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Author(s): Steven Fincke

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Discourse Motivations for Productive Verbalization in Bikol

Steven Fincke
University of California, Santa Barbara

This paper describes the phenomenon of verbalization in Bikol, a Philippine language spoken on the southern peninsula of Luzon. I will use the term verbalization as parallel to nominalization: cases where constituents which usually do not function as verbs take on verbal morphosyntax, but there is no explicit derivation in verbalization. Verbalization is a subtype of a phenomenon which is pervasive in Bikol and other Philippine languages, such as Tagalog (Schachter 1985): constituents which tend to receive a particular morphosyntactic categorical treatment can and, with some frequency, do receive others in discourse with no special derivational morphology. Consequently, there is little evidence of types being assigned to lexical categories.

Ordinary Bikol verbs contain roots which usually function as verb stems and bear verbal morphology. In the following example, ali’ ‘leave’ is an ordinary verb bearing the future tense verbal prefix ma:-.

(1) Sonny: ma:-ali’ na ako sa aga,
FUT:AGT-leave now 1s:TOP LOC morning
‘I’m gonna leave tomorrow.’

In the following example, the presence of ma:- on bayani ‘hero’ and boy scout indicates that these items (usually nouns) are verbalized. Martin is explaining how he offered his seat on a jeep to a woman.

(2) Martin: I really wanted to--. I thought that I would be a hero (lit.: ‘I will hero’). I will stand.
Buboy: You were gonna be a boy scout (lit.: ‘will boy scout’).
Martin: I thought, “I’ll be a boy scout (lit.: ‘I will boy scout’) and let her sit.”

Martin: ta muya ko talaga-ng mag-ano,
because want 1s:AGTreally-LNK NOT.BGN:AGT-what
ma:-bayani niyako’ ako a,
FUT:AGT-hero RPT:1 1s:TOP ah
ma:-[tindog niyako’] ako,
FUT:AGT-stand RPT:1 1s:TOP

1 I thank Patricia Clancy, Marianne Mithun, Carl Rubino, Ivo Sanchez, Sandra Thomspson, and, especially, Susanna Cumming for their helpful comments and advice. I take full responsibility for all errors remaining herein.

2 The database for this analysis consists of 10 natural interactions containing a total of 13,018 intonation units and 520 tokens of verbalization. All data were collected in Sto. Domingo, Albay, the Philippines. See appendices for explanation of abbreviations for glossing and transcripts. Examples are presented according to the transcription conventions of Du Bois et al. 1993.
Buboy:  [ma:-boy  s-]
       FUT:AGT-boy  s-
→        ma:-boy       scout,
       FUT:AGT-boy scout
→ Martin:  ma:-boy   scout niyako’ ako,
       FUT:AGT-boy scout RPT:1 1s:TOP
       ta pa-tukaw-on   ko   talaga siya.
       so CAUSE-sit-NOT.BGN:PAT 1s:AGT really 3s:TOP
[tambay:535-41]

In this paper, I will show that there are two discourse motivations for verbalization in Bikol.

A- Ensure that the stem of the morphosyntactic verb conveys new, focused and/or contrastive information.
B- Ensure that the stem of the morphosyntactic verb is semantically rich and is not predictable from other sentence constituents.

The properties of the verb stem specified in Motivation A all can be subsumed under the functional category of newsworthiness (Mithun 1992). Moreover, instances of verbalization vary according to what kind of information the verbalized stem indicates about the event. Taking these factors into account, we can distinguish three types of verbalization: Adverbial, Schematic, and Verbalization Constructions.

Type 1: ‘Adverbial’
‘Adverbial’ verbalizations are expressions of manner, extent or duration. Their use usually satisfies Motivation A: information indicated by the verbalized constituent is usually newsworthy.

In the following example, a group of women are discussing the introductory visit of a priest, who had just been assigned to the community, to the barrio of Calayucay. In the first portion, they discuss a party in which the people, assembled together, met the priest. At the end, Thelma contrasts this with the phase of the visit in which the priest met the people at their homes, going door to door. Here, she verbalizes the manner expression saro’-saro’ ‘one by one,’ which is in contrastive focus.

(3) Ching: She said, “There were a lot of people there at Calayucay.”
Lillian: There were a lot of people there.
Thelma: Probably, when they had their meeting--
Ching: He danced the Macarena. Mrs. De la Cruz said, “Why did Father Ramon dance the Macarena?”
Pen:  Maybe--
Ching: She said, “No--” She said, “They gathered the people together.”
Thelma: They visited the houses, one by one (lit.: ‘They one by oned the houses.’)
Ching: *ma-tawo ngani ngaya,*
ADJ-person indeed RPT:3
*duman sa* [Kalayukay].
DEM.D.LOC LOC Calayucay

Lilian: *[ma-tawo duman.]*
ADJ-person DEM.D.LOC

Thelma: *su may [2u(1ru)ron gayod kan--2]*
TOPEXIST [DIST]-converse probably NT

Ching: *[2nag-balye ngani2/ngaya an kan]*
BGN:ACT-dance indeed RPT:3 DEM.M.TOP NT
*Makarena,*
Macarena
*sabi ni Mrs. Dela Cruz.*
say NT Mrs. De la Cruz
*nata’ ngaya nag-bayle si Father Ramon ki Makarena?*
why RPT:3 BGN:AGT-dance TOP Father Ramon NT Macarena

Pen: *[ay baka’.]*
oh maybe

Ching: *[ay dai nga]ya,*
oh NEG RPT:3
*pagpa-
*nag-[t(1)rimon ngaya kan tawo]*
BGN:AGT-[DIST]-gather RPT:3 NT person

Thelma: *nagpara-
aw s/in]aro-saro’ garo su mga arong.*
o [BGN:PAT]-[DIST-one]EPIST TOP PL house

[sroq:948-52, 954-9, 961-2]

In the next example, a focused temporal expression is verbalized as part of an answer to a question about time in reported discourse.

(4) Impay: *an pag-pa-ilaw ngaya ano-ng oras,*
TOP TEMP-CAUSE-lightRPT:3 what-LNK hour
‘S/he said, “What time (should I) turn on the lights?”’
*basta niyako’ nag-diklom na,*
as.long.as RPT:1 BGN:AGT-dark already
‘I said, “As long as it has already gotten dark.”’
*mag- alas sais niyako’,*
AGT- at.hour six RPT:1
‘I said, “(Turn the lights on) at six o’clock.”’ (lit.: ‘Six o’clock (it).’)

The use of verbalizations for focused elements can also be found in question-word questions.
Thus, Bikol speakers often make newsworthy expressions of manner, extent and duration stems of morphosyntactic verbs, satisfying Motivation A.

Type 2: Schematic

In Type 2 verbalizations, the verbalized constituent participates in a schema that is evoked in the immediate discourse (Fillmore 1977). Schematic verbalizations are motivated by Motivation B, the avoidance of low-content or predictable verbs. Once a schema has been evoked, explicitly coding only one element of the schema is usually sufficient indication that the schema still pertains, and unexpressed elements of the schema can usually be inferred. Thus, explicitly coding of more than one schema element is redundant in most contexts. Type 2 verbalizations allow speakers to code the event with just one schema element.

The schema may be evoked in various ways before the Type 2 verbalization. In the next example, the schema of building a pigpen is explicitly evoked in the discourse.

(8) Alex: *pwede baga tugduk-an iyan ki orig-an.
     able EMPH erect-LOC DEM.M.TOP NT pig-LOC
     ‘A pigsty could be built there.’

In the ensuing discussion, there are verbalizations with common design elements of pigpens serving as stems.

(9) Alex: *salog-an baga daa iyan,
     floor-LOC EMPH HEARSAY DEM.M.TOP
     ‘(You would put a) floor (in) there’ (lit. ‘Floor that.’)

(10) Alex: *islab-on an,
     slab-PAT:NOT BGN DEM.M.TOP
     ‘(You would lay a) slab there’ (lit. ‘Slab it.’)
Sometimes, the schema is not evoked solely by the discourse, but the situation as well. The following is said in reference to an infant in the room after a long silence.

(11) Chona: ...ma:-ihi naman talaga iyan,
FUT:AGT-urine again really DEM.M.TOP
‘She’s gonna pee again’
.ta aki' pa.
because childstill
‘because (she is ) still young.’

Cory: dai mo pig-ki-Kimbies,
NEG 2s:AGT BGN:PAT-IMPF-Kimbies
‘You don’t (put her in) Kimbies?’ (lit.: ‘You don’t Kimbies (her)’)

Kimbies is a popular brand of disposable diapers in the Philippines. Diapering infants is only indirectly evoked in the discourse before Cory verbalizes Kimbies. Chona’s talk evokes diapering only when considered in relation to the current situation: as the infant apparently has just urinated and is in their care, Chona’s talk is hearable as a reason for waiting to put a new diaper on the infant.

Another aspect of Type 2 verbalizations is that nominally coded referents are available for further manipulation in the discourse, but stems of Type 2 verbalizations are not. Thus, in the first use of resibo ‘receipt’ below, the speaker has no plans for subsequent reference and thus uses a Type 2 verbalization, as the transaction schema has already been evoked. However, in the second case, the nominal form establishes a discourse referent for later tracking.

(12) Ching: ‘She had me buy some achara. She said, “You didn’t have (them make you) a receipt’ (lit.: ‘You did not make (them) receipt’) because when Father Jacob would have me (run) errands, I would sometimes have them make a receipt.

Cita: ‘Oh, naturally’
Ching: ‘So, I would leave (it) there for him so (he) would have nothing to talk about (i.e. ‘he would have no grounds for making allegations of malfeasance.’)

Ching: pin/a-bakal baga ako ki atsara.
{BGN:PAT}-CAUSE-buy EMPH 1s:TOP NT achara
dai na ngaya pag-pa-resibo-i.
NEG already RPT:3 TEMP-CAUSE-receipt-LOC
takon ako pig-sugo',
because when 1s:TOP BGN:PAT-errand

...ni Father Jacob,
AGT Father Jacob

nugad pig-pa-gibuh-an,
sometimes BGN:PAT-CAUSE-make-LOC

ki resibo,
NTr eceipt

Cita: [awnatural,]
oh natural

Ching: [ta i-kaag] ko duman,
so BEN-put 1s:AGT DEM.D.LOC

tanganing sabi,
so say

daing sabih-an.
NEG-LNK say-LOC

This contrast may be seen as reflecting referentiality in the sense of Du Bois (1980),
or tracking, in the sense of Thompson (1997). It is also reminiscent of the discourse
function characteristically associated with noun incorporation (Mithun 1984). This
also follows from Hopper and Thompson's (1984) observation that constituents
receiving nominal treatment are prototypically tracking, and constituents receiving
something other than full nominal treatment are often non-tracking.

Thus, the stems of Type 2 verbalizations are non-tracking elements of
schemas evoked in the discourse. This type of verbalization is a way of satisfying
Motivation B by avoiding redundancy in the clause and avoiding the use of low-
content verbs.

Type 3: Verbalization Constructions

The third type of verbalization is verbalized constructions (Fillmore et al.
1988): they are productive idioms in which constituents of a specified class are
verbalized, and there is some meaning coded neither by the stem nor by the verbal
morphology, but the combination of the two. There are three common constructions:
Reported Speech, Inchoative and Locational. The meanings expressed non-
compositionally by these constructions correspond to some low-content verbs;
thereby, these constructions are an alternative to using such verbs and a means for
satisfying Motivation B.

I will discuss the first two constructions only briefly, as they are much less
common than the third. The Reported Speech verbalization construction means 'to
say X,' where X is the stem. This construction is only used for one-word utterances
in my data.
(13) Joy: *kan pig-ka'g-an ko ngaya iyan,*
NT BGN:PAT-put-LOC 1s:AGT RPT:3 DEM.M.TOP
‘He said, “When I put that in (the agreement)”

*nag-who man ngaya ako ta,*
BGN:AGT-yes too RPT:3 1s:TOP because
‘He said, “I (said) yes because”’ (lit.: ‘I yesed’)

dai ako-ng antepara.
NEG 1s:TOP-LNK eye.glasses
‘I didn’t have (my) glasses’

The second construction involves inchoative meaning. The stem represents a state, and the verbalization construction expresses that this state comes about. There is no special inchoative morphology.

(14) Eliseo: *pag saro-ng semana,*
TEMP one-LNK week
‘after one week’

dai mo pa na-ubos pag-deliver-a an sanggatos na
NEG 2s:AGT yet BGN:PAT-consume TEMP-deliver-PAT TOP 100 LNK
sako-ng bagas,
sack-LNK rice
‘(if) you haven’t finished delivering all 100 sacks of rice’

*m/umin/ahal an presyo kan bagas.*
[AGT:CONSEQ]-expensive TOP price NT rice
‘the price of the rice (gets more) expensive’ (lit.: ‘the price of the rice expensives’) [sew:19-21]

The last construction, Locational, is by far the most frequent of the verbalized constructions in my data. The verbalized stem indicates a location, and the verbalization indicates that a verbal argument arrives at the location indicated by the stem. Therefore, verbalized locations indicate goals, never sources. The use of this construction satisfies Motivation B, as it is an alternative to using a low-content motion verb. In fact, there is no dedicated verb root in Bikol for general motion toward a goal, such as *go* in English.

(15) Karen: The chickens are not going to come *out.* (lit.: ‘The chickens will not *outside.’)
Arnel: Yes, (they will).
Karen: They’re not gonna come *out.* (lit.: ‘(They) will not *outside.’)
Arnel: Yes, (they will).

Karen: *dai man ma:-luwas su ano,*
NEG also FUT:AGT-*outside* TOP what
In the last line, Aaron verbalizes the proximal locative demonstrative *digdi(h)*. He uses it in a request to have something brought to him.

Unlike Type 2 verbalizations, the stem of Locational verbalizations can be tracking and even given (Chafe 1994). In the next set of examples, a group of women are discussing fiestas that will be held in various communities in the Bicol region. Below, they start discussing Peñafrancia, the most attended fiesta in the region.

(17) Thelma: *maka-Peñafrancia sana,*
    NOT.BGN:ACT-Peñafrancia just
    ‘Then, there will be Peñafrancia’ (lit.: ‘will Peñafrancia’)
Ching: *uho,*
   ‘yes’
   *iyo na.*
   yes now
   ‘That’s right’

Thelma: *a-baba-on ngunyan an Peñafrancia.*
   ADJ-low-INTS now  TOP Peñafrancia
   ‘Peñafrancia (will be) early in the month this year.’ (lit. Peñafrancia (will be)
   low now.)'  
   [sroq:477-80]

The women discuss the date of the Peñafrancia festival for the following 43
intonation units. Then, they start discussing attending the festival. They verbalize
the distal locative demonstrative *duman*, referring to Peñafrancia.

(18) Tita: *nag-du-d[ur]uman kamo?*
   BGN:AGT-IMP-[DIST]-DEM.D.LOC 2p:TOP
   ‘Do all of you usually (go) there?’ (lit.: ‘Do you (pl.) there?’)

   Ching: *kon may kwarta,*
   if  EXIST money
   ‘If (we) have money’  
   [sroq:524-5]

They continue to use *duman* ‘there’ to refer to the Peñafrancia festival. Below is one
element of the verbalized tokens that follow.

(19) Ching: *ako pira pa pagka-gadan kaito-ng si May dai*
   1s:TOP how many more TEMP:PST-dead DEM.D.NT-LNK TOP mother NEG
   na ako naka-duman.
   already 1s:TOP BGN:AGT-DEM.D.LOC
   ‘Me, how many (times have I gone?) I haven’t (gone) there since my mother
died.’ (lit.: ‘I haven’t thered.’)  
   [sroq:534]

Thus, locational verbalizations can be used to track referents through discourse.

Type 3 verbalizations are constructions. Their use satisfies Motivation B by
allow the avoidance of low content verbs.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, this paper has discussed three types of verbalization: Adverbial, Schematic, and Verbalized Constructions. Their appearance is due to two
discourse motivations.

A- Ensure that the stem of the morphosyntactic verb conveys
newsworthy information.
B- Ensure that the stem of the morphosyntactic verb is semantically rich and is not predictable from other sentence constituents.

Adverbial verbalization is motivated by A. Schematic and Verbalization Constructions are motivated mainly by B, and sometimes also by A. Since a wide range of constituents function as verb stems with no explicit derivation, the phenomenon of verbalization heavily undermines the status of verb as an organizational category in the Bikol lexicon. In doing so, however, it allows morphosyntactic verbs to perform particular discourse functions more consistently, such as satisfying Motivations A and B.

In view of the potency of Motivation A and B demonstrated here for Bikol, we might expect them to have similar impact in the rest of the world’s languages. However, this is not the case. In many languages, verb is a much more robust category for the organization of lexical types: a narrower range of constituents can receive verbal treatment without explicit derivation. To explain this, we must postulate another motivation, Motivation C, to compete with A and B and curb their effect.

C- Ensure that a stem that bears verbal morphology belongs to the lexical category verb.

The lexical category of verb has semantic as well as discourse-functional motivations (Hopper and Thompson 1984). Sometimes, not all three motivations can be satisfied. In Bikol, A and B win out, and the functional transparency of the verbal constituent is maintained. In many other languages, C wins more often. Verb is maintained as a category of lexical types, and motivations, such as A and B, promoting the functional transparency of the verbal constituent are more likely to be compromised.
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**Glossing Abbreviations**

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