

REVIEWS

THE BISAYAN DIALECTS OF THE PHILIPPINES: SUBGROUPING AND RECONSTRUCTION: By R.D.P. Zorc. *Pacific Linguistics, Series C – No. 44. Department of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific Studies. The Australian National University, 1977, pp. xxi, 328.*

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The Philippines has over a hundred distinct but related speech varieties whose lexicons, phonologies and grammars show evidence of a long history of cultural and linguistic interaction, as well as the effect of external linguistic influences, notably that of Malay. While the broad groupings among these varieties are fairly clear, if not universally agreed upon, attempts to achieve a more comprehensive taxonomy are made difficult by the residual phenomena of language contact. Different methodologies, moreover, although they manifest the same sorts of ambiguities and anomalies, achieve different low-level subgroupings.

It seems clear that the problem of untangling the genetic and historical relationships among the diverse Philippine speech varieties (hereafter referred to for simplicity as 'languages', without prejudice to their mutual intelligibility or status) requires the reconstruction first of low-level subgroupings, with careful attention to the quality of the comparative data. The comparativist must, in fact, control a wide range of facts in order to distinguish between those items which illuminate and those which obscure the relationships between languages and subgroupings. Zorc undoubtedly meets this requirement, and in this book displays both thoroughness and perception.

The book contains a detailed study of thirty-six closely related languages generally subsumed under the label 'Bisayan', with special attention to thirteen of these. The Bisayan languages are characterized by closely similar phonological systems and syntactic typologies, all languages having a lexicostatistical score of 80% or more (using a modification of the Swadesh 100-meaning list) with at least one sister language of the subgroup. In such a context the discriminating data is frequently found only in low-level differences often passed over in comparative studies of Philippine languages. The author identifies these criterial data and uses them very effectively to establish the integrity of Bisayan as a subgroup (subject to a few comments which I make later), and then to distinguish divisions within Bisayan.

The book is clearly set out with abundant illustrative material that indicates the extent and depth of the author's fieldwork. The only omission in this respect, regretted by the reviewer, is the omission of the word and functor lists on which the statistical evidence is based. These data for twenty of the languages could have been presented, with advantage, in as many pages.

Chapter 2 is an extremely useful chapter that brings the reader up-to-date on the current status of studies of Central Philippine languages (Central Philippine being the linguistic grouping which most immediately includes Bisayan). The chapter's description of the distribution of the Bisayan languages and their place in the various classifications attempted to date is invaluable, and it is to be hoped that the identifications and code-

groups presented will be widely adopted as a reference base for any future discussion of these languages.

Chapters 3 and 4 present a wealth of synchronic comparative material for phonology, morphology, and syntax. Chapter 4 is valuable for its attention to recurring morphological and syntactic patterns, features of growing importance in comparative studies. Of particular interest are the sections on the morphological use of accent (usually composed of stress with concomitant vowel length) and the systemic use of deictic bases.

Chapter 5 is a brief parenthesis describing an uncompleted mutual intelligibility testing survey. The lack of completeness (it includes no Southern or Cebuano Bisayan languages, and only one Central Bisayan) is unfortunate but understandable; such a project would be a full-scale research project on its own. One hopes that Chapter 5 is in the nature of a progress report, and that the full survey, with a sound methodology, will eventually be completed as a companion study to the one being reviewed here.

Chapters 6 and 7 deal with internal comparisons of the Bisayan languages using both conventional lexicostatistics and functor analysis, with results that show a satisfactory degree of consistency. Functor analysis is essentially a quantitative comparison of items which, unlike those on lists such as that compiled by Swadesh, are not contentives but high frequency morphemes such as phrase markers and members of small closed sets such as pronouns and numerals. Zorc observes (p. 197):

It appears that this new method (functor comparison) provides a more accurate tool for comparison and subgrouping in that its results more closely reflect historical events, because: (1) functors have a low probability of replacement The diversity among functors not only indicates the synchronic diversity among Bs and CPh dialects, but also the historical diversity of such forms in the proto language .

He also notes (p. 186) that:

the number of shared retentions from earlier stages of proto-languages observed in the (functor comparison) method is considerably smaller (than in a conventional lexical comparison).

It would thus appear that functors are generally *less* stable over long periods of linguistic diversification than basic lexical vocabulary items, and a comparison of the two sets of scores for Bisayan languages bears this out; even for these closely related languages the functor scores are almost always less than the lexical scores. A functor list, furthermore, would seem prone to the same defects as a list of lexical items, namely the tendency to differential retention rates, and the susceptibility to the influences of diffusion. This reviewer would be glad to see a study which demonstrated clearly the advantages of a functor comparison, since sharp tools are badly needed in comparative studies, but at the moment there does not seem much to choose between the two techniques.

Chapter 8 deals with a reconstruction of the phonemic system of Proto Bisayan, but Zorc notes that subgrouping by phonological features — innovations of various kinds — does not support the subgrouping indicated by the findings of Chapters 6 and 7. Phonological features are not therefore used to influence decisions about subgrouping when they disagree with the indications of lexical and functor analysis. When they agree, however, they are considered to be confirming evidence.

Chapters 9-13 give the genetic evidence for various subgroupings, beginning with the unity of the Central Philippine subgroup (chapter 9), of which the Bisayan languages form a member subgroup coordinate with Tagalog, Bikol, Mansakan and Mamanwa, in Zorc's arrangement. The internal unity of Bisayan is demonstrated in Chapter 10, using

evidence from phonology, accent patterns, morphology and lexical innovations from both closed and open sets. The evidence for the internal subdivisions of Bisayan are presented in Chapters 11-13. It should be noted that although Chapter 12 is entitled 'Genetic Evidence for the Central Bisayan Subgroup' it also includes the Banton and Cebuano subgroups.

Typological errors are rare in the book; they are mainly limited to places where the machinery has omitted letters (as in the title for 12.1.3 on p. 269). More serious are the occasional mistakes in citations. I limit my comments for the moment to Tausug material, for which I have access to several native speakers from Sulu. Sulu Tausug does not have *habuk* 'kiss', nor *hadk-i* 'kiss (her)!' (8.9.1(3)). In fact, it has no examples of haplology except in numeral compounds, an observation of some interest for historical studies. *hariq* 'king' (8.9.1(7)) is recognized unhesitatingly as a borrowing from Tagalog. The stress on *butuŋ*, 'young coconut' is on the penult and not the ultima (8.10.2(2)). (In this case the citation may represent Palawan Tausug, in which case the information would have been helpful). Tausug does have *paaguy* < *palaguy* 'to run away' as a reflex of PHS *laRiw; it does have the forms *bukbuk* 'weevil' and *pāŋpaŋ*, 'steep bank', despite the explicit exclusion of Tausug along with Kuyonon (10.2.1). And *luquy* 'pity' (10.6.2(8)), *nataqu* 'was born' (10.6.2(12)), *budlay* 'nausea, morning sickness' (10.6.4(11)) all occur in Tausug.

Even with the utmost care it is easy to mis-cite languages with which one is less familiar, and the comparativist cannot possibly control the entire data of as many languages as are cited in a study as rich as this. For this reason statements about the non-occurrence of a form must be made cautiously, so that the evidence of a previously unrecorded form comes not as a contradiction of an assertion, but as a modification whose possibility has been anticipated by a suitably diffident statement. This is the case, for example, in the author's introduction of innovations given in support of the putative West Bisayan subgrouping, and in this context the occurrence of Tausug *hipus* 'silent' alongside WBs **hipəs* 'quiet, silent' (11.1.2(27)) is no embarrassment.

In the case of the West Bisayan innovations the occurrence of a small percentage of cognate forms in other languages does not significantly weaken the argument for a well-defined subgroup. When, however, a large number of putative exclusively shared innovations are demonstrated to have cognates outside the subgroup, then the boundaries of the subgroup are very much in question. In this regard note the following forms cited as innovations of Bisayan or one of its subgroups, and the occurrence of cognate forms in Mansakan and Mamanwa, subgroups placed by Zorc's classification outside Bisayan, as coordinate members with it of the Central Philippine subgroup.

The starred forms without a preceding abbreviation¹ in the material below are Proto Bisayan reconstructions claimed to be Bisayan innovations. Where there is no annotation the cited language has a form which is regular as to phonological and semantic reflex.

¹ Other abbreviations are: WBs for West Bisayan; CBs for Central Bisayan; MWA for Mamanwa, the only language of the Mamanwa subgroup; KMY for Kamayo, MDY for Mandaya, MSK for Mansaka, KLK for Kalagan, all languages of the Mansakan subgroup; BUT for Butuanon, CEB for Cebuano, SUR for Surigaonon, TSG for Tausug. *q* indicates a glottal stop; when it occurs initial in a word the alphabetisation is based on the following vowel.

(a) Functors

*qadtu, *kadtu 'to go (yonder)' (KMY, MSK, KLK); *qagəd 'so that, in order to' (MWA *qagun* 'for that reason' — a possible cognate, with the innovation of $-d > -n$); *basiq 'maybe' (MWA, KMY); *gihapun 'same, as usual' (MWA, KMY); *qin- 'passive past' (MWA 'action begun, Object and Referent focus'); *kuntanaq 'hopefully (optative marker)' (MWA *kuntana* 'conditional marker'); na-puluq 'ten' (MWA *napuluq*; KMY *napuuq*, *yapuuq*, where the development $n > y$ is not uncommon with Mansakan affixes).

(b) Contentives

*qagəd-ən 'master' (MWA *qagarən*); *bānhaw 'rise from dead' (MWA, KMY); *batiq 'to hear' (MWA, KMY); *bədlay 'tired; difficult' (MWA, KMY); *balág 'separate' (MWA, KMY); *dógaq 'juice, sap' (MWA, KMY); *qəbəs 'below' (KMY; MWA 'to descend'; MWA *hiqəbəs* 'inferior'); *gəgmaφ 'to love' (KMY); *g(in)ikañ-an 'parent' (MWA, KMY); CBs *hayaq 'to cry' (MWA); CBs *həbəg 'drunk' (MWA *palahəbəg* 'drunkard'); *həmək 'soft' (KMY); *hənas 'low tide' (MWA; KMY, MDY *hunasan* 'shore'); *hiñbis 'scale (of fish)' (MWA, KMY); *ka-libut-an 'world' (KMY); *kalimutaw 'pupil of eye' (MWA, KMY); *kamaŋ, 'to crawl' (MWA); *kasiñ-kasiñ, 'heart' (KMY); *kawas 'get off (vehicle, animal)' (MWA, KMY 'jmur down from, go downstairs'); Warayan *kulu 'fingernail' (MWA *kakulhun*; Proto Mansakan *kul(h)un); *libát 'cross-eyed' (MWA, KMY); *lúbag 'wring out, twist' (MWA); CBs *lubi 'coconut' (KMY *luquy 'pity' (MWA, KMY); *pilit 'to stick to' (KMY); *panaptən 'clothing' (MWA); cf. MSK *saput* 'cloth'); *paŋáyuy 'request, ask' (MSK; KMY, BUT, SUR *ŋayuy*); *páwaq 'clear, bright' (MWA, KMY, CEB, cleared area); *pugun, 'to restrain' (MWA *pəgəŋ* 'to prevent someone's progress'); *puqpuq 'to pick (fruit off tree)' (MWA, KMY); *sábak 'lap' (MWA, KMY 'to hold child on lap'); *salakət 'to mix in' (MWA *sakət*, KMY *sakut*); *salin 'leftover (food)' (MWA); *samád 'wound' (KMY); *sidak 'sunshine' (MWA *sirak*); *singit 'scream, shout' (MWA); *subaq 'river' (KMY; MWA, KMY 'to go upriver'); *tabun 'to cover with cloth' (KMY 'to cover'); *takilid 'lie down on side' (MWA); *taŋkəgəq 'nape of neck' (KMY; MWA *taŋgəqan*, KMY *taŋguqan*); *təŋəd 'because' (MWA); *tilaquk 'throat' (MWA, KMY *tilaqukan*); *tilaw 'to taste' (MWA, KMY, 'to sample food'); *tindak 'to kick' (KMY 'to push with foot'); *tiŋala 'surprised' (KMY *matinŋaa*).

If these are innovations limited to a particular subgroup, as it seems that most are, then their occurrence in MWA and KMY must be due either to borrowing in these two languages, or to their inclusion within the same subgroup as the Bisayan languages (but distinct from Bicol and Tagalog). It is undoubtedly valid to identify similar forms in languages B as borrowings from language A which is known to be influential, but *not* if the forms themselves are the main evidence of the influence of language B. In other words the borrowing hypothesis cannot fairly be used to place the Bisayan boundary between Surigaonon and Mamanwa or Kamayo. There thus seems to be room for further discussion about the southern extent of Bisayan.

There is the further problem of the statistical relationships. As Grace (1965) has noted, there is some relativity in the decision as to what is a 'sufficiently close relationship' for identifying language or dialect groupings. He notes:

For the problem of classifying languages into subgroups, it should be relative, being any degree of relationship closer than the closest relationship existing between a member of the subgroup and a nonmember.

This problem of deciding on a cut-off point is acute where well-defined dialect chains occur, as is the case with the continuum between the Central Philippine languages. Thus

several West and Central Bisayan languages have scores with Tagalog of 62% and more, while Cebuano and Southern Bisayan languages have scores as high as 73% (CEB-KMY) and 80% (SUR-KMY, BUT-KMY). Even TSG, geographically remote from its sister languages and considerably influenced by Sama languages, scores 60% with MWA. Internally, the scores among Bisayan languages are as low as 59% (for some TSG comparisons), and 63% (CEB-Kiniray-a).

The table below gives some scores for comparisons with Kamayo; functor comparisons taken from Zorc, and lexical comparisons using the 100-meaning list.²

Lexical and Functor Comparisons – some KMY scores							
KMY		SUR	BUT	MSK	MDK	MWA	TSG
	Lexical	80	78	76	81	66	62
	Functor	56	66	77			
	Difference	- 22	- 12	+ 1			

The lexical comparison places Kamayo equidistant from Bisayan and Mansakan languages. (A comparison with the longer 372-meaning list does the same.) Kamayo is in current contact with SUR and MDK, but not with BUT, TSG, nor to any extent with MWA. The functor scores are certainly thought-provoking, but the high KMY-MSK score may be the result of prolonged interaction between these languages. Evidence from the Tausug-Sama interaction in Sulu shows that functors are very susceptible to borrowing in situations that favor bilingualism.

There are phonological reasons also for suspecting that KMY and Davawenyo (DVM) at least, of the Mansakan languages, enjoy a closer genetic relationship with the Southern Bisayan (SBs) languages than with the other Mansakan languages, and I assume that, in general, shared phonological developments are significant indicators of genetic relationships when the languages are not currently in contact. In this case SUR is the only SBs language with which KMY is in current contact, while it has close contact with at least two Mansakan languages.

²I have used my own 100-meaning lists for these lexical counts. They differ up to 2% from Zorc's counts.

Distinctive Phonological Developments of KMY

Proto SBs form ³	KMY Development	Langs. with which KMY shares its development	Mansakan Development
*h	>h	All SBs langs, MWA and DVM	>q
*r	>r	MWA and DVM	>l
	r > l	DVM (in process)	
	l > ∅	BUT (in four unique environments)	∅
*qC	>qC	{ All SBs langs and MWA }	>C
*Ch	>Ch		>C
*C *Cl	>Cl		>ll ~ l

There does seem reason to keep asking questions about what is to be included in Bisayan, and reason for care in making statements about the direction of linguistic influence. None of these questions, however, diminish the importance of Zorc's book, and all of us who are addicted to the study of Philippine historical linguistics owe him a debt for the publication of this first-class study. It would be a pity, after all, if no statements were made that could be challenged, and no conclusions reached that did not prompt further inquiry and discussion. There is a great deal still to do, but it will never be quite as difficult again with Zorc's study as a basic reference book, as it seems sure to become.

REFERENCES

GALLMAN, ANDREW F. 1977. Proto South East Mindanao and its internal relationships. Paper presented at the Austronesian Symposium, Honolulu, August, 1977.

GRACE, GEORGE W. 1965. On the scientific status of genetic classification in linguistics. *Oceanic Linguistics* Vol. IV, Numbers 1 and 2. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.

³ These forms are based on my own reconstructions for East Mindanao, a putative subgrouping which includes Butuanon, Surigaonon and Tausug (Southern Bisayan), Mamanwa and the Mansakan languages.