

AMU INI KAMI: A WORD FORMATION PROCESS OF NOUN IN KAMAYO LANGUAGE, PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT

The fear of disappearance of the minority languages such as of the Kamayo language in Surigaodel Sur can be an interesting inquiry. Modern Kamayo of today is now heavily borrowing words and phrases from Bisaya, Filipino and English. This can be a sad reality when the danger of which people celebrate one's language at the expense of others. The researcher's eagerness to analyze the language of Kamayo which is in danger of extinction is therefore, deem significant in the preservation of such language; hence, this study is conceptualized. The study aims to analyze the word formation of the Kamayo language using the framework of morphological aspects of the language. The study specifically focuses on describing the word formation process of the Kamayo language in terms of nouns. This is a qualitative type of research which utilized a purposive sampling and conducted an interview in gathering the data. It was found in this study that there were eight-word formation processes in the Kamayo language, namely: blending, borrowing, coinage, clipping, inflection, reduplication, acronym, and compounding. The study further revealed that inflection is the most common word formation process found in the Kamayo language.

KEYWORDS: *Noun, Kamayo, Language, Word Formation Process*

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INTRODUCTION

People around the world use varied languages to communicate in order to be understood, others communicate through a common language where linguists use the term lingua franca. In the Philippines, Filipinos use varied lingua francas because the country is composed of several linguistic ethnicities. A mother tongue as they use to call it is used by the people in every place of the country. May you be from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, you may become part of the 170 diverse language speakers of the country, and there are 5000 languages spoken in the entire world today. Yet, according to current estimates, only one-tenth of today's languages will remain by the coming of the 22nd century. A language may die by its natural death when no one uses it, on the other hand; a language may change and achieve global status when it develops a special role in lives of all the people in the World. Moreover, languages are disappearing at an astonishing rate and pace shows no sign of reduction and many Filipino languages are at high risk of extinction according to ethnicgroupphilippines.com. This study aimed to describe the morphology of the Kamayo language in the first district of Surigao del Sur. Hence, this study will focus on describing the word formation process of the Kamayo language.

The language in the province of Surigao del Sur which is part of the Caraga Region has a variety and variation of

languages, such variation are found in the languages of the Cantilangnon of Cantilan, Tandaganon of Tandag, Tagon-on of Tago, Manobo of San Miguel, Kamayo of Marihatagto Lianga and others. There are few research and studies that have been done on Surigaonon, Catilangnon, and others. However, unlike with its neighboring languages, Kamayo is not well-researched into many areas of language aspects specifically in syntax, semantics, pragmatics and a few studies on morphology. It has been for many years that Kamayo language remains an oral language despite the size of the population and the outstanding academic achievements of the speakers. The Kamayo language becomes the prominent language of the people in the place and common language in the community. Hence, this study proves that Kamayo is a language that can stand alone. It is spoken by the majority of people living in the mid-eastern part of Mindanao. This language is unique compared to other languages in the Philippines. It is being used by the people to communicate, express their ideas, feelings, and thoughts in the community.

In the past, there are several studies like the study on verbal affixes of the language or languages in the Philippines. One of these is the work of Endriga in her paper entitled a description of the dialectology of Cebuano spoken in the provinces of Bohol, Cebu, and Davao which she concluded that Bohol, Cebu and Leyte are distinct from other languages in Binisaya. She stressed that *inga-* 'past time prefix as in *ganiha* 'earlier', *gahapun* 'yesterday' *gabii* 'last night' (*ka-* in others). She added that they are also dialects by virtue of mutual intelligibility. The speakers from these three dialects understand the dialect of the other. There may be differences but these are minimal compared to their similarities.

In the work of Ebo (2010) he stressed that Kamayo is the language spoken by the majority of the people living in mid-eastern Mindanao. According to him, Mandaya language is the root or base language of all the Kamayo dialects spoken all over the place. The Kamayo dialects at present are said to be an amalgamation of the aborigines in Northeastern Mindanao particularly Mandaya, Mamanwa, Suban-on, Mansakanhon, and etc.

Kamayo is related linguistically to the Tausug and Butuanon which belong to the Meso and central Philippine family of languages. However, people in the province speak varied dialects from one town to another. To mention a few, people from the municipalities of Lingig, Bislig, Barobo, and Hinatuan are using different distinct Kamayo language of its own, for example, a prefix is attached to most adjectives. The disparities of the dialects are due to the interchange of communication between the Kamayo settlers and the native Manobo according to National Commission for the Culture and the Arts.

The studies of Starosta, Pawley and Reid (1982), Wolff (1973), Ross (1995) as cited by Reid & Liao that most Philippine languages maintain transitive verb forms that contain one or more of a number of affixes that are reflexes of forms that have been reconstructed for early stages of the Austronesian language family. They added that Philippine languages are immense and constantly growing.

According to Bucjan (2017) in her study morphophonemic analysis of Kamayo "kadi" language in Surigao del Sur, Philippines found out that Kamayo language is distinct and it has its own characteristics. In (2011, Dumalagan) revealed that Surigaonon, Kamayo-Hinatuan, and Kamayo-Bislig, like most of the other Philippine languages, exhibit a syntactic phenomenon, in which certain verbal affixes require the use of a common article *angor ingas* a basic constituent element in their utterance to mark the focus of the sentence. The study also revealed that basically, Surigaonon, Kamayo-Hinatuan, and Kamayo-Bislig inflect for focus and aspect and these they employ the same procedure in verbal affixation in the action, objective, instrumental, and locative-benefactive focus. Prefixation is more commonly used than in fixation and suffixation. Other features that have been found to affect verbal inflection are plurality and reciprocity of

action, though only to a limited extent.

Dumanig (2015) added in his study entitled “Descriptive Analysis of the Surigaonon Language” reveal that the Surigaonon language consists of 17 consonants with 17 sounds and 3 vowels with 5 sounds. It has also 25 clusters and 4 diphthongs, which are similar to the Cebuano language (Rubrico, 1999). Generally, the Surigaonon language is distinct as compared to other languages in the Visayas and Mindanao because it has its own consonant and vowel sounds, stress, intonation patterns and morphophonemic processes.

Meanwhile, according to Benjie (2011), many native Kamayo speakers fear for the future survival of the language. It is because many Liangahanon and those who have children studying or working in other parts of the country are aware that many of the next generations of their descendants either do not know Kamayo anymore or have virtually stopped using it. He quoted, “*in our family, in particular, not one of my mother's grandchildren is a Kamayo speaker. They do understand the language yet they are more comfortable using Bisaya or Cebuano at home and among themselves*”. Modern Kamayo is now heavily borrowing words and phrases from Bisaya and even Tagalog. The fear of the disappearance of the minority languages, where on the other hand, endangered of which some people celebrate one’s language at the expense of others. The studies mentioned above focuses only on the verbal affixes, inflectional and derivational of Surigaonon and others. These are the gap of knowledge wherein this study emphasis on the morphological analysis of Kamayo language.

In the past time, the Kamayo language does not have any published materials according to Hassel bring et al. (2011) particularly in Surigaodel Sur, in this view, conducting a study on the Kamayo language and analyzing it in terms of word formation process would be very essential. In so doing will help Kamayo people realize that their culture and language is unique. The result of the study contributes to the preservation of culture in the Kamayo community and can be a significant basis for developing a reading materials in the DepEd curriculum such as Mother Tongue subject.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is qualitative in nature. It uses key informants in order to elicit the language correctly. The interview was conducted with six key informants and an interview guide questions were asked based on the beliefs and traditions in the life cycle of the human. Purposive criterion sampling was used in selecting the key informants. Thus, criteria were set in choosing the KI’s; 1.) he/she must be at least 60 years old above, and 2.) a native Kamayo and speaker of the language. On the other hand, the study was limited to the first district of Surigao del Sur which is composed of the three municipalities; Lianga, San Augustine, and Marihatag Surigao del Sur. The researcher utilized recorder to record the conversation during the interview, after which transcription of the recorded corpus was made and the translation and analysis of the data were also undertaken.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The table below discusses the word formation process of the Kamayo language. It focuses only on analyzing the content words such as nominals, verbs, and adjectives of the Kamayo language.

Nominal Word Formation

Table 1: Proper Noun

Word Formation Process	Word Form
1. Blending	Arstan (Arnold + Tan)
	Kencams (Kenneth + Campos)
2. Inflection	Liangahay (Lianga + hay)
	Domingay (Doming + ay)
3. Clipping	Don (Brandon)
	Edi/Edil (Edilberto)
	Feding (Fedilina)

The table above shows the nominal word formation in a proper noun. The proper noun of the Kamayo language form through blending, inflection, and clipping. Blending is the combination of a syllable from the first name and surname like Arstan (*from Arnold Tan*) and added with *s* either in the first or last syllable of the word. Inflection as a suffix is added by *hay* or *ay* like Liangahay or Domingay. Clipping also was used by the Kamayo to shorten the word or words like Don from Brandon and others. Therefore, the proper noun of a Kamayo language form through blending, inflection, and clipping. The analysis conforms to the study of Kosur (2014) that the word formation process contains compounding, clipping, and blending which has a very significant concept in the word formation.

Table 2: Common Noun

Word Formation Process	Word Form	Kamayo	English
Borrowing	anak (from Bisaya)	isu	son/daughter
	ayuda (from Bisaya/Spanish)	tabang	help
	bukador (from Bisaya)	mangabugaray/ presentor	speaker
	banig (from Bisaya)	hikam	mat
	buntis/buros (from Bisaya)	kabdu	pregnant
	cowins/coins	sinsilyo	coins
	e-mail		e-mail
	Facebook		Facebook
	habol (from Bisaya)	sabanas	blanket
	kayo (from Bisaya)	atun	fire
	kamut (from Bisaya)	alima	hand
	Kamera		camera
	kudak/piktyur	bayhu	image/picture
	pangala (from Bisaya)	kagikam (paglililihi)	
	pangulitawo (from Bisaya)	pangarig	curtship
	pamanhikan (from Tagalog)	butya/presentasyon	entreaty
	selpon/cellphone		cellphone
	Sex	iyut	sex (sexual intercourse)
	silhig (from bisaya)	baslay	broom made of coconut midribs
	sud-an (from bisaya)	utan	vian
Text		text	
tigok (Filipino jargon word means dead)	patay	dead	
Twitter		Twitter	
Coinage	Kodak		camera
	Honda		motorcycle
	Xerox		photocopier machine
	Maggi		noodles
	Colgate		tooth paste
Clipping	mon (from <i>lumon</i>)		relative/sibling

	dok (from <i>doctor</i>)		Doctor
	kagdan (from <i>kagudan</i>)		coconut grater
	hagdan (from <i>hagdanan</i>)		stairs
	gamus (from <i>ginamus</i>)		salted fish
Inflection	bubayay (rw +ay)		just a girl
	usugay (rw + ay)		just a boy
	hikamay (rw + ay)		just a just mat
	sabanasay (rw + ay)		just blanket
	palina (pa + rw)		ritual
	basakan (rw +an)		rice field
	kaupod (ka + rw)		companion
Reduplication	bay-bay		house playing
	uhipan-uhipan		sea centipede
	lihi-lihi		ritual
	panday-panday		carpentry
Acronyms	TV		Television
	FB		Facebook

Table 2 shows the word formation process in a common noun in a Kamayo language. The common noun is a general term for a name of the person, animal, thing, place or event. The result shows that borrowing, coinage, and acronym are words that has been borrowed. It can be noted that Kamayo language borrowed words from Bisaya, Tagalog, and English. There is so-called inflection of words through affixes like *bubay* (*bubayay*) means girl (just a girl). Thus, a single word in Kamayo language in an inflection process is equivalent to a phrase in English like *sabanasay* (just a blanket) and others. Reduplication has been used also such as *bay-bay* (house playing), *uhipan-uhipan* (sea creature like centepede).

Therefore, the word formation process of a Kamayo language formed through borrowing, coinage, clipping, inflection, reduplication, and acronym. The result implies that Kamayo language is developing through the process of word formation. The study conformed to the work of Reid & Liaothat Philippine languages are immense and constantly growing. It followed also to the work of Bucjan (2017) that Kamayo language is distinct and it has its own characteristics. This paper observed also in the study of Turmiyah (2011) that most word formation used are acronym, derivation, conversion, compounding, and borrowing.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it shows that word formation process in Kamayo language plays a very significant role in the word construction. There are eight-word formation processes in a Kamayo language found in the study. These are blending, borrowing, coinage, clipping, inflection, reduplication, acronym, and compounding. The study reveals that inflection is the most common process found in the Kamayo language which is used by the people in the community. Hence, the language is developing that is why the use of borrowing, coinage, and acronyms are also evident in the word formation process of the language. The result of the study could be used by the teachers and pupils in the place of the study in developing the instructional materials in MTB-MLE as part of the DepEd curriculum. Hence, this study contributes to the preservation of such language. On the other hand, “*Amu ini kami*” means “this is what we are, this is how we speak and this language is part of our culture”. The result clearly implies that Kamayo language is evolving. It is an expression and application of human creative skill and imagination in communication. This language continues to develop and to change due to borrowing words and phrases from other languages, in this effect the danger of losing its identity is at stake.

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