applying the use of an affix from a particular language to another language. Just like the use of Manobo suffixes *a*, *ay* and *ha* in Cagayan-anon Sebuano.

Verb Forms. This refers to formation of verbs from the source of the action itself whether external or internal, manifested or ideational. What follows are the various verb forms with their description: **state**, expresses status of being or becoming; **process**, ongoing action done voluntarily or involuntarily; **motion**, shows specific movement; **position**, denotes stative act; **action**, initiated by conscious or unconscious effort; **action-process**, states a progressing action at the moment of utterance; **factive**, is a verb that asserts the truth of a following clause; **cognition**, involves interior acts brought about by thinking, imagination, discernment, intuiting and the like; **sensation**, is an action brought by the senses or sense perceptions; **emotion**, refers

to acts of feelings or emotions; **utterance**, refers to an action brought by the communication or speaking; and **manipulation**, refers to acts that involve altering, multiplying, eliminating dividing, transposing and the like which are used to change the way a particular process is viewed that can have an effect on preconceived meanings (Huddleston and Pullum, 2005).

### **Literatures Cited**

This section traced existing scholarly works relative to the present study. This is classified under the following headings: a) Studies in Cagayan de Oro ethnography, b) Studies on Sebuano language, morphosyntax and verb affix adaptation, and c) Language contact and language change.

#### ***Studies in Cagayan de Oro Ethnography***

Most language studies dealing with Cagay-anons have nothing to do with their own local language. Most of the researches, case studies, theses, and dissertations deal with issues on proficiency and competency in the use of the English language as L2, and the phenomenon of code switching or code mixing as well as slang like gay lingo.

Cagay-anon anthropologist, Erlinda Burton in her “The Peopling of the Philippines” and Antonio Montalvan (2004) in *A Cagayan de Oro Ethnohistory Reader: Prehistory to 1950* agreed on an educated guess that the peopling of Cagayan de Oro began as early as 3000BC based on what had been excavated at the Huluga cave site, which is considered as the oldest human settlement in this area of Northern Mindanao. Proto-Manobo language, which is considered the language of the earliest settlers in CDO, belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian branch of the Austronesian Language as in the case with Sebuano, which eventually took root as a dominant language.

Montalvan (2003) offered an even maverick speculation when he also claimed in his other scholarly work "Peopling of Mindanao" that Cagayan de Oro had been a significant crossroad for the migrating Austronesians who had settled in various locations in the archipelago. Jesuit sociologist, Francis Madigan (1983) in his *Early History of Cagayan de Oro* devoted a portion of his study on the language of Cagayan de



Oro, which he referred to as Sebuano-Bisaya. Madigan pointed that the orthography and lexicography of Cagay-anon Sebuano are heavily based on the Sebuano of Cebu but he does not mention any peculiarity or variant of Cagay-anon Sebuano that may warrant it as a Sebuano dialect.

Francisco Demetrio's (1995) *The Local Historical Sources of Northern Mindanao* is a compendium of ethnographic works in Northern Mindanao, particularly CDO. Though Demetrio focused more on folklore, legends, myths and other oral traditions of CDO and its surrounding places, he also mentioned that the language of CDO as Bisayan is closely related to Cebu Sebuano. He did not expound on his choice of the term "Bisayan" over "Sebuano" though he admitted their intimate link as languages.

A 1968 RIMCU transcript of Filomeno Bautista's *The Philippine Revolution in Misamis Province 1900-1901* classified the languages of the Misamis provinces into four, namely: a) Tagalog-Visayan, b) Bukidnon-Visayan, c) Cebuano-Visayan and d) Boholano-Visayan. Bautista (1968) assigned the Cagayan de Oro language to belong to the third category, that is, "Cebuano-Visayan" and he briefly explained that its only difference from the Sebuano of Cebu is that the latter does not sound the "L" in the word while the former does. Bautista did not elaborate on this matter of difference which for him might simply mean a sort of phonological idiosyncrasy, which may be seen as too trivial to deal with as a scholarly endeavor.

In "Cultural Survival: The Case of the Higaonon Tribe in Southern Philippines," Nimfa Lagdamen-Bracamonte (2001) studied the Higaonons in Barangay Cauyonan in Cagayan de Oro, which is considered as the traditional homeland of this tribal group. Bracamonte pointed on the marginalization of the culture and language of the Higaonon, which was brought by the coming of the Christian settlers who had already taken root on the coastal areas and gradually encroaching into the hinterlands. The missionary works of the Catholic Church into their area were also viewed by Higaonons interviewed by Bracamonte as contributory to the demise of their cultural heritage, particularly among the younger ones who had openly embraced the changes brought by the Christian migrants. To

date, there is clearly a dearth of studies on the local language here in Cagayan de Oro.

### ***Studies in Sebuano Language, Morphosyntax, and Verb Affix Adaptation***

Sebuano is one of the major Visayan languages; as such, it has the widest geographical spread and is regarded to have the biggest number of L1 speakers, second only to Tagalog if L2 speakers are included (Zorc, 1975). Its spread was brought about by migration particularly in the island of Mindanao, thereby initiating the natural process of language contact and change, which ultimately resulted in a dialect variation. This divergence in Sebuano language is discussed in Divine Angeli Endriga's (2012) thesis "Cebuano Dialectology: Cebu, Bohol and Davao" where she contrasted their variations. Endriga insisted that the Sebuano language is a confluence of related dialects, which are intimately linked in terms of vocabulary, grammar and syntax.

Yoshihiro Kobari (2006) in *Cebuano-Bisayan Ethnic Identity in Multilingualism* grounded his discussion on language as having a crucial role for the formation of one's identity. He contended that Sebuano-Bisayan speakers are multilingual as it reflected the multiculturalism (Ilonggo, Waray, Sebuano etc.) of the Visayan archipelago. Kobari then defined separately the terms, Bisayan and Sebuano. Taking the lead from Zorc (1975), he described "Bisayan" as an umbrella term, which consists of thirty six (36) distinctive local linguistic communities, and one of these local languages is Sebuano. He first defined Sebuano as a group of people residing in Central Philippines particularly the island of Cebu. According to him, Sebuano as a language occupies a much greater geography as it is considered the de facto lingua franca in Central Visayas and the greater part of Mindanao.

Grace Rafal-Bongado (2008) in her master's thesis *Kinamiguing Linguistic Configuration: A Synchronic Analysis* had shown that the suffixes *á*, and *áy* are part of verb morphology of Kinamiguing in progressive form. The affinity of these Kinamiguing suffixes to the adopted Higaonon morpheme among the Cagay-anons is quite strong as both dialects belong to the variety of Manobo language.

Mimi Trosdal's (1968) dissertation at the University of San Carlos,

*A Formal-Functional Description of the Cebuano-Bisayan Language* is among the early studies dealing with Sebuano linguistics done by a Cebuano scholar. She did this by doing a technical formal-functional analysis of Sebuano by dissecting its system of syntax, morphology and phonology. In her other work, *A Brief History of the Cebuano-Bisayan Language*, Trosdal expounded on the adaptability of the Sebuano language as it willingly embraced linguistic borrowing from various sources as shown by its external and internal history.

Regarded as a groundbreaking study on Sebuano linguistics, Casilda Luzares's (1975) dissertation, *Cebuano Verb Morphology: A Case Analysis* exclusively focused on the verb and verb morphology and affixation of the Sebuano language. Luzares developed a set of phrase structure rules among others that showed the derivation history of the verb and all possible types of affixation. In her discussion of the "intensive" form and "intensive accidental result" under the secondary specialization, she clearly pointed that the intensive does not surface as an affix but is realized as a reduplication of the base plus the shift of stress to the ultima; this is the specific rule, which Cagayan de Oro Sebuano has innovated realizing it with adapted suffixes which is almost absent in standard Sebuano affixes.

Paul Llido (2006) in *Inflectional Case Assignment in Cebuano*, explained that the internal argument of canonical structure of the verb grammar is controlled by the system of inflectional affixes. Proven also in this study is the fact that it is the inflectional affixes, which are responsible for case assignment and not the verb base.

In "The Structure Borrowed English of Words in Sebuano," Luvizminda Dela Cruz (2008) contended that affixation is a very productive word formation process in Sebuano as shown in the accommodation of borrowed morphemes from English resulting in a mix of morphemes or morphemic hybridity. She further stressed that borrowing affects the borrowing language and the borrowed words as they may undergo the same word formation processes that the so-called "native" words would do resulting in local neologisms which involved reanalysis, re-spelling of borrowed words, meaning shifts, phonological and morphological changes.

Einar Haugen (1992) in his book *Language Borrowing* (an entry

in the authoritative *International Encyclopedia of Linguistics*) traced the studies on language borrowing with the work of German linguist, Hugo Schuchardt, who believed that borrowing is a universal feature of language. Aside from sifting the history of the phenomenon of “borrowing,” Haugen too presented his own first hand involvement with this language issue by incorporating two of his groundbreaking studies, *The Analysis of Linguistic Borrowing* (1950) and *Bilingualism, Language Contact and Immigrant Languages in the US: A Research Report* (1973) where he consistently promoted the idea that no language community is or remains so isolated as to avoid some contact with the speakers of other languages or dialects.

Scott Burton’s “*A Case Study of Lexical Borrowing Between Two Languages in Southern Philippines*” investigated two adjacent language communities, the Sarangani Manobo (SM) and the Tagakaulo (T), each belonging to a different language family. Burton here determined the factors that contributed to the high percentage (about 50%+) of their shared vocabulary. He hypothesized that being members of the Malayo-Polynesian subfamily of the Austronesian language, these two languages are somehow distantly related. Yet despite this fact, Burton argued that the shared vocabularies between Sarangani Manobo and Tagakaulo cannot be assumed to be cognates inherited from a common distant ancestor. The result of this study revealed that it is rather a result of lexical borrowing that has occurred because of their geographical proximity and continued contact of their respective language families over a long period of time. As the more dominant tribe, SM has been considered as the donor language (from which the item is borrowed) whereas T is the recipient language (into which the item is borrowed).

Frank Seifart (2012) in his article “Direct and Indirect Affix Borrowing” countered the widespread assumption in language contact literatures that affixes are never borrowed directly but only indirectly as part of complex loan words as exhibited in the French suffix “able,” which has been borrowed by the English as in the words- honourable and speakable. Seifart claimed strongly that direct borrowing, that is the extraction of an affix based on knowledge of the donor language without the mediation of complex loan words within a recipient language can also be the only or primary process leading to productive loan affixes.

Ekaterina Baklanova's (2006) *Morphological Assimilation of Borrowings in Tagalog* analyzed the Tagalog main strategies in morphological assimilation of its numerous borrowings from Malay and non-Austronesian languages such as Sanskrit, Chinese, Spanish and English. She did her investigation by looking into the aspects of phonological citations, simplification, annulment of borrowings, wrong interpretations of borrowings and hybridization.

Florian Coulmas (1989) in his *Language Adaptation* which is part of his edited book under the same title, lamented that language adaptation is an old linguistic phenomenon which has just recently received attention as a new concept in the field of scientific inquiry in linguistics. Coulmas did not theorize on the phenomenon of language adaptation but just offered a descriptive presentation in a macro-scale.

S. Bowerman (2006) *Language Adaptation and Modernization* viewed language adaptation as a linguistic change whether deliberate or spontaneous whose goal is to adopt a language to the changed or changing needs of its speech community. As depicted in his title, Bowerman essentially connects language adaptation with modernization and language planning in which a language is deliberately adapted to fulfill new roles. He acknowledges too natural language adaptation which is according to him is spontaneous and is unconsciously undertaken by its own speech community.

### ***Studies in Language Contact and Language Change***

The phenomenon of verb affix adaption/ borrowing of Cagayanon Sebuano is a result of language contact facilitated by the coming of Sebuano speaking Visayans who migrated to northern Mindanao specifically Cagayan de Oro earlier before the coming of Spaniards in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

In her effort to provide a comprehensive overview, Sarah Thomason (2001) delivered an exhaustive presentation about this linguistic phenomenon by describing its various meanings, tracing its historical emergence, growth and development, its impact on people and the language itself, its nature, where, why and how it happens. Thomason believed that LC is the norm, not the exception, for LC is everywhere and there is no evidence that any language has developed in

total isolation from other languages.

Two pioneering studies need to be mentioned here. First, the classic work of Uriel Weinreich (1953) *Languages in Contact* which is widely used by specialists in language. It has been a landmark study which brought about the recognition of the significance of language contact as the probable and valid explanation for many linguistic changes. Second, Andersen Henning's (1988) *Center and Periphery: Adaption, Diffusion and Spread* expounded on how adaption is achieved through a secondary modification of the speakers' usage rules. Accordingly, this is where innovation takes place. Henning insisted that adults may adapt innovations for various communicative needs but do not change their grammar.

J H Hill's (2006) *Language Change and Cultural Change* focused on the inherent variability and dynamism of human languages, with their shifting shapes brought about by expansion and spread of the speakers who are constrained by diverse factors. He keenly observed that LC and CC tend to be "quite local" just like the hybridized form of CDO Sebuano's progressive and intensive mood which may defy a generalized view of the Sebuano grammar.

Oxford academic Jean Aitchinson (2001) in her *Language Change: Progress or Decay?* presented a lucid and up-to-date trend of language change in recent times. Aitchinson dug into the various evidences where LC comes from, how languages emerged, evolved and become extinct. She did this via historical discussion of LC phenomenon from the earliest, to medieval and up to the contemporary period. At the core of her presentation is the focal question- "Is Language Change a symptom of progress or decay?"

Two local studies are worth mentioning here. First, is Jessie Grace Rubrico's (2011) *Filipino Variety of Davao: A Linguistic Description*. It explored an emerging variety of Filipino which deviates from the standard grammatical properties of Tagalog coming from the influence of non-Tagalog speakers whose native language competencies interfere with their usage of Filipino (heavily based on Tagalog). Under this evolving language change, Rubrico took the Filipino Variety of Davao (FVD) as a case in point where she described FVD with its features, morphosyntax, innovations and how they deviate from those of Tagalog. Second, Freida

Marie Adeva's (2002) *Semantic Correlates of Transitivity in Iliganon Sebuano Narrative Discourse* used the Transitivity hypothesis of Harper and Thompson (1980) to examine and test the validity of their claim on the ergativity of the Philippine language particularly the Sebuano among the Iliganons. It has also adopted the functional typological approach in Sebuano language analysis within its communicative, cognitive and socio-cultural function; this is so to show that the narrative discourse under investigation is not based on contrived statements but concrete utterances among the Sebuano speaking Iliganons.

As part of the ongoing language researches mentioned above, the present study is an attempt to clear the ground for local linguistic in CDO, which remains to be studied in a larger scale. This study touches on the issue of Sebuano dialectology involving verb affix adaptation and the specific case of language contact and change resulting in a morphological borrowing among the Sebuano speaking Cagay-anons.

## Methodology

This study is more of a synchronic-diachronic research. **Synchronic**, as it looked into a seemingly slight change in Cagay-anon Sebuano brought about by the borrowing of a Manobo-Higaonon morpheme as exhibited in their peculiar usage of verb affixation in the progressive and intensive form. This is not the case in the standard Sebuano morphology. **Diachronic**, as it attempted to look into historical factors affecting the Sebuano language in Cagayan de Oro, starting with its arrival, its contact with the indigenous language in Northern Mindanao, its eventual gaining of prominence as a dominant language, and its adaptation of a morpheme belonging to the Manobo-Higaonon.

The primary data of this study consisted of authentic utterances by Cagay-anons bearing the verb affix adaptation of the suffixes *á*, *áy* and *há*. This means that all the statements which became part of the analysis were not manufactured; they are heard or overheard from conversations in the marketplace, public utility jeeps or taxis, streets, school campuses and from the statements made in the local mass media such as TV, radio and newspaper. A Preference Test survey through a questionnaire was also conducted to ascertain this Cagay-anon peculiar usage. An interview with key Cagay-anon personalities was done further to get

their comments, views and insights concerning this language innovation in CDO.

The primary instrument in the gathering of data included the use of a pocket field notebook where the random authentic utterances were listed and indicated with specific dates and places, when and where each statement has been uttered. A separate field notebook was also prepared to record the comments and responses of selected informants concerning their insights about the verb affix adaptation under investigation. Another instrument used was the Preference Test constructed specifically for this study to ascertain the prevalent use of the said verb affix adaptation among Cagay-anons. The Preference Test which was supplementary to the primary source consists of twelve statements, six of which used the standard Sebuano for the progressive or intensive mood while the other six use the peculiar Cagay-non Sebuano. Here, randomly selected informants/respondents were asked to select their own choice between the paired statements containing the same thought, where one is rendered in Standard Sebuano while the other is in Cagay-anon Sebuano.

A **morphosyntactic analysis** of authentic utterances bearing the adapted suffixes *a*, *ay* and *ha* was done on two levels: first, at the **verbal level** where the affixed verb was dissected as to how they were formed and as to how the choice of each suffix fit the verbal affix; second, at the **sentential level** where the position of the affixed verb in the sentence was scrutinized as to how it functions.

## Results and Discussion

### *The Phenomenon of Verb Affix Adaptation Among Sebuano Speaking Cagay-anons*

Verb Affix Adaptation (VAA) among Sebuano-speaking Cagay-anons is apparently brought about by Language Contact between migrating Sebuano speaking Visayans and the indigenous people of Cagayan who speak the Manobo-Higaonon language. The contact must be long starting even before the coming of the Spanish colonizers because when the Augustinian missionaries came to Cagayan in 1622 (Madigan, 1963) and made contact with the settlers of Cagayan in the



hills of Himologan under the leadership of Datu Salangsang, they noted that Bisayan (Sebuano to be exact) was already the dominant language of the area. As posited in the work of Myers-Scotton (2006), adaptation is almost entirely uni-directional (one-way) that is from the more prestigious (dominant) language to the less prestigious one.

The case of Cagay-anon VAA of suffixes *a*, *ay* and *ha* from Manobo morphology is quite unique for the reason that CDO has long been dominated by Sebuano-speaking migrants who came to CDO four hundred years ago and in effect displacing the early settlers of CDO who spoke the Manobo-Higaonon. The case of Cagay-anon VAA may not fit the so called “Reverse Core Borrowing” put forward by Myers-Scotton because the Cebuano migrants are no longer temporary residents of CDO; in fact, they have already regarded CDO as their home. That is why they call themselves “Cagay-anon” or “Taga-Cagayan.” This raises the question how a morpheme belonging to a language which is now rarely heard in CDO except in the households of a few Manobo descendants (Higaonon/Binukid/Kinamiguin) and who are now integrated into the mainstream of Cagay-anon populace can exert such an influence on the more dominant language of Sebuano. This instead shows that their displacement is not total or complete. This is so because the suffixes *á*, *áy* and *há*, which are not part of Sebuano morphology are not the invention of the Sebuano speaking Cagay-anons. The process of adaptation therefore could have taken place in the following inter-related processes: migration, borrowing and innovation.

### **The Integration of Adapted Verb Affixes as Constitutive Elements of Cagay-anon Sebuano**

The VAA integration into Cagay-anon Sebuano is done in two ways: first through **suffixation**, where the morpheme is affixed at the end of the word and second by **infixation**, where the morpheme is affixed within the internal syllables of the word. Both forms of affixation are always paired with a Sebuano **prefix** which determines the specific progressive tense of the affixed verb. Under the intensive mood, a **double affixation** is carried to show the intensity of the action.

**a. Suffixation with a, ay and ha**

The suffix *a* is usually used with verbs ending in consonants and not with those ending with vowels; this is apparently for a phonological reason. For instance, adding *a* to verbs with vowel finals as in- *ampoaa*, *dulaaa*, and *sukaaa* would result in an awkward sound as it could suggest different meanings whereas- *ampoay*, *dulaay*, and *sukaha* would sound right. In the following table, one will notice that suffixation of the Manobo-Higaonon morpheme is always accompanied by Sebuano prefixes like *nag-*, *ga-* and *mag-* when used in a sentence. This is so because these Manobo allomorphs as mentioned above do not form verbs unlike the Sebuano prefixes, which in this case regulate the tense aspect of the affixed verb. The prefix *nag-* suggests verb in the past, *ga-* in the present and *mag-* in the future tense.

Table 1. Suffixation with -a

Prefixes	Roots	Suffix	Affixed Verbs	Sample Sentences
Nag-	Kaon	-a	nagkauna naghulata nagtan-awa	Nagkauna sa biko si Bikay. <i>Bikay was eating biko.</i> Naghulata mi nimo Ate Faith. <i>Ate Faith, we were waiting for you.</i> Nagtan-awa TV si manoy. <i>Manoy was watching TV.</i>
Ga-	Hulat		gakauna gahulata gatan-awa	Gakauna sa biko si Bikay. <i>Bikay is eating biko.</i> Gahulata mi nimo Ate Faith. <i>Ate Faith, we are waiting for you.</i> Gatan-awa TV si manoy. <i>Manoy is watching TV.</i>
Mag-	tan-aw		magkauna maghulata magtan-awa	Magkauna sa biko si Bikay. <i>Bikay will be eating biko.</i> Maghulata mi nimo ate Faith. <i>Ate Faith, we will be waiting for you.</i> Magtan-awa ra TV si manoy. <i>Manoy will be watching TV.</i>

The suffixes *ay* and *ha* are employed in vowel-ending verbs. When to use *ay* or *ha* is again regulated by a phonological rule. For instance, *ay* sounds better than *ha* when added to the verb *ampo* (pray) as in *ampoay* (praying) than *ampo**ha* so with *tudloay* (teaching) than *tudluha* or *sukaha* (vomiting) than *sukaay* as these suffixes create a glottal catch in the final syllable.

Table 2. Suffixation with *-ay*

Prefixes	Roots	Suffix	Affixed Verbs	Sample Sentences
Nag-	Ampo	<i>-ay</i>	nag-ampoay nagdulaay naghigdaay	Nag-ampoay si mama. <i>Mother was praying.</i> Nagdulaay ra si Joy, Pa. <i>Father, Joy was just playing.</i> Naghigdaay ra ko gahapon. <i>I was just lying yesterday.</i>
Ga-	Dula		gaampoay gadulaay gahigdaay	Gaampoay si mama. <i>Mother is praying.</i> Gadulaay ra si Joy, Pa. <i>Father, Joy is just playing.</i> Gahigdaay ra ko diri balay. <i>I am just lying here at home.</i>
Mag-	Higda		mag-ampoay magdulaay maghigdaay	Mag-ampoay si mama. <i>Mother will be praying.</i> Magdulaay ra daw si Joy, Pa. <i>Father, Joy will just be playing.</i> Maghigdaay ra ko ugma. <i>I will just be lying down tomorrow.</i>

As shown in the foregoing table, the suffix *ay* is added to vowel ending verbs with stress on the penultimate syllable and a glottal catch in the last syllable.

The suffix *ha* as shown in the table is added to vowel-ending verbs with stress on the penultimate syllable but without a glottal catch on the last syllable.

Table 3. Suffixation with *-ha*

Prefixes	Roots	Suffix	Affixed Verbs	Sample Sentences
Nag-	istorya	<i>-ha</i>	nag-istoryaha nagkatawaha nagtimplaha	Nag-istoryaha ra mi sa klase. <i>We were just conversing in the class.</i> Nagkatawaha si Ma'am Bern. <i>Ma'am Bern was laughing.</i> Nagtimplaha og ice tea si Faith. <i>Faith was preparing ice tea.</i>
Ga-	Katawa		ga-istoryaha gakatawaha gatimplaha	Ga-istoryahá ra mi sa klase. <i>We are just conversing in the class.</i> Gakatawaha si Ma'am Bern. <i>Ma'am Bern is laughing.</i> Gatimplaha ice tea si Faith. <i>Faith is preparing ice tea.</i>
Mag-	timpla		mag-istoryaha magkatawaha magtimplaha	Mag-istoryaha ra mi klase. <i>We will be conversing in the class.</i> Magkatawaha jud si Ma'am Bern. <i>Ma'am Bern shall be laughing.</i> Magtimplaha og ice tea si Faith. <i>Faith will be preparing ice tea.</i>

In the sample from both foregoing and following tables, it is also noticeable that the suffixes *a*, *ay* and *ha* do not form verbs unlike the tense, aspect and mode prefixes *nag-*, *ga-* and *mag-*, which are attached to nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs to make them function as predicates.

When used in a sentence, these suffixes are always paired with prefixes such as *nag-*, *ga-*, *mag-*, *mi-*, *pag-* and others. The Sebuano prefixes being added afforded completeness and a sense of time to the affixed verb.

Table 4. Hybrid Affixation: Sebuano Prefix + Manobo- Higaonon Suffix

Prefixes	Roots	Suffix	Affixed Verbs
Nag-	hilak	-a	Naghilaka <i>was crying</i>
Ga-			Gahilaka <i>is crying</i>
Mag-			Maghilaka <i>will be crying</i>
Mi-			Mihilaka <i>keeps crying</i>
Pag-			Paghilaka <i>keep on crying</i>

In the statement, *Hilaka si Debbie ganiha*, one would sense that the affixed verb *hilaka* does not clearly indicate when the act of crying is happening, though it gives information on what is happening to Debbie; to render the statement into giving a more complete thought, a Sebuano prefix needs to be added in order to clearly signify when the progressive act of crying happened.

The Sebuano prefixes *nag-*, *ga-* and *mag-* function to indicate the element of time when the action happens. *Nag-* is generally used to indicate past action as in, *naglabaha* (was washing), *nagkauná* (was eating), or *nag-awaya* (were quarelling). *Ga-* is used to designate present action as in, *galabaha* (is washing), *gakauna* (is eating) or *ga-awaya* (are quarelling). *Mag-* is used to indicate future action as in, *maglabahá* (will be washing), *magkauna* (shall be eating) or *mag-awaya* (will be quarelling).

Table 5. Tense Signal by Sebuano Prefixes

Tenses	Verb Formation with Prefix and Suffix	Sample Sentences
Past Progressive	Nag + Verb + a/ ay/ ha	Naglabaha si Mama gahapon. <i>Mother was washing yesterday.</i>
Present Progressive	Ga+ Verb + a/ ay/ ha	Galabaha si Mama karon. <i>Mother is washing now.</i>
Future Progressive	Mag + Verb + a/ ay/ ha	Maglabaha si Mama ugma. <i>Mother will be washing tomorrow.</i>

**b. Double Suffixation occurs in a situation to express actions in the intensive mood.**

*“Naghilakaay siya pagkabalo niya nga buros siya.”*

*“She has been crying upon knowing her pregnancy.”*

If the verb *naghilaka* has been used it would simply mean the progressive act of crying; but, *naghilakaay* does not only express the ongoing act crying; it also shows the intensity of the grief suffered by the pregnant woman. In another statement that follows, the intensity of the act of waiting can also be sensed with the peculiar practice of double siffixation:

*“Gahulataay mi nimo, ganiha ra!”*

*“We have been waiting for you for a while!”*

*Gahulata* would sound milder than *gahulataay* which already involves intense emotion brought about by frustration caused by the tardy person. When one hears the utterance of that statement, one can already sense that the speaker is already irritated as shown in his facial expression and tone of his voice.

**c. Infixation with “-a-”**

Among these affixes, only *a* is used in the process of infixation.  
 “Gihilantaan si Nagac, Sir mao nga absent.”

“Nagac is having fever, Sir; that is why he is absent.”

In standard Sebuano, the foregoing statement could be rendered as, “Gahilanat- hilanat si Nagac sir mao nga absent or simply Gihilantan si Nagac Sir mao nga absent.” In the Cagay-anon Sebuano, the verb “gihilantaan” expresses the progressing effect of fever at the moment of utterance.

**d. Rule Regarding Verbs ending in “d”**

Verbs ending in *d* when suffixed with the suffix *a* is usually changed to *r*; phonological rule in Sebuano language has it that when a consonant sound like *d* is in between two vowel sounds, it has to be changed to *r* to have a fluid finish in its utterance:

**Table 6. Changing of “d” ending to “r”**

Verbs with “d” ending	Morpheme	VAA
bayad sukad hukad kagud sikad	-a	bayara sukara hukara kagura sikara

Below is an authentic statement where the rule concerning *d* ending is employed:

“A di ko mohawid anang contribution, mawala pa lang na, ako unya’y magbayara ana.”

“I will not keep the contribution because if it gets lost, I will be paying it.”

***Specific Verb Forms where these suffixes are used***

Based on the more than a hundred authentic utterances that were listed for this study, almost all the various forms of verbs were covered by the VAA as shown on the table below:

***Table 7. VAA in Various Verb Forms***

Verb Forms	Sample Authentic Utterances
1. State	<p><i>"Nagwapaha lagi na sya."</i>                      (She is becoming beautiful.)  <i>Nagkagwapa lagi na sya.</i></p>
2. Process (Voluntary or involuntary)	<p><i>"Gatuona si Faith karon."</i>                      (Faith is studying now.)  <i>Kamulog tuon si Faith karon.</i></p>
3. Motion	<p><i>"Nagjogginga mi sa Gaston Park gahapon."</i>                      (We were jogging in Gaston Park yesterday.)  <i>Nagjogging mi sa Gaston Park gahapon.</i></p>
4. Position	<p><i>"Gatindoga ra ko sa bus gikan sa Valencia."</i>                      (I have been standing in the bus from Valencia.)  <i>Nagtindog ra gyud ko sa bus gikan sa Valencia.</i></p>
5. Action (Initiated by conscious or unconscious force)	<p><i>"Nagsanggiay mi sa mais adtong Martes."</i>                      (We were harvesting corn last Tuesday.)</p>
6. Action-process	<p><i>"Galutoay si mama sa biko."</i>                      (Mother is cooking biko.)  <i>Galuto si mama sa biko karon.</i></p>
7. Factives	<p><i>"Naghilakaay sya pagkabalo niya nga buros sya."</i>                      (She has been crying upon knowing that she is pregnant.)  <i>Naghilak gyud ko sige pagkabalo nako nga buros ko.</i></p>
8. Cognition	<p><i>"Gaampoay sa chapel sila mama ug Joy."</i>                      (Mother and Joy are praying in the chapel.)  <i>Gaampo sa chapel sila mama ug Joy.</i></p>



9. Sensation	<p>“<i>Nagdaguukay</i> akong tiyan human nako inom sa 12 in 1 nga kape.”          (My stomach has been rumbling after drinking 12 in 1 coffee.)  <i>Nag sigeg daguuk akong tiyan human nako inom sa 12 in 1 nga kape.</i></p>
10. Emotion	<p>“<i>Gisakitaan</i> sa ngipon si Abeth.”          (Abeth is having toothache.)  <i>Gisakitan sa ngipon si Abeth.</i></p>
11. Utterance	<p>“<i>Gabagotbota</i> na gyud ko tungod sa ulan nga way hunong, duha na ka semana, di man gakauga ang mga gilabhan nga sinina.”          (I have been grumbling because it has been raining for two weeks now, and the washed clothes don’t get dry.)  <i>Gabagotbota na gyud ko tungod sa ulan nga way hunong, duha na ka semana, di man gakauga ang mga gilabhan nga sinina.</i></p>
12. Manipulation	<p>“<i>Gaedita</i> sa thesis si Ma’am Nancy.”          (So, we will be speaking Tagalog.)  <i>Ma’am Nancy is editing a thesis.</i></p>

**State.** In the sample utterance, *naggwapaha* (becoming beautiful/vf1) suggests an ongoing transformation towards becoming a beautiful person; a tinge of surprise is being echoed here probably because the person being referred to may not be as beautiful the way she appears now. The prefix *nag-* which is usually used with the past action would hint that the state of transformation has already taken place as manifested by this comment.

**Process.** The verb *gatuona* (is studying/vf2) describes Faith’s act of studying at the moment of speaking. In standard Sebuano, this could be rendered as *kamulo ug tuon*, *gasige pa ug tuon* or simply *gatuon*. What is unique with this Cagayan rendition is that the stressed suffix provides emphasis on the voluntariness of the ongoing act of studying.

**Motion.** *Najogginga* (was jogging/vf3) would show that the morphemes under study are not only attached to Sebuano verbs but also to English verbs resulting in an unlikely mix of hybrid affixation.

With a time determiner *gahapon* (yesterday), the act of jogging has been well-indicated to have progressed in the past, even if the Sebuano prefix *nag-* could well suggest the past action.

**Position.** *Gatindoga* (is standing/vf4) expresses literally the position of a commuter inside a bus fully packed with passengers from the city of Valencia to CDO. The speaker here expressed his sustained effort of standing as there are no longer available seats.

**Action.** *Nagsanggiay* (was harvesting/vf5) denotes a past progressive act of harvesting, which took place last Tuesday. *Nagsanggiay* here involves conscious force, as the act of harvesting demands energy, strength, hard work and patience.

**Action-process.** *Galutoay* (is cooking/vf6) states a progressing action at the moment of utterance.

**Factives.** The verb *naghilakaay* (was crying/ has been crying) asserts the truth or fact about the situation of being pregnant. Here, the person being referred to was grieving her pregnancy, and her grieving was not just momentary but progressing and even intensifying as signaled by the use of double suffixation with allomorphs *a* and *ay* affixed to the verb *hilak*.

**Cognition.** *Gaampoay* (is praying/vf8) indicates a cognitive process of faith, such as the act of praying. The one doing the action here is my wife whom I have known to be more disposed to praying mentally, except when she is praying the rosary or lectio divina in a group.

**Sensation.** The past progressive *Nagdaguukay* (was rumbling) expresses an interior sensation of rumbling stomach after the person had drunk a new coffee product (12 in 1). The suffix *a* is enough to express an ongoing sensation. The suffix *ay* has been used to indicate the intensifying effect of the coffee.

**Emotion.** The present progressive *gisakitaan* denotes the feeling of pain suffered by Abeth probably caused by her decayed tooth. In standard Sebuano, the verb *gisakitan* would be enough to indicate the feeling being expressed accompanied perhaps by an adverb to denote the progressing pain. In Cagay-anon Sebuano, the suffix *á* has been used as an infix to express the momentary pain.

**Utterance.** *Gabagotbota* (am grumbling/ vf11) offers a specific form of utterance, that is grumbling; the speaker here, a housewife, is grumbling as she shared her frustration due to the effect of continuous

rain brought by the storm *Agaton* during the month of January 2014.

**Manipulation.** *Gaedita* (is editing) is a hybrid mix of two different bound morpheme, *ga-* which is Sebuano, *-a* which is Manobo and a free morpheme, which is English *edit*. This mix is quite common here in CDO, being a multi-cultural and multi-lingual place. Both Sebuano and English are highly used by Cagay-anons, with the exception of the Manobo-Higaonon, which is represented in the VAA here in a form of a morpheme. This hybrid mix of Sebuano-English and Manobo morpheme is a curious case, as one may doubt the possibility of an English word being affixed with a Manobo morpheme since both languages do not belong to a related family of language, unlike Sebuano and Manobo, which are both Austronesian. People who are highly exposed to both English and Sebuano are the ones using this hybrid morphological mix.

**Table 8. Hybrid Morphological Mix: Sebuano Prefix+ English Morpheme+ Manobo-Higaonon Suffix**

Sebuano Morpheme	English Morpheme	Manobo Morpheme	Sample Utterance
<i>Nag-</i>	<b>Jogging</b>	<i>-a</i>	<b><i>Nagjogginga</i></b> mi sa Gaston Park gahapon. We have been jogging at the Gaston park yesterday.
<i>Mag-</i>	<b>Essay</b>	<i>-ha</i>	<b><i>Mag-essayha</i></b> nalang ko sa ako exam. I will have an essay for my exam.
<i>Ga-</i>	<b>Study</b>	<i>-ha</i>	<b><i>Gastudyha</i></b> ra si Faith tibuok adlaw. Faith has been studying the whole day.

Other than **verb formation**, these suffixes can also be affixed to form an **adverb**, which can be seen in the following statement-

“*Gabuntaga mag-inom ang mga batan-on diri sa CDO.*”

(Young people here in CDO drink till dawn.)

The affixed *gabuntaga* modifies the verb *mag-inom* as it shows the time span in overnight drinking spree. In standard Sebuano, *gabuntaga* would be rendered *gakabuntagan*, *taman sa buntag* or *padulong sa buntag*.

### ***Situations in which these verbal affixes are used***

The situations where VAA is used by the Cagay-anons can be categorized into: a) Non-formal and b) Formal.

a. The Non-formal setting (NFS) is the most prevalent based on the more than a hundred authentic utterances listed for this study. NFS can be characterized by its location or context and conversational tone. Here are conversations culled from the marketplace, school campus, mall, streets, parks, inside the jeep, the work place and at home.

“*Ganiha ra ko gakapehá.*”

DCALL Office at MUST

“*Magkauná na pud diay ta ani.*”

DELL Office at Xavier U

“*Galutoáy sa biko si Mama.*”

Cogon Market at CDO

“*Gaulaná diri, gahapon pa ni.*”

Commuter of R1 jeep (conversing in a cell phone)

“*Gipangitaáy nako akong notebook, di gyud nako makita.*”

Hans at Home

Another non-formal setting where VAA is also commonly used is in **texting**. This is so because a verb in the VAA form is much shorter than the reduplicated form [gahilak-hilak (rf) vs gahilaká (vaa)]. Communication in texting is usually done in a shortened way; this makes VAA appealing, especially that Sebuano follows the VSO pattern.

b. The Formal setting (FS), which is not as common as NFS usually happens in a form of an interview by the media (radio or TV) and those

inside church services (eucharistic or sacramental celebration). The tone here may still be conversational but one would sense the care given to the utterance as the interviewee replies to the queries of the media, just like what usually happens during the interviews of local politicians, church officials, and other personalities.

*“Mag-ampoáy gyud ta sa kanunay.”*

*Homily at St. Augustine Cathedral*

*“Naghilaká gyud ko og ayo pagkahibalo nako nga buros ko, kay para sa ako mao na to ang katapusan sa tanan, nahugno ang tanan nakong pangandoy.”*

*Pregnant Teenager Interview with Sunstar Daily*

*“Maayo gyud nga mabutangan eskwelahan diri sa amo, aron dili na magbaklayá ang mga bata.”*

*Mother from Tignapuloan, CDO  
Interview with GMA Local News*

***Do the Cagay-anons who use this verb affix adaptation perceive themselves as a distinct group?***

The Cagay-anons may not be that vocal about their perception of being a distinct group from other Sebuano speakers. Among the 266 randomly chosen respondents, 67% (179) classified themselves as Cebuano, 7% (20) as Bisaya, 5% (12) as Cagay-anon and 21% (55) as a mix of other ethnicities. This mixture consists of ethnicities like Maranao, Manobo-Higaonon, Chavacano, Ilonggo, Waray, Ilocano, Bicolano, Tagalog, Siquijudnon and so on, including those who had found their way to CDO and resided here for good.

**Table 9. Ethnicity of Respondents and Their Preference**

Ethnicity				
	A Standard Sebuano Reduplication	A/B Simultaneous use of SS and Cagay-anon VAA	B Cagay-anon VAA Manobo morpheme affixation	Number of Respondents/ Percentage
Cebuano	16 (55%)	21 (58%)	142 (71%)	179 (67%)
Bisaya	2 (7%)	5 (14%)	13 (6%)	20 (7%)
Cagay-anon			12 (6%)	12 (5%)
Mixed	11 (38%)	10 (28%)	34 (17%)	55 (21%)
	29 (11%)	36(13%)	201 (76%)	266 (100%)

Though a mere 5%, those who classified themselves as Cagay-anons are quite notable for the reason that in the recent 2014 NSO survey even in the past, the ethnic group Cagay-anon is never part of the choices for ethnicity. Even in my PT questionnaire, I did not include it as part of the choices yet these respondents wrote “Cagay-anon” under the blank space intended for other ethnicities not in the checklist. This could suggest that CDO for these respondents is no longer viewed as a place of migration where their great grandparents, grandparents and parents had migrated a long time ago but a home to where they have already identified themselves as Cagay-anon or *taga* CDO. Among the 266 respondents, this 5% belonged to the B Group, who have fully embraced the use of VAA of Manobo–Higaonon morpheme.

Though majority of the respondents classified themselves as Cebuano, even those who belonged to the B Group which is at 71% (142), somehow preferred the Cagay-anon usage of VAA in place of reduplication. Their preference for VAA usage could suggest their being a Cagay-anon apart from other Sebuano speakers from Cebu and other places who subscribe to the standard use of reduplication.

**Table 10. First Language of Respondents and Their Preference**

L1				
	A	A/B	B	
Sebuano	9 (31%)	12 (33%)	92 (46%)	113 (42%)
Bisaya/ Binisaya	16 (55%)	20 (56%)	89 (44%)	125 (47%)
Other languages	4 (14%)	4 (11%)	20 (10%)	28 (11%)
	29 (11%)	36 (13%)	201 (75%)	266 (100%)

In contrast to ethnicity, the result in terms of L1 among Cagay-anons showed that 47% (125/266) of respondents classified themselves as Bisaya/Binisaya speakers, 42% (113/266) as Sebuano speakers and 11% (28/266) as speakers of various local languages and dialects. Since the mixed languages/dialects include other Visayan languages such as Ilonggo, Kinaray-a, Siquijudnon, Waray and Bol-anon, it would be safe to assume here that since Bisaya/Binisaya is heavily based on Sebuano, these two terms are linguistically the same.

Their sense of being a Cagay-anon can also be discerned from the candid responses provided by those who preferred the VAA. This could be seen on the top four responses concerning their use of the VAA.

**Table 11. Reasons Offered by Respondents on Their VAA Usage**

Reasons for VAA Usage	Percentage
1) “Maoy naandan.” “This is how I used to speak.”	38% (76/201)
2) “It is how people in CDO speak.”	10% (20/201)
3) “It is what I hear from my parents, grandparents, siblings, relatives, friends, schoolmates and neighbors.”	7% (14/201)
4) “I grew up hearing this way of saying.”	4% (9/201)

From the foregoing responses, the VAA can be seen as a linguistic phenomenon that is already deeply rooted within the consciousness of the Cagay-anons. Its usage had antedated many Cagay-anons as validated by the responses.

Responses 1, 2 and 4 would suggest that VAA had already been an intrinsic feature of the lingua franca in CDO. This is beside the fact that most respondents who fully embraced the VAA are not aware of the origin of this borrowed morpheme.

Response 3 revealed that the VAA had been already in place long before respondents were born in CDO as they heard it from their grandparents and parents. It further shows that it is popular and widely used among Cagay-anons.

### ***How do the Informants/Respondents perceive the Verb Affix Adaptation to Cagay-anon Sebuano?***

Among the selected respondents who were interviewed concerning the VAA phenomenon, the following have offered their notable views:

a) VAA as a Form of Language Corruption. Professor Joy Enriquez (2014) is the widow of the foremost Mindanaoan novelist Antonio Enriquez. She works part-time at the Department of Sociology and RIMCU, the research institute in Xavier University. Enriquez viewed the VAA phenomenon in an unfavorable sense. For her, it is a corruption of the Sebuano language. She herself preferred the Sebuano form of reduplication or adding an adverb when expressing verbs in the progressive or intensive mood. For her, when one uses a language, he should follow the standard rule; a person cannot just mix one language with another language as it could result in corruption or bastardization;

b) Grammatical Issue of VAA. Marivic Rotoras (2013) is a Cebuana from the City of Mandaue who has taken CDO as her home now. For her, the VAA is grammatically wrong as it is not part of the standard Sebuano usage. Despite such a comment, she happened to use the VAA, though most of the time, she would be using the standard Sebuano. When she was reminded of her VAA usage, she reasoned her more than thirty years of residency in CDO must be the influence as she always hears the VAA usage in her interactions with her family, friends, neighbors, colleagues and students at Mindanao University of Science and Technology;

c) VAA as Semantic Connotation. University teacher Bombei Samante (2013) confessed that he is using both the reduplication of standard Sebuano and the VAA of Cagay-anon Sebuano. When asked



why he is using both and whether there is a distinction between the two, he commented that, he would use the Cagay-anon VAA when the mood of what he is going to say is serious; whereas he uses Sebuano reduplication when the mood is light. He qualified his position with the statement:

***Gakaun-kaun ang bata sa sopas.*** (SS)

The child is eating biscuit.

***Gakauna ang bata sa sopas.*** (VAA )

Samante reasoned that there is a tinge of lightness (or even playfulness) in the reduplicated verb *gakaun-kaun* in the first statement (perhaps in reference to *balay-balay*), whereas the verb *gakauna* in the second statement suggests a focused progressive act of eating:

d) **VAA as Literary Language.** Multi-awarded playwright Ametta Taguchi (2014) regards Sebuano as her first language. During the interview wherein she spoke in Sebuano, it was observed right away that she herself uses the VAA. When I alerted her that the interview had something to do with the VAA usage in CDO, she was gracious in affirming that it is truly Cagay-anon usage; she openly confessed that she also used it, being a Sebuano-speaking Cagay-anon. She did not see any problem with such usage since most Cagay-anons use it in their day to day transactions.

e) **VAA as Cultural Identifier.** Roger Garcia (2013) shared that when he was still an undergraduate student in MSU-Marawi, every time he used CDO VAA, his classmates would tease him, as they were fascinated with the peculiar sounding – *ulana, tuona, uboha, sukaha, ampoay*. These classmates are also Sebuano-speaking but they are not from CDO. *Taga- Cagayan man ka ba?* This was the usual question his classmates would ask him when they heard him use the VAA. For him, the VAA usage provided him a sense of identity as a Cagay-anon:

f) **VAA as Natural Linguistic Phenomenon.** Cagay-anon anthropologist Dr. Erlinda Burton (2015) in our conversation concerning the adoption and adaptation of Manobo morpheme, *-a*, *-ay* and *-ha* into the Cagay-anon Sebuano morphology commented that such a phenomenon can be expected to happen since CDO was

originally occupied by the indigenous people (Manobo-Higaonon) and had become one of the places of migration by the Sebuano-speaking Visayans. The language contact brought about by the encounter of these cultures could result in a language change, and the VAA phenomenon is a testament to this. Burton affirmed that the morpheme under study is of Manobo origin. Burton admitted that she herself observes such usage.

### **Conclusion**

The VAA among the Cagay-anons did not just happen by chance but was brought about by complex social and historical factors that had created an impact on the Sebuano language. The subscription to VAA among the Cagay-nons has gradually replaced the standard Sebuano system of reduplication, which is still heavily used by the Sebuano speakers in Cebu and other places where Sebuano is the *lingua franca*. Though the VAA has been looked down as ungrammatical as it has deviated from Standard Sebuano grammar and has been accused of being a corruption of the Sebuano language, this study showed that the VAA could be positively viewed as a linguistic innovation through adaptation. The VAA as a linguistic phenomenon in CDO has been brought about by the complex processes of migration, language contact, language change, borrowing, adaptation and innovation. The migration of Cebuanos to northern Mindanao and CDO must be the primary reason for them to be introduced to the Manobo-Higaonon morphology. Migration further led the way to language contact between the migrating Cebuanos and the indigenous populace in CDO. Their sustained contact long before the coming of Spanish missionaries in 1622 to the present times must be an important factor too to the integration of this indigenous morpheme into the language used by Cagay-anons. Centuries of cultural and linguistic interactions between the Cebuanos and Manobo-Higaonons in CDO have indeed resulted in language change. Basically, Cagay-anon Sebuano has retained its “Sebuanness” as no considerable amount of lexicon from other local languages have been assimilated into the Sebuano vocabulary. The most identifiable change is the borrowing of the indigenous morpheme which had been initiated by the bilingual Manobo-Higaonons who have taken Sebuano

as part of their linguistic repertoire.

The process of borrowing has been put in place by replacing the Sebuano system of reduplication through morpheme adaptation and paradigm transfer. The integration of a Manobo-Higaonon morpheme into Cagay-anon Sebuano is done through infixation or suffixation. Both are always paired with a Sebuano prefix, which would indicate the tense of the progressive action. The intensive mood is done through double suffixation to show the intensity of the action. Almost all verb forms as shown by the samples from the list of authentic utterances can be affixed with these morphemes. In other cases, these morphemes can also be used to form an adverb. Another important information to be brought up is the possibility of morphological mix by unrelated languages as shown in the use of this indigenous morpheme with English verbs in a Sebuano-English statement.

### Recommendations

Based on the insights yielded in this study, the following suggestions are recommended: 1) since the same linguistic phenomenon has been observed and heard in the neighboring places of Misamis Oriental, studies in these places could be explored in comparison or contrast to the CDO phenomenon being studied. The same usage has been also heard in Iligan though it is not yet as widely popular as in CDO; this too can be investigated; 2) with the implementation of the K to 12 program where the mother tongue is to be used, particularly Sebuano in Northern Mindanao, insights of this study could help explain the background behind the variation created by Cagay-anon VAA to that of standard Sebuano reduplication to counter the unfair accusation of ungrammaticality and language corruption. This is important since the Sebuano to be used in the preparation of instructional materials is usually the standard Sebuano; 3) as this study focused solely on a specific Manobo-Higaonon morpheme (the allomorphs- *a*, *ay* and *ha*) the possibility of looking into Cagay-anon Sebuano lexical items, which are adopted from other local languages in CDO can also be done; 4) As shown by many of the respondents, there is this **tendency to prefer** the term Bisaya/ Binisaya/ Visayan **over** Cebuano/Sebuano, even in a situation when they are referring to the language of Cebu province.

This preference can also be investigated; 5) The hybrid morphological mix involving two related languages and one unrelated language as in the case of an English morpheme bounded by a Sebuano prefix and a Manobo-Higaonon suffix can further be explored as this reveals a peculiar linguistic possibility.

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