The Cebuano Visayan Editorial *Tagay, Bay* of Sunstar Superbalita Cebu: Its Orthographic, Syntactic, and Morphemic Structures

MELISSA D. SUMALINOG*

ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the orthography, morphology, and syntax inaccuracies of the Cebuano Visayan editorial *Tagay, Bay* of Sunstar Superbalita Cebu for linguistic idealization. Since Cebuano Visayan is a phonetic language, the written words should be spelled as pronounced; thus, only the vowels *a, i, and* u are to be used. There should also be the marking of a glottal stop between vowels with a hyphen (e.g. *gabi-i, or* night). In terms of syntax, Cebuano Visayan, just like other Philippine languages, should follow the predicate-subject order. Upon closer examination using content analysis, the study yielded the following results: 1. Out of 292 words, there are 85 inaccurately spelled words (29.11%) because the vowels a, e, i, o, and u are used instead of only a, i, and u, and words with two successive vowels without a hyphen to indicate a glottal stop; 2. There are 4 out of 13 sentences that followed the subject-predicate order instead of the predicate-subject order, and 3. In terms of content words, there are 34 nouns, 20 verbs, and 18 adjectives. It can therefore be concluded that the editorial contains inaccuracies in orthography, sentence construction, and affixation. It is hereby recommended that study results be used as bases for linguistic accuracy in the field of education and the mass media, considering that these two fields are very influential and powerful forces for reform. Having a standard for language used in these fields will improve the quality of communication to their intended audience.

Keywords: **Cebuano Visayan, affixation, morphology, orthography, syntax**

I. INTRODUCTION

Cebuano Visayan is one of the major Philippine languages spoken by two-thirds of the Philippine population (Linguistic Data Consortium, 2020; Pesirla, 2012), making it the lingua franca in Central and Southern Philippines (Abastillas, 2015 as cited by Genon-Sieras, 2020). As stated in the "Language Specific Peculiarities Document for Cebuano as Spoken in the Philippines", it is spoken by some 20 million people on Cebu Island and the western part of Leyte (also called Leyteño). Other varieties are spoken in Bohol (also called Boholano), Negros Oriental, the northern and eastern parts of Mindanao, parts of the Zamboanga peninsula, and in the southwest of Mindanao.

As a language, Cebuano Visayan has far-reaching socio-linguistic importance because it bridges communication among peoples in the said islands. Because of this, there is a need to study how it is used in major areas of Philippine life such as the mass media, and how it is taught in subjects, especially with the implementation of Mother Tongue Based Language Education (MTB-MLE). For linguistic accuracy, this study thus seeks to investigate the orthography, morphology, and syntax of Cebuano Visayan as used in the editorial *Tagay, Bay* of Sunstar Superbalita Cebu.

*English Department, College of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mindanao State University – Main Campus, Philippines

E-mail Address: melissa.sumalinog@msumain.edu.ph

Theoretical Background

This paper argues that the Cebuano editorial *Tagay, Bay* of Sunstar Superbalita Cebu reveals a textuality of inaccurate orthography, syntax, and morphemic structures. This argument is supported by the theory of pedagogic grammar.

A pedagogic grammar presents the structural description of a language for teaching-learning purposes. This includes the making of descriptive statements about the target language to be learned through teaching in such a form that its structures (sound, word, sentence) will be more readily learned (Corder, 1973) as cited by Pesirla (2003).

Related Literature and Studies

Corder (1973) as cited by Pesirla (2003), the adequate linguistic description of Cebuano Visayan is anchored on its natural linear structure as a Malayo-Polynesian language belonging to the Austronesian family of languages spoken throughout Southeast Asia across the Pacific and thus, closely, through phylogenetic variation, relating to the linear linguistic characteristics of Bahasa Malay.

The following are the comprehensive instructional components of the pedagogic grammar of Cebuano Visayan: Phonology-Orthography Correspondence (Sound-Letter System), Morphology (Word System), and Syntax (Sentence System).

The following universal commonalities of Cebuano Visayan are reflected in its mother tongue, Bahasa

Malay: (1) A phonetic language, Cebuano Visayan phonology needs to follow the alphabetic phonetic spelling system (spelled as sounded) observing phoneme-grapheme correspondence of three vowels and fifteen consonant sounds. (2) An agglutinative language, Cebuano Visayan morphology shares common characteristics with Bahasa Malay where affixes and particles dictate meaning, function, form, and class of words. (3) The predicate construct in Cebuano Visayan syntax, as in all Austronesian/Malayo-Polynesian and Philippine languages, assumes the linear marker for its basic unit of thought. Therefore, Cebuano Visayan syntax is characterized by the predicate-subject order. Predicates in Cebuano Visayan sentences may be noun predicates, adjective predicates, adverb predicates, prepositional phrase predicates, intransitive verb predicates, and transitive verb predicates.

Some studies have also been done to support the idealization of Cebuano Visayan grammar. The study of Genon-Sieras (2020) also analyzed a Cebuano Visayan editorial and it revealed 57 misspelled Cebuano Visayan words involving the use of inaccurate vowels, the absence of hyphens to mark glottal stops, and the lack of apostrophes for contracted words. Moreover, three inaccurate sentence constructs following the subject-predicate order instead of the predicate-subject order were found. Another study was conducted by Caroro, Paredes, and Lumasag (2020), which created grammar rules for hyphenated words which include sequences of a hyphen between vowel-consonant, vowel-vowel, consonant-consonant, and consonant-vowel. They concluded that hyphens improve the naturalness and intelligibility in the utterance of words, thereby enhancing the understanding and comprehension of Cebuano Visayan discourse.

Problem Statement

As mentioned in the literature review, Cebuano Visayan words should use the vowels a, i, and u and use hyphens to indicate glottal stops. In terms of syntax, it should follow the predicate-subject order. This study therefore analyzes the inaccuracies in orthography, syntax, and morphemic structures, in the editorial *Tagay, Bay* of Sunstar Superbalita Cebu for linguistic idealization. Specifically, it focuses on the following: (1) phoneme-grapheme correspondence, (2) syntactic system, and (3) morphemic structures of content words.

II. METHODS AND MATERIALS

Linguistic Research Method Used

This study used content analysis to determine the inaccuracies in orthography, morphology, and syntax of Cebuano words in the editorial *Tagay, Bay* of Sunstar Superbalita Cebu.

Source of Data

The main source of data for this study is the editorial *Tagay, Bay* of Sunstar Superbalita Cebu, an online newspaper that publishes articles in English and Cebuano Visayan. This editorial discusses the issues of the Filipino culture of drinking liquor during celebrations and what the city of Mandaue has done to minimize problems related to this practice.

Data-generating Process

Three phases were involved in generating the necessary data for the study:

Phase 1: Phoneme-grapheme correspondence. This phase shows the spelling of Cebuano Visayan words as they are to be pronounced, which should ideally use only the three vowels: a, i, and u; the marking of a glottal stop between words with a hyphen (-), and the use of 15 consonants: p, t, k, b, d, g, m, n, ng, l, r, s, h, w, and y.

Phase 2: Syntactic system. This phase shows the accurate sentence structures for Cebuano Visayan, which should follow the predicate-subject order.

Phase 3: Morphemic structures. This phase identifies the content words in the editorial *Tagay, Bay* of Sunstar Superbalita Cebu. It analyzes these words in terms of affixation.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This presents the results and discussion focusing on the analytical data derived from the linguistic analysis of the editorial *Tagay, Bay* of Sunstar Superbalita Cebu. The definitions of Cebuano words are taken from Wolff's (1972) Dictionary of Cebuano Visayan and Binisaya! | Ato Ni Bay! (http://www.binisaya.com./).

Table 1 - Orthographic Idealization

Misspelled words	Paragraph	Accurate orthography
o	1	*u* (or)
ilimnong	1	*ilimnung* (alcoholic drink)
makahunong	1	*makahunùng* (intoxicating)
pabritong	1	*pabritung* (favorite)
kauban	1	*ka-uban* (companion or partner)
kauban	1	*ka-uban* (companion or partner)
panagtapok	1	*Panagtapùk* (gathering)
salosalo	1	*salusalù* (meal eaten with a group)

Table 1 (Continued)

Misspelled words	Para-graph	Accurate orthography
bag-ong	1	bag-ung (new/newly)
nakaila	1	naka-ilà (known or acquainted)
masuod	1	*masu-ud* (close)
tungod	1	*tungud* (because of)
kon	1	*kun* (if)
mosanong	1	*musanung* (will assent; agree; concede)
molawom	1	*mulawum* (will deepen)
panagkaila	1	*panagka-ila* (knowing each other or one another)
kadugo	1	*kadugû* (blood-related)
paryente	1	*paryinti* (relative)
diay	1	*di-ay* (indeed or actually)
alegre	1	*aligri* (merry, lively)
mao	1	*ma-u* (That is)
gahom	1	*gahum* (power)
mogawas	1	*mugawas* (will surface or come out)
mahimong	1	*mahimùng* (will become)
matinud-anon	1	*matinud-anun* (honest or truthful)
pugongpu-gong	1	*pugungpugùng* (inhibition or stopping)
pag-istorya	1	*pag-isturya* (talking)
panultion	2	*panulti-un* (saying or aphorism)
nag-ingon	2	nag-ingun (said)
sobra	2	*subra* (excess)
problema	2	*prublima* (problem)
mugna	2	mugnâ (caused or created)
kahubog	2	*kahubug* (drunkenness)
bag-o	2	*bag-u* (new)
daan	2	*da-an* (old)
Kristo	2	*Kristu* (Christ)
kalibotan	2	*kalibutàn* (world)
dili	2	dilî (no/not)
maayong	2	*ma-ayung* (good)
epekto	2	*ipiktù* (effect)
nagtukmod	2	*nagtukmud* (pushed; incited)
pagkabayo-lente	2	*pagkabayu-linti*(violence)
panahon	2	*panahun* (time)
leksiyon	2	*liksiyun* (lesson)
nakat-onan	2	*nakat-unan* (learned)
tighimo	2	*tighimû* (maker)
og	2	*ug* (of)
produkto	2	*pruduktu* (product)
pahimangno	2	*pahimangnû* (reminder or warning)
paningkamot	2	*paningkamut* (effort)
makontrolar	2	*makuntrular* (to control)
pagkapala-hubog	2	pagkapalahubug (being a drunkard)
tawo	2	tawu (person)
sakop	3	sakup *(including)*
organisadong	3	urganisadung (organized)
komunidad	3	kumunidad (community)
diha	3	*dihâ* (there; in that place)
taas	3	*ta-as* (long)
sibilisasyon	3	*sibilisasyun* (civilization)
dakong	3	*dakung* (big)
kaakuhan	3	*ka-akuhann* (responsibility)
naa	3	*na-a* (has/have)
naghupot	3	*naghuput* (possessed, bought, or acquired)
renda	3	*rinda* (confine, restrain, or control)
local	3	*lukal* (local)
parte	3	*parti* (part)

Table 1 (Continued)

Misspelled words	Para-graph	Accurate orthography
pamaagi	3	*pama-agi* (way)
pagsuporta	3	*pagsupurta* (support)
nasudnong	3	*nasudnung* (pertaining to a city)
imposibling	3	*impusibling* (impossible)
gihimo	3	*gihimû* (did or made)
dalaygon	4	*dalaygun* (to be praised)
opisyal	4	*upisya*l (official)
nag-obserbar	4	*nag-ubsirbar* (observed)
ordinansa	4	*urdinansa* (ordinance)
ngadto	4	*ngadtu* (until)
oras	4	*uras* (hour or time)
gabii	4	*gabi-i* (night)
maong	4	*ma-ung* (that)
kausaban	4	ka-usaban (change)
talaan	4	tala-an (record)
krimen	4	*krimin*(crime)
kaadlawon	4	*ka-adlawun* (dawn)
undanon	5	*undanun* (meaty; fleshy)
nagkadako	5	*nagkadakû* (becoming larger or greater)
diin	5	*di-in (*where)
gipahiluna	5	*gipahilunâ* (settled or accommodated)

All misspelled Cebuano Visayan words from the editorial *Tagay, Bay* of Sunstar Superbalita Cebu are summarized in Table 1. It shows that 86 words from the said editorial do not follow phoneme-grapheme correspondence of the Cebuano Visayan language because of the use of the vowels e and o instead of i and u. Words containing two vowels in a row should also have hyphens to indicate a glottal stop (e.g. gabi-i, tala -an).

Table 2 - Syntactic Idealization

INACCURATE SENTENCE CONSTRUCT	IDEALIZED SENTENCE CONSTRUCT
1. *Ang alak o mga ilimnong maka-hunong pabritong kauban sa panag-tapok o salosalo sa pamilyang Bisa-ya, barkada ug bisan bag-ong nakaila masuod tungod sa pagsulti nga "Tagay, Bay."* (Liquor or alcoholic drinks are a favorite partner in gatherings or celebrations of a Visayan family, friends, or new acquaintances because of the saying, "Let's drink, Buddy!")	*Pabritung ka-uban sa panagtapuk u salusalu sa pamilyang Bisaya, barkada ug bisan bag-ung naka-ila masu-ud tungud sa pagsulti nga "Tagay, Bay" ang alak u mga ilimnung makahunung.*
2. *Apan ang panultion nag-ingon nga ang tanang sobra makadaut.* (But as the saying goes, anything in excess is harmful.")	*Apan nag-ingun ang panulti-un nga ang tanang subra makada-ut.*
3. *Ang problema mugna sa sobra nga kahubog dili bag-o, apan nang daan na bisan sa panahon ni Kristo sa kalibotan.* (The problem caused by too much intoxication is not new, but an old one dating even during the time of Christ in the world.)	*Dilî bag-u ang prublima mugnâ sa subra nga kahubug, apan nang da-an na bisan sa panahun ni Kristu sa kalibutan.*

Table 2 (Continued)

INACCURATE SENTENCE CONSTRUCT	IDEALIZED SENTENCE CONSTRUCT
4. *Ang mga tighimo og alak nibutangan ang ilang produkto nga* "drink moderately" *ug uban pang pahimangno sa paningkamot nga makontrolar ang pagkapalahubog sa usa ka tawo.* (Liquor manufacturers put "Drink moderately" and other reminders to control a person's being a drunkard.)	*Gibutangan sa mga tighimû ug alak ang ilang pruduktu nga "drink moderately" ug uban pang pahimangnû sa paningkamut nga makuntrular ang pagkapalahubug sa usa ka tawu.*

All inaccurate sentence structures are identified and recorded for idealization in Table 2. Since Cebuano Visayan follows the predicate-subject order, the selected sentences are written in the opposite. Therefore, they are identified in the table and idealized accordingly.

Table 3 - Morphemic Structures

CONTENT WORDS	MORPHEMES AFFIXE/S		
NOUNS	FREE	BOUND	FORM
1. *alak*	*alak* (liquor)		simple
2. *buntag*	*buntag* (morning)		simple
3. *dakbayan*	*dakbayan* (city)		simple
4. *dapit*	*dapit* (place)		simple
5. *gabi-i*	*gabi-i* (night or evening)		simple
6. *gahum*	*gahum* (power)		simple
7. *ilmnun*	*inum* (to drink)	-lim-, -un	complex
8. i*piktu*	*ipiktu* (effect)		simple
9. *kadugû* (blood relative)	*dugû* (blood)	ka-	complex
10. *kahubug* (drunken-ness)	*hubug* (drunk)	ka-	complex
11. *kalibutan* (world)	*Libut* (travel)	ka-, -an	complex
12. *kapulisan* (police)	*Pulis* (police officer)	ka-, -an	complex
13. *kasaysayan* (history)	*Saysay* (to narrate)	ka-, -an	complex
14. *ka-uban* (compa-nion or partner)	*Ubán* (to go with)	ka-	complex
15. *Kristu*	*Kristu* (Christ)		simple
16. *kumunidad*	*kumunida* (community)		simple
17. *liksiyun*	*liksiyun* (lesson)		simple
18. *Mandaue*	*Mandaue* (a city in Cebu)		simple
19. *pagkapalahubug* (being a drunkard)	*hubug* (drunk)	pagka-, pala-	complex
20. *pagtagay*	*tagay* (to drink liquor)	pag-	simple
21. *pahimangnû* (advisory or briefing)	*himangnû* (to remind)	pa-	complex
22. *panahun*	*panahun* (time)		simple

Table 3 (Continued)

CONTENT WORDS	MORPHEMES AFFIXE/S		
NOUNS	FREE	BOUND	FORM
23. *panatapuk*	*tapuk* (to gather)	panag-	complex
24. *pang-lawas* (bodily)	*lawas* (body)	pang-	simple
25. *panulti-un* (saying or aph-orism)	*sulti* (say)	pa-, -n-, -un	complex
26. *paryinti*	*paryinti* (relative)		simple
27. *prubli-ma*	*prublima* (problem)		simple
28. *pruduk-tu*	*pruduktu* (product)		simple
29. *salusálu*	*salusalu* (eating in a gathering)		compound
30. *sibili-sasyun* (civilization)	*sibilisar* (civilize)	-syun	complex
31. *tighimû* (maker)	*himû* (make)	-tig	complex
32. *upisyal*	upisyál (official)		simple
33. *uras*	*uras* (time; hour)		simple
34. *urdinansa*	*urdinansa*		simple

CONTENT WORDS	MORPHEMES AFFIXE/S		
VERBS	FREE	BOUND	FORM
1. *gibuta-ngan* (placed or put)	butang (to place or put)	gi-, -an	complex
2. *gihimû* (make)	himû (make)	gi-	complex
3. *gipahi-gunâ*	hilunâ	gipa-	complex
4. *gipanga-yû* (asked; re-quested)	*pangayû* (to ask or request)	gi-	complex
5. *mahi-mung* (will become)	*himû* (to make or become)	ma-, -ng	complex
6. *makun-trular* (will be able to control)	*kuntrular* (to control)	ma-	complex
7. *masubay* (will be able to trace)	*subay* (to trace)	ma-	complex
8. *musa-nung* (agreed or assented)	*sanung* (to agree or assent)	mu-	complex
9. *nagtuk-mud* (prodded; shoved)	*tukmud* (to prod; to shove)	nag-	complex
10. *nakat-unan* (learned)	*kat-un* (to learn)	na-, -an	complex
11. *muga-was* (will come out)	*gawas* (out)	mu-	complex
12. *mugnâ*	*mugnâ* (created or caused by)		simple
13. *namatay* (died)	*patay* (dead)	na-, -m-	complex
14. padáyun	*padáyun* (continue)		simple
15. *pagligid*	*ligid* (to roll)	pag-	complex
16. *paglimitar*	*limitar* (to limit)	pag-	complex
17. *pag-mintinar*	*mintinar* (to main-tain)	pag-	complex
18. *pagsulti* (by saying)	sulti (say)	pag-	complex

Table 3 (Continued)

CONTENT WORDS	MORPHEMES AFFIXE/S		
VERBS	FREE	BOUND	FORM
19.*palam-bu-un* (to make something grow or flour-	*lambû* (to grow or flourish)	pa-, -un	complex
20. *sakup*	*sakup* (to include)		simple

CONTENT WORDS	MORPHEMES AFFIXE/S		
ADJECTIVES	FREE	BOUND	FORM
1. *bag-ung*	*bag-u* (new)	-ng	complex
2.*Bisayâ*	*Bisayâ* (Visayan)		simple
3.*buhatun* (to be done or made)	*buhat* (to do or make)	-un	complex
4.*da-an*	*da-an* (old)		simple
5.*daghang*	*daghan* (many)	-ng	complex
6.*dakung*	*dakû* (big or great)	-ng	complex
7.*impusibling*	*impusibli* (impossible)	-ng	complex
8. *kanunay*	*kanunay* (always)		simple
9.*lukal*	*lukal* (local)		simple
10.*ma-ayung*	*ma-ayu* (good)	-ng	complex
11.*maka-da-ut* (harmful)	*da-ut* (to harm)	maka-	complex
12.*matinud-anun* (honest or truthful)	*tinu-ud* (true)	ma-, -anun	complex
13.*nasud-nung* (pertaining to a city)	*nasud* (city)	-nun, -ng	complex
14.*natural*	*natural*		simple
15. *subra*	*subra* (excessive)		simple
16. *ta-as*	*ta-as* (long)		simple
17.*urganisadung*	*urganisadu* (organized)	-ng	complex

The content words in the editorial *Tagay, Bay* textuality are identified and analyzed in terms of affixation using Table 3. They are identified in terms of free morphemes (root words) and bound morphemes (affixes). Since Cebuano Visayan is an agglutinative language, the data show that the attachment of affixes indicates changes in meaning.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As shown in the findings, there are 86 misspelled Cebuano Visayan words because 5 vowels (a, e, i, o, u) are used instead of only 3 (a, i, u), and the non-use of a hyphen between two succeeding vowels to indicate a glottal stop. There are also 4 inaccurate sentence constructs in Cebuano Visayan because they follow the subject-predicate order instead of the predicate-subject order. The editorial also contains the follow-ing number of content words: 34 nouns, 20 verbs, and 17 adjectives. In terms of affixation, 20 nouns, 2 verbs, and 6 adjectives are simple in form (composed of free morphemes); 13 nouns, 17 verbs, and 10 adjectives are complex in form (composed of a free morpheme and bound morpheme/s; and one noun is compound in form (composed of two free morphemes).

Therefore, it has been proven that the Cebuano Visayan editorial *Tagay, Bay* of Sunstar Superbalita Cebu contains inaccuracies in orthography, sentence construction, and affixation. This conclusion is based on the universal commonalities of the Cebuano Visayan language as a language derived from the mother language Bahasa Melayu. Thus, just like the mother language, Cebuano Visayan is a phonetic, agglutinative language following the predicate-subject order of syntax.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are given:

1. A similar study may be conducted using another Visayan language like Hiligaynon or Waray.
2. Another piece of literature in Cebuano Visayan such as a poem or Biblical passage may be analyzed using similar methods used in this study.
3. Function words may be additionally analyzed in terms of morphemic structure in another study.
4. Teachers of Cebuano Visayan under the MTB-MLE program may use these data as a basis for teaching sentence construction and spelling.
5. Newspaper columnists who write in Cebuano Visayan may use these data as a reference for accurate and spelling sentence construction.

Cebuano Visayan as Lingua Franca. This paper was presented last January 26, 2020, at the International Research Congress organized by the American Studies Association of Cebu City as a final requirement under the said course.

VI. REFERENCES

Caroro, R. A., Paredes, R. K., & Lumasag, J. M. (2020). Rules for orthographic word parsing of the Philippines' Cebuano-Visayan language using context free grammars. *International Journal of Software Science and Computational Intelligence (IJSSCI), 1* (2), 34-49.

Corder, S.P. (1973). *Introducing applied linguistics:* Penguin Books, 1973.

Genon-Sieras, S. V. (2020). Orthography, syntax, and morphemes in Cebuano Visayan news editorial: a linguistic analysis. *International Journal of English Language and Linguistics Research, 8*(3), 34-46.

Linguistic Data Consortium. (2020, January 12). *Language-specific peculiarities document for Cebuano as spoken in the Philippines.* Cebuano LSP. https://catalog.ldc.upenn.edu/docs/LDC2018S07 LSP_301_final.pdf

Pesirla, A. O. (2003). *A Linguistic Description of Cebuano Visayan.* CNU Research Center, Cebu City.

Pesirla, A. O. (2012). *Ang Linggwistika sa Sugbuanun'g Bisaya.* Carangue, Cebu City.

Tagay, Bay. (2018 November 4). *Sunstar Superbalita-Cebu.* https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1772375

Wolff, J. (1962). *A description of Cebuano Visayan: texts, analysis and vocabulary.* Cornell University-Library. https://ecommons.cornell.edu.

Wolff, J.U. (1973). A dictionary of Cebuano Visayan. *The Journal of Asian Studies, 33*, 166 - 167.