

A Grammar of Mëranaw Language

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Abstract: This paper describes the grammar of Mëranaw (ISO 639-3: mrw). Mëranaw, or more commonly known as Maranao, is a Philippine language prevalently spoken in almost all parts of Lanao del Sur province and in some areas in Lanao del Norte, Maguindanao, and North Cotabato. The primary goal of this study is to provide a grammar of the Mëranaw language that entails linguistic features of the language covering its morphological features. The participants of this study were the three identified professional and native speakers living in Marawi City. The elicited materials consist of the 615-word list and 775-sentence list from UP Department of Linguistics were transcribed and analyzed using the Basic Linguistic Theory. It was found that morphologically speaking, Mëranaw language has a rich culture of affixation as prefixes, suffixes, infixes, and circumfixes are all present to create new words. These affixations include the prefix *p-*, *mak-*, and *tomi-* and the suffix *-an*. Moreover, the infix *ka- -an* and circumfix *p- -n, miaka- -e*. This is to form another lexical category of a given Mëranaw word that most likely entails to tells the time certain Mëranaw verbs take place. Furthermore, this grammar sketch aims to provide a concrete reference for Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) as the Mëranaw language is one of the languages being taught. It further implies language description and documentation as the basis for language revitalization and at the same time culture preservation.

Keywords: Applied Linguistics, Maranao, Mëranaw, Language Documentation, Grammar Sketch, Phillipines

A. Introduction

There are 187 distinct living languages in the Philippines, including Filipino Sign Language (FSL) which accounts for its diverse and multilinguistic landscape (Lewis, 2009). Governing this multilinguistic landscape, Mëranaw is considered to be the largest of the Muslim cultural-linguistic groups of the Philippines with a population of more than 840,000 in the late 20th century. They are one of the 13 Muslim Filipino ethnolinguistic groups living on the Philippine Island. They live around Lake Lanao on the southern island of Mindanao wherein rice farming is their main livelihood, along with metalworking and woodworking handicrafts. However,

it was found that it was under documented in terms of its language description and language documentation.

Lobel and Riwarung (2011) stretch that Mëranaw has one of the richest morphologies of any Philippine language (McKaughan 1971), richer even than Tagalog, Bikol, or Waray-Waray. Complex morphophonemics and recalcitrant phonology further complicate the system, hindering its proper analysis for the first 95 years of foreign inquiry into the language.

Moreover, they are known for the richness of their culture that until now is still evident and has continued to live up in the hearts of every Mëranaw. This culture has been maintained and remained strong even to the test of time making it very much alive up to these years. Like any other cultural group, in the country, the Mëranaw are also known for their literary involvement, which until now some are not yet recorded and appreciated to the fullest (Ulla, 2014).

On the other hand, studies dealing with orthographies used by linguists, dictionary compilers, and Bible translators likewise failed to represent the heavy consonants, and sometimes added an extra vowel phoneme in an attempt to compensate (Lobel and Riwarung, 2011). The orthography used in this sketch was developed four decades ago by three of the most celebrated Mëranaw writers-Aleem Abdulmajeed Ansano of Taraka (1943-2008), Senator Ahmad Domocao "Domie" Alonto of Ramain (1914-2002), and Shaiekh Abdul Azis Guroalim Saromantang of Tugaya (1923-2003)—without any known outside help.

Notably, no primary studies of Mëranaw phonology have previously been published. There has been extensive documentation of Mëranaw from Elliot (1913) to McKaughan and Macaraya (1996), yet without exception, these works were based on incomplete phonological analyses which overlooked the language's four heavy consonants, sometimes resulting in the misanalysis of the vowel system (Lobel & Riwarung 2009).

Since the Mëranaw language has been developed to the point that it is used and sustained by institutions beyond the home and community, the primary focus of this study is to update its most salient points of grammar in terms of phonological, morphological, and syntactical features. However, this language remains to be documented as the available studies could imply. The only dedicated phonological description is a brief, unpublished sketch by Ward probably written in the late 1960s, which is highly problematic, based on insufficient data available in analyzing the language's complicated phonology (Lobel & Riwarung, 2009).

Similarly, not much literature on the linguistic aspects of Mëranaw is available which further denote a larger pace to study. Furthermore, the results of the study can be used

to promote knowledge of this Philippine language, and also offers benefits for language pedagogy as one of the languages being used in Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE).

To realize the aims of giving a comprehensive description of the linguistic features of the Mëranaw language and to revitalize the language through documentation, this paper will seek to answer the following questions 1) what is the language to be grammatically described? Who are the speakers and their speech community? 2) what is the morphological feature of the language as to its inflectional, derivational, and free morphemes? 3) what is the language's morphological process that includes affixation? What are the present lexical categories of the language?

B. Literature Review

The Mëranaw

The Philippines is a culturally diverse nation with over 7,000 islands and incorporating more than 150 languages (Reid, 2005). Filipinos are living in diaspora throughout the country. Most Filipinos identify themselves by their ethnic identity or by the language that they speak (Clariza, 2019) and Mëranaw is one of these languages.

In fact, Sohayle M. Hadji Abdul Racman's Ph.D. dissertation, *The Political Legitimacy of Lanao Sultanate in the 17th Century with Special Reference to the Political Theory of al-Mward* (2020), hypothesizes that the term Maranao originated from the combination of the phrases Mai and Ranao. The old name for Mindoro Island in the Philippines was Mai, while the Maranao word for lake is Ranao. Migrant Chinese-Arab Muslim traders from China lived in Mai. When the Mai people moved to Ranao, which is now Lake Lanao, they were known as Mairanao; as time went on, Mairanao changed its name to Maranao.

Moreover, it might be assumed that some of the Maranao people living in Lanao now are decedents of the aforementioned Muslim Chinese-Arab traders. Many Maranaos today display phenotypes that are similar to those of mixed Arab and Chinese or either Arab or Chinese individuals. Hadji Abdul Racman (2020) did not go into detail in his thesis regarding how the Arabic language and Arabs have influenced the Maranao language, although the majority of Maranaos are of Malay ethnicity.

The Mëranaw Language

Just over a million people in the provinces of Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur on the southern island of Mindanao in the Republic of the Philippines speak Mëranaw, the language of the ethnolinguistic group of the same name. It shares a strong relationship

with the Iranun language of Sabah, as well as the Maguindanaon and Iranun languages spoken further south in Mindanao (called Ilanun in Malay). Mranaw is a member of the Danao subgroup of Greater Central Philippine languages together with Iranun and Maguindanaon (Alonto, 2009).

Additionally, Raymond G. Gordon Jr. (2005) speculates that the Mranaw language descended from the Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Southern Philippines, Danao, Mranaw, and Iranon language families of his book, *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, 15th edition. Gordon Jr. did not look into how the Maranao language had been influenced by Arabic or other languages, though. The Maranao language has some influences from Sanskrit, Arabic, English, Spanish, and regional languages, according to *The Influences of the National Question and the Revival of Tradition on Gender Issues Among Maranaos in Southern Philippines*.

Mëranaw Spelling and Phonology

The Maranaos themselves and the different publications that have been written in the Mranaw language utilize a variety of spelling schemes. The Maranao dictionaries and literacy resources that are now available use the same spelling scheme (Alonto et al., 2009). It has 20 letters, not including those used to spell unassimilated words of English and Arabic origins (15 consonants and 5 vowels, excluding the glottal stop, which is not written) not including letters used for spelling unassimilated words of English and Arabic origin.

The vowel “e” denotes the schwa, as in English “but,” “what,” or “shut,” and these vowels are raised after a voiced stop (b, d, g) or a semivowel. The vowels “a,” “o,” and “u” generally correspond to their equivalents in Tagalog or Spanish (w, y). The consonants b, d, g, h, k, l, m, n, ng, p, r, s, t, w, and y all have the same values as their Tagalog equivalents.

On the other hand, the Maranao translation of the Qur’an, Maranao-language Islamic books and pamphlets, and Maranao music videos, on the other hand, utilize a somewhat distinct spelling system that is used by native Maranao sources (i.e., not of Christian or foreign origin) (Alonto, 2009). Only four vowels (a, I o, and the schwa, spelled either as “e” or “u”) are recognized, together with the previously listed 15 consonants and four aspirated consonants: “t” (spelled “th”), “k” (spelled “kh”), “p” (spelled “ph”), and “s” (spelled “z” or “sh”). As the other vowels (a high I a high “u,” and a high center vowel) are allophones that exclusively follow the voiced stops, the aspirated stops, and the semivowels, it more closely resembles the actual phonological system of Maranao (Lobel, p. 288). The fact that no dictionaries, grammar, or instruction books have ever been written in this writing system makes it particularly challenging for non-native speakers to learn.

As a result, the simpler spelling system will make it easier to learn the language and use the available print resources without obstructing comprehension. The Maranao language varies extremely little from place to place, unlike its sister language Maguindanaon. Geographically speaking, the Maranao that were able to communicate by boat from wherever they were on the lake is partially a result of the terrain (Alonto et al., 2009).

The Mëranaw Culture and its Cultural Implications

The Maranaos have high esteem and reverence for their things because they provide them the certainty that they are protected and that they may provide solutions to the issues they face in life, as evidenced by the findings of the study on their folk songs (Velasco, 2017). Additionally, Maranaos have more respect for people who live in higher social classes than they do for people who live in lower classes. This is clear from the presence of a unique malong species known as a landap. This is so that only Maranaos from the higher class are permitted to acquire landaps. This type of malong is shared by the sultans and datus in society, and it essentially guarantees that they will be respected by others.

On the other hand, Maranaos are renowned for their pride and rido culture (Alaya-ay et al. 2013), which relates to conflict, vengeance, and retaliatory behavior on the one extreme and self-worth, personal dignity, honor, and pride on the other. As a result, they are very sensitive individuals, especially when their “amor propio” is at risk. In relation to this attribute, inter-family conflict, or rido as it is known in the local dialect, happens whenever a family member is physically or verbally offended. The Maranaos refer to the conduct as retributive justice, however, the Philippine legal system classifies it as murder or homicide when it is committed in retaliation.

Moreover, they are also renowned for the depth of their cultural heritage which is still obvious now, and have continued to uphold the Maranao people’s hearts. This tradition has persisted and has stood the test of time well, making it a very valuable asset living in these days. similar to any other ethnic or cultural. The Maranao are renowned throughout the nation for their literary involvement, of which some have not yet been recorded, and for utmost appreciation (Ulla, p.58).

Additionally, even as more modern and culturally diverse society has emerged, arranged marriages among Muslims, particularly in Mindanao, have remained one of the most preserved practices that represent the Islamic cultural norm. This is because it is a social necessity that comes about as a result of their extended family and community (Morada et. al., 2014).

Indeed, the richness of the Meranaw culture and tradition can be found in images, symbols, and practices that made them the source by which themes such as love for

kin, family, marriage, good manners, social life, and other attitudes and values about life are extracted. Thus, making the Maranao culture distinctively unique.

Language Description

Any language can be described efficiently by its components. It is considered that a given language, has its Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, and overlaps of these components such as Morpho-phonemics, and Morphosyntax (Yule, 2020). Semantics and Phonetics are also the other components that are included under phonology. The detailed investigation of the phonology, morphology, and syntax of any language entailed its in-depth description which is the main content of any grammar sketch.

Morphology, this is the analysis of word formation concerning the smallest unit of language that bears meaning or the morphemes (Dobrovolsky, O'Grady, & Katamba, 2016). Consequently, language word development and perception are greatly influenced by morphology. Morphemes are the smallest components of words that can communicate meaning. They include roots, stems, prefixes, and suffixes significance. The ability to employ this intermediate degree of dialect is essential for expanding one's vocabulary and comprehending English-language material. The term "morphology" refers to the use of or the study of morphemes, the meaning-giving components of words. Every dialect has a different morphology, depending on the word arrangement types that are used in all dialects. In any event, there is no guarantee that a single, all-encompassing aspect of morphology applies to every dialect (Libben & Jarema, 2004).

Moreover, in English, morphemes provide the basic building blocks for morphemes' skill in creating new words contributing to some of the dialect's generative power. Many new words are immediately understandable since they are constructed from well-known morphemes. According to Kuo and Anderson (2006), phonological awareness, syntactic mindfulness, and vocabulary knowledge should all be integrated with various aspects of metalinguistic mindfulness and etymological competence. Additionally, they mentioned how morphological understanding in English becomes a more significant indicator of reading ability. Readers can participate in morphological analysis to dissect new words into their component morphemes and therefore expand their vocabulary, according to Anglin (1993).

Moreover, the primary goal of this study is to provide a grammar of the Mëranaw language into a broader scope of documentation that specifically entails its language description of the linguistic features of the language covering its morphological features.

C. Methods

This study will deal with qualitative descriptive research that looks at actual issues and offers a more in-depth understanding (Korstiens, 1995). Moreover, it mainly deals with participants' experiences, viewpoints, and actions gathered. Instead of addressing how many or how much, it addresses hows and whys. It might be set up as an independent study that just uses qualitative data, or it might be a component of mixed-methods research that uses both qualitative and quantitative data. The reader is introduced to some fundamental terms, definitions, and applications of qualitative research in this overview.

In addition, qualitative research will utilize the direct experience of the informants in dealing with the language. In the first place, Vanderstoep & Johnston, & Creswell, 2009 stress that qualitative research is descriptive that gathers data through interviewing, making an observation, analyzing documents, and visual performing analysis. Coupled with this, it will be done through detailed collection and in-depth exploration of the documents (Polkinghorne, 2005) that are essential for types of studies that cannot be undertaken quantitatively.

In addition, data collection strategies typically involve individual and/or focus group interviews with minimal to semi-structured interview guides (Neergaard et al., 2009). Also, Creswell (2007) emphasized that the researcher's role in qualitative research is critical, as he or she collects data and implements analysis; therefore, my specific role in this study will be that of an observer-as-participant, as I will be the primary instrument of data collection and analysis what will be collected, coded, and analyzed from interviews, participant journals, and questionnaire to uncover the emerging concepts and patterns.

As a matter of fact, greater importance to the researcher itself will be the main mechanism for obtaining knowledge in dealing with the study. As a researcher, I am confident that I am instrumental in the comprehension and learning of the complexity of the Maranao language.

Participants/Respondents, for the inclusion criteria for the participants of the study, Emmel (2013), notes that sampling in qualitative research is less direct as it involves a sequence of decisions to be made, throughout the research journey. Having this in mind, this study will have three (3) native and educated Maranao speakers as Morse (2000) posits that the more useable data are collected from each person, the fewer participants are needed.

Moreover, the participants must be native speakers of the language and must be more than 20 years old. He/She is also educated to translate from the Maranao language to Bisaya and then to Tagalog. However, any physiological defects specifically in speech

among the participants should be excluded. Participants who are non-bachelor's degree holders (did not finish college) and too old native speakers who cannot communicate anymore will not be considered.

On the other hand, participants in this study can withdraw at any time without any explanation or reason. The participants can withdraw from being one at any time of his/her own volition.

In order to choose the language consultants, principal criteria will be set up as follows; a) The informants must be native speaker who was born and raised in Lanao del Sur Province; b) The informants must speak Maranao as their native tongues and also use them to communicate in their daily lives; c) The informants must be clearly and correctly articulate; d) The informants must be 20-60 years old; e) The informants should have enough free time and willingness to work and coordinate long hours with the researcher.

Equally, the selection of informants includes two following steps. The first step will be when any volunteers contacted the researcher and they will be asked the following questions: a) Are you a native speaker of Maranao? b) Do you have normal hearing and don't have any speech disabilities? and c) Can you read Maranao writings?

In the same way, the volunteers who will pass all three preliminary questions will be asked to attend the second interview where they will be asked the following questions: a) How old are you? b) Were you born in the province of Lanao del Sur? c) Have you ever moved or lived at any other location? and d) Do you understand Maranao or English?

Instruments of the Study, if all the raised questions will be answered yes, the informants will then proceed in translating the 615-word list and 775-sentence list to delve into the linguistic features of the Maranao language. These word and sentence lists coming from UP Department of Linguistics were transcribed and analyzed using the Basic Linguistic Theory. The use of mentioned materials already had their consent and was approved to be used by the University of the Philippines.

Procedure, Moreover, the following procedures were performed in collecting the data. Foremost, *Permission to Conduct the Study* - the researcher submitted a letter, seeking permission to conduct the study to the target participants. These letters were addressed to the informants as language consultants of the study.

Conduct Interviews and Translation, upon approval, the researcher validated the interview guide questions and checklists for translation by the panel of experts. When the validity of the questions and checklists was established, it was then administered to the informants.

Collection and Analysis of Data, the researcher will collect the translated data which will be tabulated and analyzed. Lastly, the *Analysis and Interpretation* – a descriptive approach will be used to gather the data. The phonological analysis of this dissertation will be based on 600 item word list and 700 sentence list. The data will be prepared and used in interviewing the informants. The list will be divided into different sections based on the semantic domain. The mediating languages between the informants and the researcher were Maranao, Cebuano, and English.

Identically, the general word elicitation for both informants includes the following: a) A list of 600 general words in English with Filipino translation and 700 sentence lists will be given to the informants; b) Video and voice recording will be used to record speech from the informants; c) The word list will be read for the informants in English-Filipino translation; and d) Informants will give the translation of each word after hearing a word read in English with Tagalog translation and it will be transcribed immediately in phonetic symbols. However, the immediately written transcription will be only for the segmental phonemes: consonants and vowels. In presenting tones of the language, the video files will be analyzed later.

Consultation of Results with Experts, after the collection and analysis of the data, it was then consulted with the experts to further validate the obtained data. The experts are native speakers and are well-versed in the language to further verify its results. Corrections were made after the consultation to improve this study.

Gearing on the data analysis of this study, further utilized Dixon's Basic Linguistic Theory which entails having a thorough journal for language description and analysis, as well as a brand-new and basic characterization of the nature of human language as he gives a thorough explanation of grammar that is well-articulated and coherent. He goes into great detail on each major and numerous minor grammatical structure that can be found in the languages of the globe (Genetti, 2011).

As a typologically-informed framework, BLT allows one to describe a language in own terms and "furnishes an array of grammatical categories and construction types together with varieties of interrelations between them from which appropriate choices are made" (Dixon, 2010).

During the data collection, the journal was used to write down preliminary analyses in recording the responses of the participants of the study. Assessment and reflection were done right after each set of interviews were conducted.

Moreover, Dixon's Basic Linguistic Theory was used as an approach that further understands the elements comprising the morphological, syntactic, and morphosyntactic analysis of the language.

Ethical Considerations, this study is conducted with a strong adherence to the ethical protocols and guidelines set forth by the University of Mindanao Ethics committee. It was presented before a panel of experts in language studies in the Professional Schools of the University of Mindanao. After the approval of the study, the questionnaires were presented, reviewed, and validated by experts in qualitative research. Also, it merits the approval of the committee with protocol no. U MERC -2022-152. Furthermore, the researcher started to conduct her research using these instruments to gather the pertinent data for her study only after the approval of the Ethics Review Committee. The researcher secured the voluntary participation of the respondents. Before their approval, all the necessary information was laid to them followed by the signing of the informed consent form. The researcher emphasized the full protection of their anonymity and well-being. They were not involved in risky situations that could affect their physical, psychological, or socio-economic well-being.

Moreover, the respondents understood that documenting their language would preserve their cultural and historical identity. This study can also provide teaching materials for Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) as part of the K-12 Curriculum of the Department of Education.

D. Results and Discussion

This chapter will present the results of the conducted study. This will further answer the research questions raised in the area of study. I also provided a legend of the abbreviation commonly used in the interpretation of the data particularly its codes and glosses in the appendices (please see appendix D). Using Dixon's Basic Linguistic Theory, the following are the results of the study as the main purpose of this study:

The *Mëranaw* Language and Its People

Our country, the Philippines is a place with an incredibly diverse linguistic landscape with over 170 spoken languages and 12 indigenous languages with at least 1 million speakers. Among these languages, the Maranao language "*Meranaw*" /*mëranaw*/ in the language itself, or the orthography currently used in Department of Education MTB-MLE teaching materials is spoken by under a million native speakers' Muslim population in one of the few remaining culturally homogenous areas of the large southern Philippine Island of Mindanao.

Additionally, *Mëranaw* is the spelling recommended by the Commission on the Filipino Language the official regulating body of the Filipino language, and the official government institution tasked with developing, preserving, and promoting the various local Philippine languages.

Furthermore, Mëranaw is a Philippine language prevalently spoken by an ethnic population of 1,325,000 (2010 NSO) in four provinces in Mindanao, namely – Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, and North Cotabato (Eberhard, Simons, & Fennig, “Ethnologue: Languages of the World”). As previously mentioned, in terms of subgrouping, it is more genetically related to Maguindanao (ISO 639-3: mdh) and Iranun (ISO 639-3: ilp), and together, they form a legitimate subgroup called Danaw, one of the microgroups that constitute a higher-order proto-language called Greater Central Philippine (GCP) (Blust, 2013). Mëranaw and its two other sister languages, Maguindanao and Iranun, all share the same root – i.e., *danaw* or lake – which reflects these ethnolinguistic groups’ being generally referred to as people of the lake.

Morphological Processes in Mëranaw Language

The morphological process is the process by which a word is adjusted to conform to a certain context. To put it simply, it is the process of changing the form and function of a word to fit a context, sometimes to the extent of changing the meaning and/or grammatical function. These processes involve production, creating or deriving, and inflecting new words. However, the case for the Mëranaw language only constitutes to have affixation to create new words. This morphological process is described below.

Affixation in Mëranaw Language

Affixation in Mëranaw Language merely done that consists of adding an affix (or more than one affix) to a morphological base. This can be done by adding the prefixes *p-*, *mak-*, and *tomi-* and the suffix *-an*. Moreover, the infix *ka-* *-an* and circumfix *p- -n*, *miaka-* *-e*.

Table 9. The Affixation in Mëranaw Language

PREFIX			
Word (ROOT)	Meaning	With Affix	Meaning
kan	eat	<i>p'kan</i>	to eat now
imbitiyara-e	to talk	<i>makimbitiyara-e</i>	talking
tind'g	stand	<i>tomitind'g</i>	standing
SUFFIX			
Word (ROOT)	Meaning	Affix	Meaning
pamasa	buy	<i>pamasaan</i>	planning to buy
gitagita	toy	<i>gitagitaan</i>	to play
INFIX			
Word (ROOT)	Meaning	Affix	Meaning

sadya	joyous	<i>kasadyahan</i>	enjoyment, celebration
utod	sibling	<i>kauturan</i>	siblings
tuon	learn	<i>katuludan</i>	learnings
CIRCUMFIX			
kukura	grate	<i>pkukuran</i>	grater
imbitiyara	to talk	<i>miakaimbitiyaarae</i>	have talked

The prefix, suffix, infix, and circumfix are all present affixations in the Mëranaw language. This is to form another lexical category of a given Mëranaw word that most likely entails to tells the time certain Mëranaw verbs take place.

Lexical Category

In grammar, a lexical category can be categorized as a noun, verb, adjective, adverb, and preposition. These categories carry meaning, and often words with a similar (synonym) or opposite meaning (antonym) can be found.

Evidently, these identified categories were also found to be present in the Mëranaw language.

Mëranaw Nouns

Nouns names things, persons, objects, and places. It denotes naming everything that surrounds us. Below are the frequent Mëranaw nouns from our elicitation materials:

The above-mentioned nouns were used in the elicitation materials and translated into the Filipino language as follows:

1. Adn a taw sa *walay*.
May tao sa bahay.
2. Bigan ako niyan sa *margas*.
Binigyan niya ako ng bigas.
3. Adn a *tohan*.
May Diyos.
4. Sa walay so *raga*.
Nasa bahay ang dalaga.
5. Miyanik sa palaw so *mangoda*.
Umakyat ng bundok ang binata.

In the Mëranaw language, specifically to nouns we have the term *walay* which means a house, *margas* for rice, *tohan* for Lord, *raga* for maiden, and *magoda* for a young man.

Mëranaw Adjectives

Adjectives are words that describe the qualities or states of being of nouns. In the field of linguistics, it is a word that generally modifies a noun or noun phrase or describes its referent. Its semantic role is to change the information given by the noun.

1. *Mataid* so raga.
Maganda ang dalaga.
2. *Mapasang* so raga.
Masipag ang dalaga.
3. *Mabagr* si Juan.
Malakas si Juan.
4. *Mapasang* e kandadak'p sa s'da a lok's oto.
Magaling manghuli ng isda ang matandang iyon.
5. *Magaan* so palalagoy o wata.
Mabilis ang takbo ng bata.

The sentences above can be configured to have Mëranaw adjectives such as *mataid* for English gloss for beautiful, *mapasang* for responsible, *mabagr* for strong, *mapasang* for great, and *magaan* for fast.

Mëranaw Verbs

Almost every sentence requires a verb because verbs are words that show an action, occurrence, or state of being. Verbs are inflected and occur as the grammatical center of sentences in Mëranaw with the following tenses.

Table 10. Mëranaw Verbs

Perfective	Imperfective	Contemplative
Verb: tind'g (stand)		
Timinind'g so wata. Tumayo ang bata.	P'tind'g so wata. Tumatayo ang bata.	Tind'g so wata. Tatayo ang bata.
Verb: khan (eat)		
Komiyan so wata sa mangga. Kumain ang bata ng mangga.	P'khan so wara sa mangga. Kumakain ang bata ng mangga.	Khan so wata sa mangga. Kakain ang bata ng mangga.
Verb: phamola (plant)		
Miyamola so taribasok sa banggala. Nagtanim ang magsasaka ng kamote.	Dimamola so taribasok sa banggala. Nagtatanim ang magsasaka ng kamote.	Phamola so taribasok san banggala. Magtatanim ang magsasaka ng kamote.
Verb: phamasa (buy)		

Inipamasa o wata so raga sa dolse. Ibinili ng bata ang dalaga ng kendi.	Iphamasa o wata so raga sa dolse. Ibinibili ng bata ang dalaga ng kendi.	Iphamasa o wata so raga sa dolse. Ibibili ng bata ang dalaga ng kendi.
Verb: phanik (climb)		
Miyanik sa palaw so mangoda. Umakyat ng bundok ang binata.	P'phanik sa palaw so mangoda. Umaakyat ng bundok ang binata.	Phanik sa palaw so mangoda. Aakyat ng bundok ang binata.

The results above can be configured that Mëranaw verbs in perfective cases can be formed by adding prefixes “*ini*” as *inipamasa* and infix “*imin*” as *timinind’g* and “*omiy*” as *komiyan*. The change in segmental symbols such as “*miyamola*” from *phamola* and “*miyanik*” from *phanik* can also be observed. On the other hand, in imperfective tense, the prefix “*p*” is the added feature to denote the current situation of the verbs, such as “*p’tind’g*” “*p’khan*” and “*p’phanik*”. For the contemplative tense of the verbs, the latter usually retains its form to denote that the action will be done in the future such as “*phanik*”, “*phamola*”, “*khan*”, “*tind’g*”.

Mëranaw (ISO code *mrw*) is one of the Austronesian languages of the Greater Central Philippine subgroup which was primarily spoken on the southern Philippine Island of Mindanao. The area that covers mainly comprises the provinces of Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte. Maranao people are considered to be merchants in the archipelago and they are closely related to Iranun (spoken in both Mindanao and Sabah, Malaysia) and Maguindanaon.

Moreover, dealing with its sociolinguistics and language attitudes, the Maranao language (and culture) is likely one of the least endangered in the Philippines. They are one of the few Philippines ethnolinguistic groups who in the twenty-first century faithfully maintain the use of their language and wear traditional clothing in any parts of the Philippine archipelago. One of its unwavering senses of cultural identity is based largely on the Maranaos’ Islamic faith and a centuries-old history of resistance to the historical regime from the Spanish to the American Era who attempted to take control of their homeland.

Dealing with its linguistic features, morphologically speaking, Mëranaw language has a rich culture of affixation as prefixes, suffixes, infixes, and circumfixes are all present to create new words. These affixations include the prefix *p-*, *mak-*, and *tomi-* and the suffix *-an*. Moreover, the infix *ka-* *-an* and circumfix *p-* *-n*, *miaka-* *-e*. This is to form another lexical category of a given Mëranaw word that most likely entails to tells the time certain Mëranaw verbs take place. Furthermore, this grammar sketch aims to provide a concrete reference for Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) as the Mëranaw language is one of the languages being taught. It further implies

language description and documentation as the basis for language revitalization and at the same time culture preservation.

E. Conclusion

In order to maintain its historical perspective and sense of cultural identity especially its impact in the realm of education, this grammar sketch will aim to provide a concrete reference for Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) as Mëranaw language is one of the languages being taught. It further implies language description and documentation as the basis for language revitalization and at the same time culture preservation. Furthermore, it can cater to teachers learning the mëranaw language who certainly don't know or have less knowledge about the language. Also, this grammar sketch will contribute to the latest and holistic language description and documentation that offers the entire parts of linguistics. With this, it will further denote to share of pieces of information in the body of linguistics in terms of language description and language preservation.

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