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## A PILOT STUDY ON THE DIALECTS OF PHILIPPINE CREOLE SPANISH

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## I. Introduction

Working on the assumption that there are variants or dialects of Philippine Creole Spanish (PCS), a pilot study was made of observable correspondences and differences between a word-list of Cotabato Chabacano (Ct) and three others, namely, Cavite Chabacano (Cv), Ternate Chabacano (Tr), and Zamboanga Chabacano (Zm).

A proposed list of 100 Ct. words which was later reduced to 91 after eliminating synonyms, was drawn up. The words fall under five general categories with reference to an adapted HRAF outline which was earlier prepared for the pilot project. Data gathering was done through field informant work.

The result of the study showed that while there are observable differences in certain language features between and among the four variants, they are nonetheless, mutually intelligible with each other even among native speakers who do not have any special language training. Thus, for the purpose of the pilot study, all four variants were identified as dialects of PCS.

Of the 91 Ct words, 56 were found to be perfect cognates of the 3 other variants. They were found to be similar in both form and meaning. Fifty-five words had observable differences in varying degrees: phonological and/or in the use of either Philippine or Spanish sources in their lexicon.

## II. General Observations

What follows is a notation of general observations resulting from the study. It is divided into three parts:

1. Observable phonological differences
2. Observable vocabulary differences on the basis of language source: Philippine and Spanish
3. Other comments

## 1. Observable phonological differences

- a. Where the Ct, Cv and Zm variants have word-final /-o/, Tr tends to use /-u/.

|          |             |    |             |               |
|----------|-------------|----|-------------|---------------|
| Ct,Cv,Zm | APELLIDO    | Tr | APELLIDU    | 'family name' |
|          | /qapeɫIdoh/ |    | /qapeɫIduq/ |               |

|          |         |    |         |               |
|----------|---------|----|---------|---------------|
| Ct,Cv,Zm | LOLO    | Tr | LOLU    | 'grandfather' |
|          | /lɔlɔq/ |    | /lɔluq/ |               |

|            |          |    |          |        |
|------------|----------|----|----------|--------|
| Ct, Cv, Zm | MYEDO    | Tr | MYEDU    | 'fear' |
|            | /myEdoh/ |    | /myEduq/ |        |

B. Where Ct and Zm have /-r-/, Cv and Tr have /-l/.

|        |          |        |          |          |
|--------|----------|--------|----------|----------|
| Ct, Zm | GORDO    | Cv, Tr | GOLDO    | 'fat'    |
|        | /gOrdoh/ |        | /gOlduh/ | /gOlduq/ |

|        |           |        |           |       |
|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|-------|
| Ct, Zm | PWERKO    | Cv, Tr | PWELKO    | 'pig' |
|        | /pwErkoh/ |        | /pwElkoh/ |       |

c. Metathesis

|            |        |           |           |
|------------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| Ct, Zm, Tr | DIRITI | /diritIh/ | 'to melt' |
| Cv         | RIDITI | /riditIh/ |           |

|        |         |            |                   |
|--------|---------|------------|-------------------|
| Ct, Cv | BIDRIYO | /bIdriyoh/ | 'glass splinters' |
| Ct, Zm | BRIDYO  | /brIdyoh/  |                   |
| Tr     | BUBUD   | /bUbud/    |                   |

d. Peculiarities of Tr

When using Philippine forms, certain changes take place among the variants

|    |           |             |            |
|----|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Cv | BALAKUBAK | /balakUbak/ | 'dandruff' |
| Tr | BALAKUBAG | /balakUbag/ |            |

|        |       |         |             |
|--------|-------|---------|-------------|
| Ct, Cv | MUMUG | /mUmug/ | 'to gargle' |
| Tr     | MUMUK | /mUmuk/ |             |

|            |         |             |                         |
|------------|---------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Ct, Cv, Zm | ALKANSA | /qalkansAh/ | 'to reach; to overtake' |
| Tr         | ENKANSA | /qenkansAh/ |                         |

|    |       |          |                              |
|----|-------|----------|------------------------------|
| Cv | TAGPI | /tagplq/ | 'patch, referred to mending' |
| Tr | TIGPI | /tigplq/ |                              |

2. Observable vocabulary differences

a. When all four variants have a Spanish source word

1. One of the variants takes a Spanish source synonym

|            |        |                |         |
|------------|--------|----------------|---------|
| Ct, Tr, Zm | SEN    | /sEn/(Sp)      | 'money' |
| Cv         | KWALTA | /kwaltah/(Pil) |         |

|            |           |              |            |
|------------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| Cv, Tr, Zm | PRINSIPYA | /prinsipyAh/ | 'to start' |
| Ct         | EMPESA    | /qempesAh/   |            |

2. Ct and Zm tend to use the same form; Cv and Tr, differing from Ct and Zm, tend to use the same form

|        |       |           |                        |
|--------|-------|-----------|------------------------|
| Ct, Zm | AGUSA | /qagusAh/ | 'to sharpen as pencil' |
| Cv     | TASA  | /tasAh/   |                        |
| Tr     | TISA  | /tisAh/   |                        |

|        |       |          |           |           |
|--------|-------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Ct, Zm | GERYA | /geryAh/ | /gehryAh/ | 'to hurl' |
| Cv, Tr | TIRA  | /tirAh/  |           |           |

b. When three variants have a Spanish source word, the fourth one uses a Philippine form

1. Three out of four are perfect cognates

|          |           |                  |            |
|----------|-----------|------------------|------------|
| Cv,Tr,Zm | BERGWENSA | /bergwEnsah/(Sp) | 'shame'    |
| Ct       | HUYA      | /huyAq/(Pil)     |            |
| Cv,Tr,Zm | KASPAS    | /kAspas/(Sp)     | 'dandruff' |
| Tr       | BALAKUBAG | /balakUbag/(Pil) |            |
| Ct,Cv,Zm | TIHERAS   | /tihEras/(Sp)    | 'scissors' |
| Tr       | GUNTING   | /guntIn/         |            |

2. Ct and Zm tend to use the same forms; Cv and Tr each take different forms

|       |         |                |          |
|-------|---------|----------------|----------|
| Ct,Zm | ILO     | /qILOh/(Sp)    | 'thread' |
| Cv    | ALGODON | /qalgodOn/(Sp) |          |
| Tr    | PANAHI  | /panahIq/(Pil) |          |

3. All three variants are perfect cognates; the fourth takes on two forms, one Spanish and the other a Philippine form.

|          |         |                |                |
|----------|---------|----------------|----------------|
| Ct,Cv,Zm | UPUS    | /qupUs/(Pil)   | 'cigaret butt' |
| Tr       | TITIS   | /tItis/(Pil)   |                |
|          | LABYEHA | /labyEhah/(Sp) |                |

c. When three variants take on a Philippine form, the fourth uses a Spanish source word.

|          |          |                  |             |
|----------|----------|------------------|-------------|
| Ct,Cv,Tr | KULA     | /kulAh/(Pil)     | 'to bleach' |
| Zm       | EMPLASTA | /qemplastAh/(Sp) |             |
| Ct,Cv    | MUMUG    | /mUmug/(Pil)     | 'to gargle' |
| Tr       | MUMUK    | /mUmuk/(Pil)     |             |
| Zm       | GARGALYA | /gargalyAh/(Sp)  |             |

d. When three variants take on a Philippine form, but are each different from the other; the fourth uses a Spanish source word.

|    |          |                |            |
|----|----------|----------------|------------|
| Ct | MACHAKAW | /mačakAw/(Sp)  | 'crumpled' |
| Cv | KULUBUT  | /kulubUt/(Pil) |            |
| Tr | GUSUT    | /gusUt/(Pil)   |            |
| Zm | KUMU     | /kUmuq/(Pil)   |            |

e. When all four variants use a Philippine form

1. One of the variants takes a different Philippine form

|          |          |                 |               |
|----------|----------|-----------------|---------------|
| Ct,Cv,Tr | SAMPAYAN | /sampayAn/(Pil) | 'clothesline' |
| Zm       | SABLAYAN | /sablAYan/(Pil) |               |

2. Ct and Zm take the same form. Cv and Tr either are the same or take divergent Philippine forms.

|       |       |              |                |
|-------|-------|--------------|----------------|
| Ct,Zm | GUMUN | /gumUn/(Pil) | 'tangled hair' |
| Cv    | GULU  | /gulUq/      |                |
| Tr    | LUGUM | /lUgum/      |                |

|       |        |           |              |          |
|-------|--------|-----------|--------------|----------|
| Ct,Zm | KITIK  | /kItik/   | KALAM/kalAm/ | 'tickle' |
| Cv    | KALITI | /kalitIq/ |              |          |
| Tr    | KILITI | /kilitIq/ |              |          |

- f. When two variants use Spanish source words, the other two take on Philippine forms, but differing each from the other.

|    |          |                          |        |
|----|----------|--------------------------|--------|
| Ct | TANGKUGU | /tan <u>k</u> Uguq/(Pil) | 'nape' |
| Tr | BATUK    | /b <u>A</u> tuk/(Pil)    |        |
| Cv | SELEBRO  | /se <u>lE</u> broh/(Sp)  |        |
| Zm | OMBRURA  | /qom <u>br</u> Urah/(Sp) |        |

### 3. Other Comments

In this study, the similarity of sound and meaning on the lexical level among the variants of PCS was considered as the evidence that they are cognates and that they come from an earlier form of speech which is assumed to be the common language ancestor of said variants. (Hockett 1958:486)

Certain patterns of the familiar processes of linguistic change have been noted among the PCS variants. The cognates among the variant dialects appear to have undergone related linguistic changes and are viewed as having descended from some common ancestral language. (Gleason 1961:446)

From even a cursory investigation, it is plain that a very significant percentage of PCS vocabulary has Spanish as its language source. In such a case then, a few examples of the degree of cognateness are here cited:

- When Ct has a word final /-o/, Tr has word final /-u/. It is noted too that a Tr word with a final /-u/, when in citation, usually takes on a final glottal sound /-q/.
- When Ct and Zm have medial /-r-/, Cv and Tr tend to have medial /-l-/.
- When Ct and Zm have Spanish source verbs with an initial /-a/, Cv and Tr tend to delete the /-a/.

|       |       |           |    |      |         |  |
|-------|-------|-----------|----|------|---------|--|
| Ct,Zm | ABAHA | /qabahAh/ | Tr | BAHA | /bahAh/ | 'to go down; to descend'                     |
| Ct,Zm | APAGA | /qapagAh/ | Tr | PAGA | /pagAh/ | 'to put out or put off flame, fire or light' |

#### NOTE

This pilot study constitutes the Appendix B of the writer's doctoral dissertation entitled, A Composite Dictionary of Philippine Creole Spanish, submitted to the Ateneo de Manila University-Philippine Normal College Consortium. Reference to the adapted HRAF Outline is Appendix A of said dissertation.

The dissertation was concerned with placing Ct on the linguistic map of the Philippines by identifying it as a PCS dialect with a speech community of its own. The work is a unidirectional dictionary using English as its tool language, containing at least 6,000 alphabetical main entries of the Ct lexicon with corresponding run-in entries of contrastive data on the lexical level of Cv, Tr and Zm. This was accomplished through a three-fold approach, namely that of historical comparison, linguistic description, and lexicographic method.

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