

A Brief Description of the Grammar of Butuanon

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the phonology, morphology, and syntax of the Butuanon language. The data used in this study include a Butuanon translation of more than 1,000 Tagalog and Cebuano sentences and a vocabulary consisting of 350 words. Short stories written in Butuanon likewise form part of the data analyzed in this study. The study reveals that Butuanon has an inventory of three vowel phonemes and 16 consonant phonemes. Its words can be categorized into two groups – open and closed classes. Open classes which include nouns, verbs, and adjectives may occur affixed or unaffixed. Verbs in Butuanon are generally inflected for focus, aspect, and mood. Two of the closed classes in Butuanon include nominal markers and pronouns. As a predicate-initial language, Butuanon has a basic clause structure consisting of a predicate and a focus argument that serves as a subject of the clause and is marked by **ang** or **si**. The predicate in Butuanon can be verbal or non-verbal. In general, the Butuanon language may be treated as one of the Philippine-type languages based on the linguistic features it exhibits.

Keywords: Butuanon, shifting, phonology, morphology, syntax

1. Introduction

Butuanon is a South Visayan language spoken in northeastern Mindanao particularly in the provinces of Agusan del Norte and Agusan del Sur. Its speakers are also distributed in Misamis Oriental and Surigao del Norte. The language is characterized as a conglomeration of Kamayo, Surigaonon, and Cebuano (Eberhard et al., 2020) with the latter heavily influencing the language. Genetically, Butuanon is closely related to Tausug – its one and only sister language. Butuanon was spoken by approximately 24, 566 native inhabitants as of 1990 census (National Commission for Culture and the Arts, n.d.) and since then its number of speakers has depleted. In 2007, there were fewer than 500 younger speakers speaking the language in Butuan alone (Cabuang, 2007).

The Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) which measures the vitality status of languages shows Butuanon landing at level 7 indicating that the language is “shifting.” This means that the child-bearing generation can use the language among themselves, but it is not being transmitted to children (Lewis & Simons, 2010). The dwindling number of child-bearing Butuanon speakers is a clear indication that the first and second generation of speakers of the minority language, who voluntarily pass on the language to the younger generation, are getting fewer and fewer. Majority of the fluent older speakers (60 and above) find no motivation to perpetuate the use of the heritage language at home which is supposedly the best environment where children would be immersed in the language. The schools which could be an alternative means for the younger speakers to learn Butuanon are rendered ineffective since all schools in Caraga region use and teach only Cebuano/Bisaya, English, and Filipino as provided for in the 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article 14, Section 7. Moreover, the domains that allow the younger speakers to use and acquire fluency in their language are limited. They are only restricted to the speakers’ respective homes and communities. Outside of those domains, Butuanon speakers shift to Cebuano/Bisaya – the language spoken by the majority of the inhabitants who are migrants in Butuan city.

Another factor that contributes to language shift in the region is discrimination. When people find their group and language being looked down upon by the dominant group, they have a greater propensity to culturally assimilate with the latter and to shift to a high prestige language to avoid being discriminated. The minority groups in Mindanao, which include Butuanon are fully aware of the derogatory stereotypical images and words/phrases that the lowland Bisayans

attach to them. They are typically characterized as “natibo” (native), “tribo” (tribe), “mga taga bukid” (mountain people), “way grado” (uneducated), and “lumad” (indigenous) (Kobari, n.d.).

A recognition of a minority group as an official indigenous group is likewise very crucial in the maintenance of the heritage language that serves as a symbol of group identity. It is unfortunate that the Butuanon or Lapaknon (swamp dwellers), the indigenous group of the natives of Butuan, has not been officially recognized by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) as one of the legitimate and independent minority groups in the province of Agusan. This is because of the recommendation made by an American anthropologist, Professor John Garvan. In 1901, Professor Garvan became interested in studying the culture of non-Muslim groups in Mindanao. In his investigation, he found that many of the ethnic groups in Agusan shared similar practices. Hence, he suggested that they be placed under one name which he called Manobo whose members consisted of Kamayo-Surigaonon of Surigao, Wawaanon, Umayamnon, Masamnon, Banwaon, and Lapaknon of Agusan, Mansaka, Mandaya, Ata, Matig-Langilan of Davao and Ubo of Upi in Cotabato (Dumanon, 2015). The NCIP undoubtedly followed Garvan’s recommendation and officially placed Lapaknon under the Manobo group. Such action has a serious repercussion on the survival of the ethnic group which had its own rich history, culture, and language. Dumanon (2015) once said,

We have today not only an endangered Lapaknon Tribe but also an endangered Butuanon language ... The Butuanon language which was the official language in the early days and still spoken today became a language of non-existent people because there is no tribe that represents it. (p. 10)

With the influx of the Cebuano/Bisayan settlers who constitute the majority of the population, a large number of Butuanons have gradually assimilated with the Cebuano/Bisayan culture and language. In fact, majority of the new generation today no longer speak Butuanon as their first language. Among those who could still speak the language, Kobari’s study (n.d.):

Confirms that the current form of Butuanon that younger speakers use shows such convergence toward Cebuano with the reduced amount of Butuanon distinguishing features

transmitted from the preceding generations that it becomes questionable whether Butuanon is actually surviving, and the possibility exists that it may be swallowed up in a more generic language and culture. (p. 4)

If native Butuanons no longer take pride in their own language and cease speaking and transmitting it to the younger generation, it will eventually become endangered, worst extinct. With the dwindling number of a new generation of speakers, it is not far-fetched that the language as well as the Butuanon's rich cultural heritage will perish without the speakers knowing it. Thus, this study on the reference grammar of Butuanon is conceptualized as a response to the need to document and preserve the language from possible endangerment or extinction. Describing the grammar of Butuanon is one of the vital keys toward the revitalization of the language and the preservation of the people's rich cultural heritage – their culture and history that define the Butuanons.

2. Butuanon Subgroup

Zorc (1977) categorizes Butuanon under Southern Visayan languages which are further classified into Butuanon-Tausug. The genetic affiliation of Butuanon with the Southern Visayan languages is based on the lexical innovations Butuanon shared with the rest of the languages of the Southern Visayan subgroup. Some of the lexical innovations identified by Zorc (1977, pp. 281-285) are the following:

- (1) Ceb, Boh, Sur, Nat, But, Kamayo **bagaq** 'thick' < SBs ***bagaq**; replaces PCP ***dakməl** > Rom **dákmoy**, Hil, Mas, War, Tsg **dákmul**, Kamayo **dakmúu**, Mansaka, Kalagan **dakməl**, Kagayanen **dakməl**. SBs ***bagaq** 'thick' is a semantic innovation of PAN ***baRəq**, PMP ***baq** 'abscess, boil'.
- (2) Ceb, Jau, Nat, But, Tsg **bukúg**, Boh, Sur **bəkəg** 'bone' (in general, but especially human) < SBs ***bəkəg**; note Mamanwa, Dibabawon **bəkəg**, Ata **bokog**, Kagayanen **bekkəg** bone, AKI **bukóg**, S-L **bəkəg** spine (of fish); to choke on bone or spine. Replaces PPH ***tuqlan**, ***tuqlan** bone.
- (3) Ceb, Boh **gáhiq**, Sur, Jau, But **gahíq** (with accent shift) 'hard substance' < SBs ***gáhiq**; note Mamanwa **ma -gahiq**.

- (4) Ceb, Jau, But **háqit**, Boh, Sur, Tsg, Kamayo, **haqít** ‘sharp’ < SBs ***haqit**; borrowed by Mamanwa **ma-haqit**, Dibabawon, Binukid **ma-háqit**. Most other Bs dialects reflect PSP ***tad** > Kin, Pan, Sem, Kuy **tarám**, Blk, Sor, Gub, Mas, **tarúm**, Ogd, rom, **tayóm**, Akl **tałúm**, Hil, Cap, **talúm**.
- (5) Ceb, Boh, Sur, Jau, But, Kamayo ***gawás** ‘to go out, exit’ < SBs ***gawás**. Most other Bs dialects reflect PBS ***guwáq**.

Zorc’s Butuanon-Tausug subgroup is confirmed by the exclusive lexical innovations both languages share. These lexical innovations are as follows:

- (1) But, Tsg **bugáq** ‘fear, be afraid’ < But-Tsg ***bugáq**. Replaces PAN ***takut**, PSP ***haldək**, PBS **hádłək**.
- (2) But, Tsg **daqák** ‘to command, order’ < But-Tsg ***daqák**. Replaces PHS, PPH ***súruq**, PBS ***súguq**.
- (3) But, Tsg **daqig** ‘nearby’ < But-Tsg ***daqíg**. Replaces ***dapít** ***daní** found in other Bs dialects, Ceb **duqúl**.
- (4) But **qátud** (with unexplained loss of ***h-**), Tsg **h<um>átud** ‘to look at, watch’ < But-Tsg ***[h]átud**. Replaces PPH ***tanqáw**.
- (5) But **hináqat**, Tsg **ma-hináqat** ‘morning’ < But-Tsg ***hináqat**. Other Bs ***qáagah**, Ceb **búntag**.
- (6) But **ma-nyát** (metathesis), Tsg **ma-qinját** ‘to know (how)’ < But-Tsg ***[q]inját**. Note Tag **qinját** ‘to watch out, take care’.
- (7) But, Tsg **qugúd** to itch < But-Tsg ***qugúd**. Other Bs dialects reflect PSP ***katəl**.

Kobari (n.d, pp. 16-18), attempts to compare some of the grammatical features of the Butuanon and Cebuano languages, which are as follows:

1. Personal Pronoun		Nominative		Genitive		Oblique	
Basic Set	Enclitic	Proposed	Postposed	Enclitic	Basic Set	Enclitic	
Butuanon ikaw 'though'	kaw				kanimu		
Cebuano ikaw	ka	qimu	nimu	mu	kanimu	nimu	

2. Deictics		Nominative		Genitive		Oblique	
Butuanon	Cebuano	Butuanon	Cebuano	Butuanon	Cebuano	Butuanon	Cebuano
qiyán 'that'	kanáq ~ náq	haqún	ni-qána ~ qánaq			disaqún	dimhaq ~ ámbaq

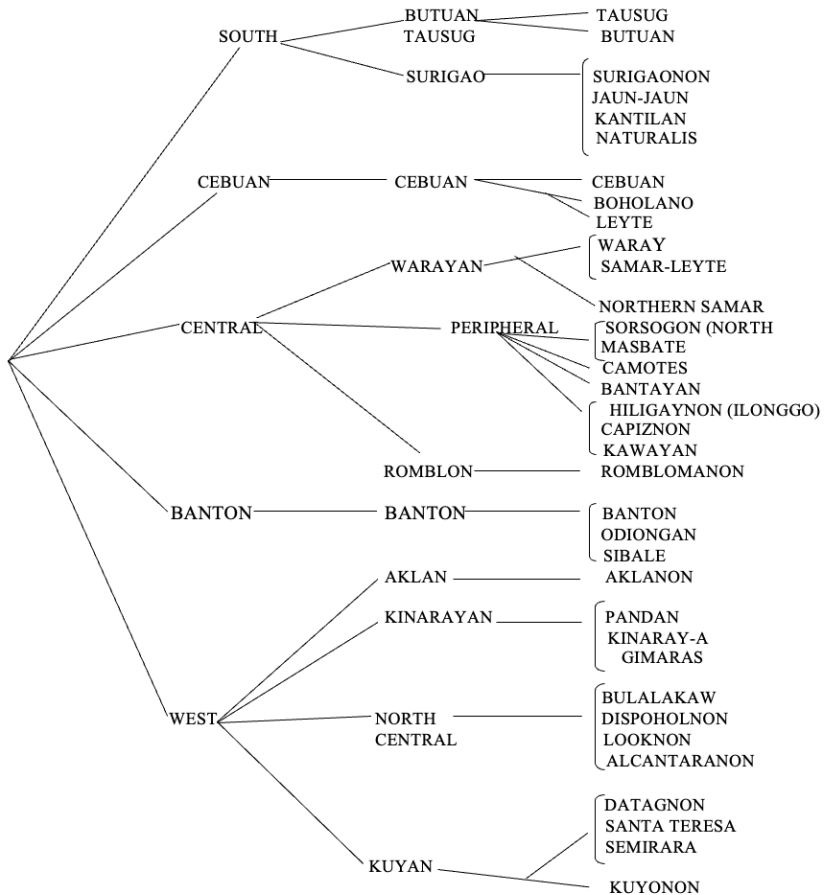
3. Common Noun Case-Marking Particles		Nominative		Genitive		Oblique	
	indefinite	definite	indefinite	definite	indefinite	definite	
Butuanon (-y*)	qatj	past	non-past	past	non-past		
Cebuano (-y)	qatj		(huŋ*) qug.	huŋ	sa	sa	sa

4. Interrogatives: Temporals		who		whose		when	
	what						
Butuanon	ɾáan	sinuhq	kanínqu	past	future		
Cebuano	qúnsah	kínsa	kaŋ-kínsa	gánu	kúnqu	kanúsqa	qanúsqa

5. Interrogatives: Adverbials		why		how (manner)	
Butuanon	ɾánsi ba		qúnhun		
Cebuano	ɾánu (man)		qunsaqun		

6. Existential Predicate and Affirmation		there is [proclitic]		there is [independent]		yes	
Butuanon	yaqu-y	yaqún		húqu			
Cebuano	may	(qa)dúna		qu / ququ			

The tree diagram below illustrates Zorc's genetic relationships of the Bisayan dialects.



Genetic Relationships of the Bisayan Dialects (Zorc,1977)

Tree Diagram 1

3. Phonology

Butuanon is among those Philippine languages which exhibit a three-vowel system consisting of /a i u/ and 16 consonant phonemes /p b t d k g q m n ŋ s h l r w y/. The suprasegmental features of Butuanon, which include stress and vowel length are said to be phonemic. As stress shifts from one syllable to another, the meaning of a word also changes as shown in *abúd* ‘lash mark, bruise’ and *ábud* ‘to scatter grain’. Vowel length in the language is brought about by the deletion of /l/ when it is between identical vowels and when it is in word-final position as exemplified in the following rule:

$$/l/ > /ø/ / \left\{ \begin{array}{l} V_V \\ V_# \end{array} \right\}$$

The following examples illustrate vowel lengthening caused by the loss of the phoneme /l/ in the environment.

balay /baláy/ > bay /baáy/ ‘house’
 sawal /sawál/ > sawaa /sawaá/ ‘pants’

Vowel length as a result of the deletion of /l/ in word-final position is called compensatory vowel lengthening.

There are also words in Butuanon which have inherently long vowels. The latter usually occurs in penultimate syllables as shown in the following examples.

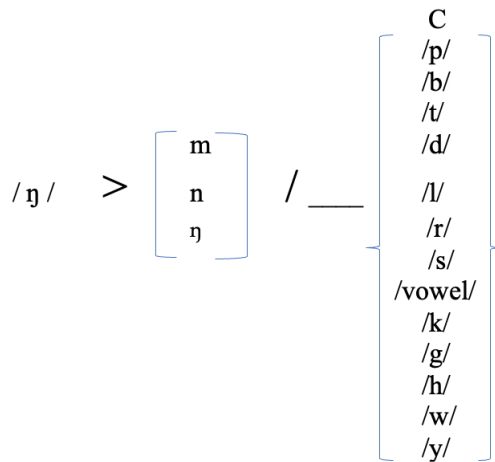
masawa /masaawa/ ‘bright’
 mahaba /mahaabaq/ ‘long’

3.1 Morphophonemic processes

Butuanon exhibits the following morphophonemic processes: assimilation, deletion, epenthesis, substitution, and metathesis.

3.1.1 Assimilation

This process makes a sound become identical with its neighboring sound. In the following examples, the velar sound /ŋ/ in the affix maŋ becomes /m/, /n/, and /ŋ/ respectively depending upon the initial sound of the following root or stem. The velar consonant /ŋ/ becomes [m] when it is followed by bilabial stops /p/ and /b/. It becomes [n] when it is followed by dental consonants /t d/ and alveolar consonants /l r s/. Moreover, the sound /ŋ/ remains its form before vowels, velar consonants /k g/, glottal fricative /h/, and glides /w y/.



maŋplántsá	>	mamplántsá	>	mamlántsá	‘will iron clothes’
maŋsádsá	>	mansádsá	>	manádsá	‘will dance’
maŋ-utúd	>	maŋqutúd	>	maŋutúd	‘will cut’
maŋhíluúd	>	maŋhíluúd	>	maŋhíluúd	‘will hand-pick’

3.1.2 Deletion

This morphophonemic process removes a sound or sounds from the string of sounds, thus shortening a word. The deletion of /l/ between vowels and in word-final position is a process commonly observed in Butuanon. In the second example below, compensatory vowel lengthening follows after /l/ is deleted in the word-final position.

dalága > daága 'girl, woman'
katumbal > katúmbaa 'red chili'

3.1.3 Epenthesis

This process inserts a sound within a string of sounds. In the examples, the sound /h/ is usually inserted when the suffix **-an** or **-un** is added to the root or stem that ends with a vowel as exemplified in the following rule:

∅ > [h] / V# _____ #V(C).

kaába 'dress' + -un > kaabahún 'clothing material'
qabri 'to open' + -an > qabrihan 'to open'

3.1.4 Substitution

This morphophonemic process replaces one sound with another sound. In the following examples, the sound [d] is substituted by [r] when it is between vowels, as shown below.

qínkud 'to sit' + -anan > qínkuránan 'seat'
báyad 'payment' + -an > bayáran 'to pay'

3.1.5 Metathesis

Metathesis is a morphophonemic process that reorders the sequence of sounds within a word. The following example illustrates the switching of position between the phonemes /l/ and /i/.

taglima > tagilma 'five each'

4. Morphology

Butuanon morphology consists of two classes – the open and the closed classes. Open classes are words “whose members cannot be listed exhaustively and which are potentially expandable through borrowings and derivation from other word classes” (Aikhenvald, 2015, p. 52). Closed classes, on the other hand, are word classes whose membership is said to be restricted or can be listed exhaustively (Aikhenvald, 2015).

4.1 Open classes

Open classes typically include nouns, verbs, and adjectives. These categories morphologically occur as affixed or unaffixed.

4.1.1 Nouns

Nouns can be distinguished from other open classes through their roots and the affixes associated with them. Nouns in Butuanon may occur unaffixed in the following types of nouns: common nouns, proper nouns, count nouns, and mass nouns:

common noun:	qusúg ‘boy, man’
proper noun:	
personal	Minda
non-personal	ISUZU ‘a car brand’
count noun:	dagánwan ‘fishing rod’
mass noun:	qunáw ‘tapioca starch’

4.1.1.1 Noun inflections

Butuanon exhibits affixes that mark nouns for gender and diminutivity. These affixes are not inherent in the language but are generally borrowed from Spanish. The two affixes that indicate gender in Butuanon are the suffixes **-u** and **-a**. The first affix indicates masculine gender while the second affix denotes feminine gender, e.g. dramatúrgu ‘actor’ dramatúrga ‘actress’. Inherent gender in Butuanon is usually expressed lexically rather than morphologically as in: táqu (indefinite) ‘person’, qusúg (masculine) ‘man’, and daága (feminine) ‘woman’.

Diminutive is one of the properties of a noun that semantically refers to a very small object. In Butuanon, diminutive is expressed by the affixes **-ita** and **-itu** both borrowed from Spanish and occur only in a very limited number of Spanish-loaned nouns. The suffix **-ita** may be attached to a noun that ends with /a/ while **-itu** with a noun that ends with /u/, for example: lamísa ‘table’ + -ita > lamísita ‘coffee table’ and bánkuq ‘high bench’ + -itu > bánkítu ‘small, low bench.

4.1.1.2 Noun derivational affixes

The following word-formation rules (WFR) derive nouns from verbs, adjectives, or other nouns through the various derivational affixes (DA):

$$[{}_{N/V/ADJ} X] > [{}_N [{}_{N/V/ADJ} X] + DA]$$

1. -an

WFR 1: $[_N X] > [_N [_N X] + \text{-an}]$

a. Meaning: 'a vessel containing X'

qasúkar 'sugar' + **-an** > qasukarán 'sugar container'
 tubig 'water' + **-an** > tubigán 'water container'

b. Meaning: 'an instrument, tool, device, or medium used in measuring X'

gántañ 'ganta' + **-an** > gantañán 'ganta'
 tímbañ 'weight' + **-an** > timbañán 'weighing scale'

c. Meaning: 'a place where X is cultivated'

níyug 'coconut' + **-an** > niyugán 'coconut plantation'
 guwáñ 'forest' + **-an** > guwáñan 'forest'

WFR 2: $[_V X] > [_N [_V X] + \text{-an}]$

Meaning: 'a place where X occurs'

asíbaq 'to play' + **-an** > qasibaqán 'a playing place'
 kuwáñ 'to lie down' + **-an** > kuwañán 'a sleeping place'

2. -anan

WFR 3: $[_V X] > [_N [_V X] + \text{-anan}]$

Meaning: 'a place where X habitually happens'

kuwáñ 'to lie down' + **-anan** > kuwañanan 'bed'
 qasíbaq 'to play' + **-anan** > asibaqanan 'playhouse'

3. -anti

WFR 4: $[_V X] > [_N [_V X] + \text{-anti}]$

Meaning: 'an Xer; a person who Xes'

trabahár 'to work' + **-anti** > trabahánti 'worker'
 qaplikár 'to apply' + **-anti** > qaplikánti 'applicant'
 butár 'to vote' + **-anti** > butánti 'voter'

4. **-dur**WFR 5: [_VX] > [_N [_V X] + **-dur**]

Meaning: 'a doer of the action X'

qakusár 'to accuse' + **-dur** > qakusadúr 'accuser'
 sirku 'to flip' + **-dur** > sirkadúr 'acrobat'
 qadministrár 'to administer' + **-dur** > qadministradúr 'administrator'

5. **-in**WFR 6: [_NX] > [_N [_N X] + **-in-**]

a. Meaning: 'a processed/preserved X'

tumpíq 'sago starch' + **-in-** > tinumpíq 'sweetened sago cake'
 qagúnqun 'fish with vinegar' + **-in-** > qinagúnqun 'pickled fish'

b. Meaning: 'a type of speech variety X'

butuwánun + **-in-** > binut(u)wanún 'a speech variety spoken in Butuan City'
 bisayáq + **-in-** > binisayáq 'a speech variety spoken in Visayas and Mindanao'

6. **tig-**WFR 7: [_VX] > [_N **tig-** + [_V X]]

Meaning: 'a person whose work is X'

tig- + saqúk 'to fetch' > tigsaqúk 'a person who fetches water'
tig- + kamúk 'to cook' > tigkaámu 'a person who cooks rice'

7. **ting-**WFR 8: [_{Adj/V}X] > [_N **ting-** + [_{Adj/V} X]]

Meaning: ‘a time/season X’

ting- + hágkut ‘cold’ > tiṅháḡkut ‘cold season’

ting- + sugáq ‘hot’ > tiṅsugáq ‘hot season’

4.1.2 Verbs

Similar to nouns, verbs in Butuanon may also appear affixed or unaffixed.

4.1.2.1 Verbal roots

Verbal roots may be categorized into three: roots denoting state, roots denoting the result or object of the action, and roots denoting the name of the action. Each type of verbal root may occur as a predicate, modifier, or nominal (Himmelman, 2008).

4.1.2.1.1 State-denoting roots

Himmelman (2008) associates state-denoting roots with the past participle in English. In their unaffixed form, state-denoting roots may indicate properties and states. A few examples of state-denoting roots are: **hilís** ‘melt’, **buká** ‘open’, **tulúḡ** ‘sleep’, **balíq** ‘break’, **lutúq** ‘cook’, and **sunúḡ** ‘burn’. When these verbs are used as predicates, they indicate completion of the action expressed by the verb (Constantino, n.d.). The state-denoting verbal roots are generally stressed on the ultima when they function as predicate or modifier.

a. As predicate

- (1) **hilís** na qaṅ ays
 REAL-PF.melt PRT-already FM ice
 ‘The ice has already melted.’

b. As modifier

- (2) pigasalibáy ni máryu qaṅ hilís ṅa ays
 REAL-TF.throw NFM Mario FM melt REL ice
 ‘Mario threw away the melted ice.’

4.1.2.1.2 Roots- denoting results/object

Verbal roots-denoting results/ objects may be associated with the “object(ive) nominalizations in English” (Himmelman, 2008, p. 19). Examples of roots-denoting results/objects are as follows: **dápay** ‘slap’, **bángaq** ‘bite’, **qiyák** ‘shout’, **tiyáhuq** ‘cry’. Roots-denoting results/objects “typically occur in nominal

expressions” (Himmelman, 2008, p. 23) and are treated as things.

- (3) pagkasakit huŋ dápay níya huŋ báyhu ku
 INTENS-painful NFM slap 3SG-GEN PREP face 1SG-GEN
 ‘How painful the slap she gave me on my face.’
- (4) pagkacusúg huŋ qiyák huŋ bátaq
 INTENS-loud NFM shout PREP bata
 ‘The shout of the child is very loud.’

4.1.2.1.3 Roots denoting the name of action

Verbal roots denoting the name of an action is similar to nominalized verbs with zero affixation. A few examples of roots denoting the name of action are: **bilí** ‘to buy, to purchase’, **hátag** ‘to give’, **lagúy** ‘to run’, **qágas** ‘to flow’, and **siqáb** ‘to eat’. Roots denoting the name of action typically function as the subject of manner predicates (Himmelman, 2008). They are generally marked by the focus marker **qaŋ** placed before the verbal roots.

- (5) hínay kadiyáw qaŋ lagúy huŋ qáwtu
 ADJ-slow INTENS FM run PREP car
 ‘The speed of the car is very slow.’
- (6) kusúg qaŋ qágas huŋ túbig huŋ grípu
 ADJ-strong FM flow PREP water PREP faucet
 ‘The flow of the water in the faucet is strong.’

4.1.2.2 Verbal inflections

Verbs differ from nouns and adjectives in that they are typically inflected for focus, aspect, and mood (FAM).

4.1.2.2.1 Aspect

Butuanon exhibits two types of aspects: realis and irrealis. The irrealis aspect is marked by the following affixes in their neutral mood: (1) **mu-**, (2) **mag-**, (3) **maN-**, (4) **-un**, (5) **-an**, and (6) **i-**.

- (7) musiqáb siyá huḡ lámbug
IRR-AF.eat 3SG-NOM NFM cherry
'S/he will eat some cherry.'

- (8) magkamúq huḡ qisdáqan si mínda
IRR-AF.cook NFM viand FM Minda
'Minda will cook some viand.'

- (9) maníhig qakú huḡ kuwártu
IRR-AF.sweep 1SG-NOM NFM room
'I will sweep the room.'

- (10) baḡáqun huḡ háas qan qidúq
IRR-PF.bite NFM snake FM dog
'The snake will bite the dog.'

- (11) káwqan níya huḡ túbig qan máqas ḡa daága
IRR-GF.get 3SG-GEN NFM water FM old REL woman
'S/he will get the old woman some water.'

- (12) qiqutúd ni máryu huḡ papíl qan gúntin
IRR-IF.cut NFM Mario NFM paper FM scissors
Mario will cut the paper with the scissors.'

The realis aspect, on the other hand, is marked by the following affixes: (1) **mi-**, (2) **miga-/ga-**, (3) **miN-**, (4) **qimpiga-piga-/gi-**, and (5) **qimpiga-an/piga-an/gi-an**.

Infinitive	Realis
mupánaw 'to go, to leave'	mipánaw 'left'
maghínanḡ 'to make'	miga-/gahínanḡ 'is/was making, makes,made'
manlimpyo 'to clean'	minlimpyo 'is/was cleaning, cleans,cleaned'
baḡá-qun 'to bite'	qimpiga-/piga-/gibaḡaq 'is/was biting, bites, bit'
bíl-qan 'to buy'	qimpiga-/piga-/gibílqan 'is/was buying, buys, bought'
qiqutúd 'to cut'	qimpiga-/piga-/qiqutúd 'is/was cutting, cuts,cut'

- (13) *mipanaw na qañ mañá bisíta*
 REAL-AF.leave PRT-already FM PI visitor
 ‘The visitors left already.’
- (14) *gahíñañ huñ bánug-bánug qañ qusúg duqún*
 REAL-AF.make NFM kite FM man ADV-now
 ‘The man is making a kite now.’
- (15) *minlimpiyo qañ mañá bátaq hung baáy gahápun*
 REAL-AF.clean FM PI child NFM house ADV-yesterday
 ‘The children cleaned the house yesterday.’
- (16) *pigabáña huñ qidúq qañ qapík gaqína*
 REAL-PF.bite NFM dog FM cat ADV-earlier
 ‘The dog bit the cat earlier.’
- (17) *pigabılqan ni nılo huñ pabiyún qañ máqas ға*
 REAL-BF.buy NFM Nilo NFM mosquito net FM old REL
daága gahápun
 woman ADV-yesterday
 ‘Nilo bought the old woman a mosquito net yesterday.’
- (18) *pigaqutud huñ qusúg huñ kárni qañ kutsılyu kagahápun*
 REAL-IF.cut NFM man NFM meat FM knife ADV-yesterday
 ‘The man cut the meat with the knife yesterday.’

Except for *mi-* in (13), the affixes in (14-17) may indicate present, on-going, or past action. Further, each event may be distinguished by the use of the temporal adverbs such as *kagahápun/gahápun* ‘yesterday’, *kagaqína/gaqína* ‘earlier’ and *duqún* ‘now’ or of the particles such as *na* ‘already’ and *pa* ‘still’.

Table 1 Summary of aspect affixes in Butuanon

ASPECT		
Infinitive	Irealis	Realis
mu-	mu-	mi-, miga-/ga-
mag-	mag-	miga-/ga-
maN-	maN-	miN-
-un	-un	qimpiga-/piga-/gi-
-an	-an	qimpiga-an/piga-an/gi-an
qi-	qi-	qimpiga-/piga-/gi-

4.1.2.2.2 Focus

Focus is a verbal predicate feature that indicates the semantic relationship between the verbal predicate and its argument to be accorded prominence in the sentence. Such relationship is marked by an affix attached to the verb, which determines the semantic role of the argument to be focused. The argument chosen to be focused is also indicated by the marker **qaŋ**. In the example below, the actor-focus affix **mu-** is attached to the verb indicating that the argument to be focused is an actor marked by the marker **qaŋ**.

- (19) musiqáb huŋ maŋga qaŋ daága
 IRR-AF.eat NFM mango FM girl
 ‘The girl will eat a mango.’

Depending on the affix attached to the verb, the latter can be an actor focus, patient focus, theme focus, goal focus, source focus, locative focus, beneficiary focus, and instrument focus. Butuanon has three sets of verbal affixes that mark actor focus: **mu-**, **mag-**, and **maN-**. Verbs that carry the **mu-** affix express actions that are intentionally executed by the actors. They generally “denote casual action and/or action not involving movement of an object external to the actor” (Schachter & Otones, 1972, p. 292).

- (20) muqinum huŋ lítsi si kárla
 IRR-AF.drink NFM milk FM Karla
 ‘Karla will drink milk.’

Verbs that take the affix **maga-** or **mag-** indicate that the actors are the ones

who perform the actions expressed by the verbs similar to the *mu-* verbs. The *mag-* verbs generally “connote deliberate action and /or action involving movement of an object external to the actor” (Schachter & Otones, 1972, p. 289).

- (21) *magasaqúk huɲ túbig ɲádtu qatábay qaɲ qusúg*
 IRR-AF.fetch NFM water DEMP well FM boy
 ‘The boy will fetch water from the well.’

The **maN-** affix is another actor-focus morpheme. Newman (1990, p. 2012 as cited in Kimoto, 2019) also names it as pluractional which can be distributive or iterative. The former “is used to encode distributive actions in which the actions performed affect more than one individual” (Kimoto, 2019, p.5).

- (22) *manhábhah huɲ ságbut qang maɲá báka*
 IRR-AF.eat NFM grass FM Pl cow
 ‘The cows will eat grass.’

The iterative pluractional “indicates that the event described is iterative, and the affectedness is not spread over different undergoers; it may be used with plural actors” (Kimoto, 2019, p. 8).

- (23) *maɲádsad qaɲ maɲá maqístra ɲádtu dyim*
 IRR-AF.dance FM Pl teacher DEMP-Distal gym
 ‘The teachers will dance there at the gym.’

- (24) *minílhig huɲ sawg si rúsa gahápun*
 REAL-AF.sweep NFM floor FM Rosa ADV-yesterday
 ‘Rosa swept the floor yesterday.’

Patient focus refers to the entity that is being affected by the action expressed by the verb. In Butuanon, the patient focus is signalled by the suffix **-un**.

- (25) *pisgáaqun ni pídrú qaɲ katumbáa*
 IRR-PF.crush NFM Pedro FM hot chili
 ‘Pedro will crush the hot chili.’

Theme focus refers to the entity that has been moved, but unlike patient focus, it does not undergo physical change. Theme-focus verbs are also marked by the affix **-un**.

- (26) pigabitbit ni husí qañ bag ni maríya
 REAL-TF.carry NFM Jose FM bag POSS Maria
 duqún
 ADV-now
 'Jose is carrying Maria's bag now.'

Goal focus indicates the direction where the action is performed. In Butuanon, it is marked by the suffix **-an**.

- (27) hatágan ni tirisíta huñ sápiq qañ máqas ña qusúg
 IRR-GF.give NFM Teresita NFM money FM old REL man
 'Teresita will give the old man some money.'

Source focus refers to the place from where the action happens and it is usually signaled by the affix **-an** similar to the goal focus.

- (28) káwqan ni pídru huñ túbig qañ sáwgan
 IRR-SF.get NFM Pedro NFM water FM river
 'Pedro will get some water from the river.'

Locative focus shows the place where the action transpires. Similar to goal and source focus, the locative focus is also expressed by the suffix **-an**.

- (29) pigalimpiyúhan ni maríya qañ kwártu kú gaqína
 REAL-LF.clean NFM Maria FM room 1SG-GEN ADV-earlier
 'Maria cleaned my room earlier.'

Beneficiary focus highlights the entity that benefits the action indicated by the verb. Verbs that focus the beneficiary usually carry the affix **-an**.

- (30) pigabilqan ni maríya katsaqún klára si mında
 REAL-BF.buy NFM Maria CONJ-LNKR Clara FM Minda
 hún kaába duqún
 NFM dress ADV-today
 'Maria and Clara are buying Minda a dress now.'

As the term implies, instrument focus denotes the thing employed in performing the action expressed by the verb. The said focus is marked by the prefix *qi-* in Butuanon.

- (31) qiqidlip huñ bátaq huñ mánga qañ kutsílyu
 IRR-IF.slice NFM child NFM mango FM knife
 'The child will slice the mango with the knife.'

Table 2 Focus and aspect affixes in Butuanon

FOCUS	ASPECT		
	Infinitive	Irrealis	Realis
Actor	mu- maga-/mag- maN-	mu- maga-/mag- maN-	mi-, miga-/ga- miga-/ga- miN-
Patient	-un	-un	qimpiga-/piga-/gi-
Theme	-un	-un	qimpiga-/piga-/gi-
Goal	-an	-an	qimpiga-an/piga-an/gi-an
Source	-an	-an	qimpiga-an/piga-an/gi-an
Locative	-an	-an	qimpiga-an/piga-an/gi-an
Instrument	qi-	qi-	qimpiga-/piga-/gi-

4.1.2.2.3 Mood

Three of the moods in Butuanon include durative, causative, and abilitative. Durative mood views action as a continuing process (Wolfenden, 1971). In Butuanon, the durative mood is marked by the affix *paga-*.

Table 3 *Durative mood affixes with focus and aspect*

FOCUS	DURATIVE	
	ASPECT	
	Irrealis	Realis
Actor	maga-	miga-/ga-
Patient	paga-un	qimpiga-/piga-/gi-
Theme	paga-un	qimpiga-/piga-/gi-
Goal	paga-un	qimpiga-an/piga-an/gi-an
Source	paga-un	qimpiga-an/piga-an/gi-an
Locative	paga-un	qimpiga-an/piga-an/gi-an
Beneficiary	paga-un	qimpiga-an/piga-an/gi-an
Instrument	qi-	piga-

(32) pagasiqabún huŋ bátaq qaŋ sáŋiŋ
 REAL-PF-DU.eat NFM child FM banana
 ‘The child will be eating the banana.’

The causative mood indicates that the actor who is not necessarily the doer of the action serves as an agent who causes someone else to perform the action (Wolfenden,1971). The causative mood in Butuanon is expressed by the affix **pa-**.

Table 4 *Causative mood affixes with focus and aspect*

FOCUS	DURATIVE	
	ASPECT	
	Irrealis	Realis
Actor	magpa-	migapa-/gapa-
Patient	ipa-	pigapa-/gipa-
Theme	paga-un	qimpiga-/piga-/gi-
Goal	paga-an	qimpiga-an/gi-an
Source	paga-an	qimpiga-an/gi-an
Locative	paga-an	qimpiga-an/gi-an
Beneficiary	paga-an	qimpiga-an/gi-an
Instrument	qi-	piga-

- (33) pahatágan huŋ maqístru qaŋ qístudyánti huŋ pan
 IRR-GF-CAUS.give NFM teacher FM student NFM bread
 ‘The teacher will let someone give the student some bread.’

The abilitative mood which refers to one’s potential to do something is marked by the affix **ka-** in Butuanon. In the irrealis aspect, the mood indicates possible action while in the realis aspect, it does not only denote possibility but also completion of the action (Morey, 1961).

Table 5 *Abilitative mood affixes with focus and aspect*

ABILITATIVE		
FOCUS	ASPECT	
	Irrealis	Realis
Actor	maka-/ka-	mika-
Patient	ma-	mi-
Theme	ma-	mi-
Goal	ma-an	mi-an
Source	ma-an	mi-an
Locative	ma-an	mi-an
Beneficiary	ma-an	mi-an
Instrument	qika-	mika-

- (34) mikasaká si mádut huŋ níyug
 REAL-AF-ABL.climb FM Madot NFM coconut
 ‘Madot could climb the coconut tree.’

4.1.2.2.3 Derivational affixes

This section presents the different affixes that derive verbs from nouns, adjectives, and other verbs represented by the following WFR:

$$[_{N/Adj/V} X] > [_{V} [_{N/Adj/V} X] + DA]$$

1. -an

$$WFR\ 9: [_{N} X] > [_{V} [_{N} X] + -an]$$

a. Meaning: 'to do/perform X for someone'

baáy 'house' + **-an** > baáyan 'to build a house for someone'

b. Meaning: 'to mount/ride on X'

kabáyuyq 'horse' + **-an** > kabayú-qan > kabáy-qan 'to mount
on someone or something'

2. ma-

WFR 10: [_{Adj} X] > [_V **ma-** + [_{Adj} X]]

Meaning: 'to be X'

ma- + bugáq 'afraid' > mabugáq 'to be afraid of'

3. mag-

WFR 11: [_N X] > [_V **mag-** + [_N X]]

a. Meaning: 'actor focus and irrealis aspect expressing a meaning "to become what X expresses'

mag- + maqístra 'teacher' > magmaqístra 'to become a teacher'

mag- + nars 'nurse' > magnars 'to become a nurse'

b. Meaning: 'will X; X being a natural phenomena'

mag- + quwán 'rain' > mag-quwán 'will rain'

mag- + sigáy 'flood' > magsigáy 'will flood'

mag- + línug 'earthquake' > mag-línug '(the earth) will shake'

4. maN-

WFR 12: [_N X] > [_V **maN-** + [_N X]]

Meaning: 'to X; to gather/collect by-product of X'

maN- + káhuy 'tree' > mañáhuy 'to gather firewood'

maN- + plántsa 'iron' > mamlántsa 'to iron clothes'

maN- + tanúm 'plant' > mananúm 'to plant'

maN- + sílhig 'broom' > manílhig 'to sweep'

5. -un

WFR 13: [N X] > [V [N X] -un]

Meaning: 'to do something using X'

gúntin 'scissors' + -un > guntúnun 'to cut something with scissors'

sirútsu 'saw' + -un > sirutsuhún 'to do something with a saw'

WFR 14: [Adj X] > [V [Adj X] -un]

Meaning: 'to make something X; to X something'

basáq 'wet' + -un > bás-un 'to make something wet'

6. ka-un

WFR 15: [N X] > [V ka- + [N X] + -un]

Meaning: 'will be about to X'

ka- + quwán 'rain' + -un > kauwanún 'will be about to rain'

ka- + hángin 'wind' + -un > kahanginún 'will be about to get windy'

WFR 16: [V X] > [V ka- + [V X] + -un]

Meaning: 'to want to X eagerly'

ka- + si-qáb 'eat' + -un > kasiqabún 'to want to eat eagerly'

ka- + báñaq 'bite' + -un > kabañaqún 'to want to bite eagerly'

7. pa-an

WFR 17: [Adj X] > [V pa- + [Adj X] + -an]

Meaning: 'to make somebody X'

pa- + budús 'pregnant' + -an > pabudusán 'to impregnate somebody'

4.1.3 Adjectives

Similar to nouns and verbs, adjectives may likewise appear affixed or unaffixed. Unaffixed adjectives in Butuanon include dákwá 'big', máqas 'old',

patsáda ‘lovely’, lúnay ‘soft’, and hangáqa ‘greedy’.

The following sentences illustrate the occurrence of unaffixed adjectives in Butuanon.

(35) dákwa qañ sapátus níya
 ADJ-big FM shoes 3SG-GEN
 ‘His/her shoes are big.’

(36) mibilí siyá huñ lúnay
 REAL-AF.buy 3SG-NOM NFM ADJ-soft
 ‘S/he bought a soft one.’

4.1.3.1 Adjectival inflections

Butuanon exhibits inflections that encode gender, intensity, and superlative degree. Gender among adjectives in Butuanon is signaled by the suffixes **-u** and **-a** which are the same affixes that are used to mark noun gender in the language, e.g. burukíntu burukínta ‘trouble maker’. Intensification is signaled by the affix **pagka-** or its shortened form **ka-** which is attached before the affixed or unaffixed adjective, e.g. dákwaq ‘big’- (pag)kadákwaq ‘very big’. The superlative degree in Butuanon is denoted by the inflectional morpheme **pinaka-**, attached before an affixed or unaffixed adjective, e.g. mabuyún ‘noisy’ - pinakamabuyún ‘noisiest’.

4.1.3.2 Derivational affixes

Adjectives can be derived from nouns, verbs, and other adjectives through the different derivational affixes. The said derivation can be represented by the following WFR :

$$[_{N/V/A} X] > [_{A} [_{N/V/A} X] + -DA]$$

1. **-an, -anan**

$$\text{WFR 18: } [_{N} X] > [_{ADJ} [_{N} X] + \text{-an/-anan}]$$

Meaning: ‘X’s extraordinary quality, character, or property’

sápíq ‘money’ + **-an** > sapíqan ‘moneeyed or rich’

gahúm 'power' + **-an** > gamhánan 'powerful'
 kusúg 'strength' + **-an** > kusugán>kúsgan 'strong'

2. hiN-

WFR 19: [V X] > [hiN- + [ADJ [VX]]]

Meaning: 'X's character or quality'

qinúm 'drink' + **hiN-** > hiñinúm 'drunkard'

qigúq 'hit' + **hiN-** > hiñigúq 'sharpshooter'

3. qika-

WFR 20: [N X] > [qika- + [ADJ [N X]]]

Meaning: 'ordinal number X'

qika- + duwa 'two' > qikaduwa 'second'

qika- + qupát 'four' > qikaqupát 'fourth'

4. -in-

WFR 21: [V X] > [ADJ [V X] + -in-]

Meaning: 'X-ed'

súgba 'to roast' + **-in-** > sinúgba 'roasted'

túwa 'to cook by boiling' + **-in-** > tinúwa 'boiled'

5. -in...-an

WFR 22: [N X] > [ADJ **-in-** + [N X] + **-an**]

Meaning: 'X-ed'

-in- + qasín 'salt' + **-an** > inasinán 'salted'

-in- + súkaq 'vinegar' + **-an** > sinukaqán 'vinegared'

6. ma-

WFR 23: [N X] > [ADJ **ma-** + [ADJ [N X]]]

Meaning: ‘X-y’

ma- + pisák ‘mud’ > mapisák ‘muddy’

ma- + buhángin ‘sand’ > mabuhángin ‘sandy’

4.2. Closed classes

Nominal markers and pronouns are two of the instances of the so-called closed classes in Butuanon.

4.2.1 Nominal markers

There are four sets of markers in Butuanon, that mark nouns in the sentence. These include the following: (1) focus argument markers, (2) non-focus argument markers, (3) peripheral argument markers, and (4) plural markers.

4.2.1.1 Focus argument markers

The focus argument markers consist of the morphemes **qan** marking a common noun and **si** marking a proper noun. The two nominal markers are generally placed before the focused nominal. Any nominal can be focused regardless of whether that nominal takes the role of an actor, patient, theme, goal, source, location, beneficiary, or instrument determined by the verb through an affix.

Actor focus

(37) milabak qan bátaq
 REAL-AF.run FM child
 ‘The child ran.’

(38) gaqiyák si lurína duqún
 REAL-AF.shout FM Lorena ADV-now
 ‘Lorena is shouting now.’

Patient focus

(39) pigabángaq huᵛ qidúq si qáya kagahápun
 REAL-PF.bite NFM dog FM Aya ADV-yesterday
 ‘The dog bit Aya yesterday.’

Theme focus

- (40) pigaqáskwat huŋ qusúg qaŋ bátaq duqún
 REAL-TF.carry NFM man FM child ADV-now
 ‘The man is carrying the child now.’

Goal focus

- (41) hatágan huŋ qusúg huŋ maŋá búwak qaŋ daága
 IRR-GF.give NFM man NFM PI flowers FM woman
 ‘The man will give the woman some flowers.’

Beneficiary focus

- (42) tunaqán ni maŋíyu huŋ qisdáqan qaŋ bisita
 IRR-BF.cook NFM Mario NFM viand FM visitor
 ‘Mario will cook the visitor some viand.’

Instrument Focus

- (43) qiqutúd níya huŋ pápil qaŋ gúntiŋ
 IRR-IF.cut 3SG-GEN NFM paper FM scissors.
 ‘S/he will cut the paper with the scissors.’

4.2.1.2. Non-focus argument markers

The non-focus argument (the nominal not chosen by the verb to be focused through an affix) is indicated by the non-focus markers **huŋ**, marking a common noun and **ni**, marking a proper noun, all preceding the nouns they mark.

- (44) siqabún **huŋ** bátaq qaŋ ságin
 IRR-PF.eat NFM child FM banana
 ‘The child will eat the banana.’

- (45) bukaqún **ni** nístur qaŋ maŋá níyug
 IRR-PF.break NFM Nestor FM PI coconut
 ‘Nestor will break the coconuts.’

4.2.1.3 Peripheral argument markers

The peripheral argument markers are those that mark non-core arguments. They typically include goal, instrument, recipient, beneficiary, time, locative, and manner (Dixon, 2010). In some literature, peripheral argument markers are also

referred to as obliques. The peripheral argument markers in Butuanon consist of **huŋ**, marking a common noun and **kaŋ**, marking a personal noun.

- (46) gahátag huŋ sápiq qaŋ mayúr huŋ maŋá kisunúgan
 REAL-AF.give NFM money FM mayor PAM PI fire victim
 ‘The mayor gave some money to the fire victims.’
- (47) gahatúd huŋ maŋa prútas si kárlu kaŋ lúrna
 REAL-AF.bring NFM PI fruit FM Carlo PAM Lorna
 kagahápun
 ADV-yesterday
 ‘Carlo brought Lorna some fruits yesterday.’

4.2.1.4 Plural markers

Plural markers in Butuanon are of three sets. The first set consists of **maŋá** and **sila si**, marking the focus-argument common noun and proper noun, respectively. The plural marker **maŋá** generally occurs after the marker **qaŋ** while the morphemes **silá si** precede the personal noun.

- (51) pigabilí ni mariya qaŋ maŋá sabanás kagahápun
 REAL-TF.buy NFM Maria FM PI blanket ADV-yesterday
 ‘Maria bought the blankets yesterday.’
- (52) pigaqiyákan ni huwán silá si mínda duqún
 REAL-TF.shout NFM Juan PI FM Minda ADV-now
 ‘Juan is shouting at Minda and her companions now.’

The second set of plural markers includes **maŋá** and **níla ni** marking the non-focus arguments. The plural marker **maŋá** is used to mark a non-focus argument common noun. It is generally placed between the marker **huŋ** and the common noun. The plural markers **níla ni**, on the other hand, occur before the personal noun.

- (53) maglabá huŋ maŋá sabanás si lína
 IRR-AF.wash NFM PI blanket FM Lina
 ‘Lina will wash the blankets.’
- (54) qisalibáy níla ni patrín qaŋ mga láta

IRR-TF.plant 3Pl-GEN Patring FM Pl can
 ‘Pating and her companions will throw away the cans.’

The third set of plural markers consists of **maṅá** and **kańíla** marking the common and personal noun peripheral arguments. The plural marker **maṅá** follows the marker **huṅ**, marking a common noun peripheral argument. The plural marker **kańíla**, on the other hand, is placed before a personal noun peripheral argument.

(55) gahátag huṅ sápiq qaṅ mayúr huṅ maṅá táqu
 REAL-AF.give NFM money FM mayor PAM Pl people

kagahápun

ADV-yesterday

‘The mayor gave some money to the people yesterday.’

(56) mokádtu silá kańíla pídru
 IRR-AF.go 3 Pl-NOM 3Pl-OBL Pedro

‘They will go to Pedro and his companions.’

4.2.2. Pronouns

There are three types of pronouns that can be used to replace nouns and these include: personal, demonstrative, and interrogative pronouns (see section 4.2.2).

4.2.2.1 Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns are divided into three cases – nominative, genitive, and oblique. The three cases are used as substitutes for animate focus and non-focus arguments. The following table summarizes the different personal pronouns in Butuanon.

Table 6 *Personal Pronouns in Butuanon*

Person and Number	Nominative		Genitive			Oblique	
	Full	Clitic	Postposed		Preposed	Full	Clitic
			Full	Clitic			
1 st person singular	qakú	ku	nákuq	kuq	qákuq	kanáku	nákuq
2 nd person singular	qikáw	kaw	nímu	mu	qímu	kanímu	nímu
3 rd person singular	siya		níya		qíya	kaníya	níya
1 st person plural, excl	kamí		námuq		qámuq	kanámuq	námuq
1 st person plural, incl	kitá	ta	nátuq		qátuq	kanátuq	nátuq
2 nd person plural	kamú	mu	níyu		qíyu	kaníyu	níyu
3 rd person plural	silá		níla		qíla	kaníla	níla

(57) misáka **qakú** huḡ níyug
 REAL-AF.climb 1SG-NOM NFM coconut
 ‘I climbed the tree.’

(58) bilqan **níla** huḡ maḡá búwak qaḡ maḡá daága
 IRR-BF.buy 3Pl-GEN NFM Pl flower FM Pl girl
 ‘They will buy the girls some flowers.’

(59) mubilí si qamílya huḡ páyuḡ pára **kanákuq**
 IRR-AF.buy FM Amelia NFM umbrella PREP 1SG-OBL
 ‘Amelia will buy an umbrella for me.’

4.2.2.2 Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns in Butuanon are divided into three sets expressing the following: (1) proximal space, 2) medial space, and (3) distal space. Each set has three forms indicating various cases which include nominative, genitive, and oblique cases. The following data show the demonstrative pronouns in Butuanon.

Table 7 *Demonstrative Pronouns in Butuanon*

Meaning	Nominative	Genitive	Oblique	
Proximal	qiní	haní	disaní	ḡaní
Medial	qiyán	haqún	disaqún	ḡanhaqún/ḡatún
Distal	qídtu/sádtu	hádtu	disádtu	ḡádtu

- (60) miqiyák **qiní**
 REAL-AF.shout DEMP-Proximal
 ‘This one shouted.’
- (61) pigatahíq **haqún** **níya** qañ kaába
 REAL-PF.sew DEMP-Medial 3SG-GEN FM dress
 ‘That one sewed the dress.’
- (62) mukádtu **ñádtu** manflaq si mariya
 IRR-AF.go DEMP-Distal Manila FM Maria
 ‘Maria will go over there to Manila.’

5. Syntax

The basic clause structure in Butuanon consists of a predicate and a focus argument. The predicate generally occurs sentence-initially. In the following examples, the verbs **miláksu** ‘jumped’ and **gasiqáb** ‘is eating’ serve as predicates in the sentences.

- (63) miláksu qañ qámbak
 REAL-AF.jump FM frog
 ‘The frog jumped.’
- (64) gasiqáb si mínda duqún
 REAL-AF.eat FM Minda ADV-now
 ‘Minda is eating now.’

Following the predicate in the basic clause is the focus argument which serves as the subject in the sentence. The focus argument is commonly filled by a noun phrase whose basic structure includes one of the following: a) **qañ** plus common noun, b) **si** plus proper noun, c) personal pronoun, and d) demonstrative pronoun.

- (65) migatunáq huñ qinisáb qañ kusiníru duqún
 REAL-AF.cook NFM toasted sago FM male cook ADV-now
 ‘The male cook is cooking toasted sago now.’

(66) mukádtu si nílo disaqún guwáñan
 IRR-AF.go FM Nilo DEMP-Medial forest
 ‘Nilo will go there to the forest.’

(67) muqinúm siyá huñ túbig
 IRR-AF.drink 3SG-NOM NFM water
 ‘S/he will drink water.’

(68) muqiyák qiní
 IRR-AF.shout DEMP-Proximal
 ‘This one will shout.’

5.1 Types of clauses

Clauses in Butuanon can be verbal or non-verbal. Verbal clauses are headed by verbs while non-verbal clauses have nouns, adjectives, or prepositional phrases as predicate heads.

5.1.1 Non-verbal clauses

Non-verbal clauses in Butuanon are of three types: (1) nominal, (2) adjectival, and (3) prepositional predicate clauses. Unlike verbal clauses, the non-verbal clauses are uninflected for focus, aspect, and mood and entail only one argument.

Nominal predicate clause

(69) pánday si qárman
 carpenter FM Arman
 ‘Arman is a carpenter.’

Adjectival predicate clause

(70) hayupúq qañ buhúk níya
 ADJ-short FM hair 3SG-GEN
 ‘His/her hair is short.’

Prepositional predicate clause

(71) pára huñ daága qañ mañá búwak
 PREP PAM girl FM Pl flower
 ‘The flowers are for the girl.’

5.1.2. Verbal clauses

Verbal clauses in Butuanon can be headed by one-argument, two-argument, or three-argument predicate verbs. Verbs are classified based on the number of participants they may accept.

5.1.2.1 One-argument verbal predicates

A verb that takes only one participant is said to be a one-argument verb. Three of the affixes that may be attached to one-argument verbs are the following: (1) **mu-**, (2) **mag-**, and (3) **maN**. The sole participant of the one-argument verbs usually play the role of an actor which serves as the focus argument as shown in the following examples.

(72) mulabák qakú
IRR-AF.run 1SG-NOM
'I will run.'

(73) mag-qusbaq qarj manjá bátaq njádtu dyim
IRR-AF.play FM Pl child DEMP-Distal gym
'The children will play at the gym over there.'

(74) manílhig si mında njádtu guwáq
IRR-AF.sweep FM Minda DEMP-Distal outside
'Minda will sweep outside over there.'

5.1.2.2 Two-argument verbal predicates

A two-argument verbal predicate is one that takes two participants consisting of a focus and a non-focus argument. The non-focus argument may immediately follow the verb (75a) comprising the verbal predicate phrase or the focus argument (75b) composing the focus argument phrase.

(75a) mubilí huŋ híkam si marí
IRR-AF.buy NFM mat FM Marie
'Marie will buy a mat.'

(75b) mubilí si marí huŋ híkam
IRR-AF.buy FM Marie NFM mat
'Marie will buy a mat.'

5.1.2.3 Three-argument verbal predicates

A three-argument verb is often times referred to as a ditransitive verb which requires a focus argument and two non-focus arguments. The two non-focus arguments may occur simultaneously with the verb in the predicate slot.

(76) pigabíłqan ni máryu huŋ maŋá búwak qaŋ daága
 REAL-BF.buy NFM Mario NFM Pl flower FM woman
 ‘Mario bought flowers for the woman.’

(77) qíqutúd huŋ qusúg huŋ káhuy qaŋ lúdyu
 IRR-IF.cut NFM man NFM branch FM bolo
 ‘The man will cut the tree with the bolo.’

5.2 Other types of clauses

This section presents other types of clauses headed by other elements and these include negative clauses and interrogative clauses.

5.2.1 Negative clauses

Negative clauses are generally introduced by negators. Butuanon has two types of negators consisting of **diiq** ‘not’ and **waáq** ‘no’.

5.2.1.1 Diiq ‘not’

The negator **diiq** ‘not’ is regarded as the most versatile negator because it negates all types of constructions – verbal and non-verbal. In verbal clauses, **diiq** precedes verbs expressed in the irrealis aspect.

(78a) muláksu qaŋ bátaq
 IRR-AF.jump FM child.
 ‘The child will jump.’

(78b) diiq muláksu qaŋ bátaq
 NEG IRR-AF.jump FM child.
 ‘The child will not jump.’

When **diiq** negates verbs in the realis aspect, it renders the negative clauses unacceptable as shown in the following examples.

- (78c) *diiq miláksu qan bátaq
 NEG REAL-AF.jump FM child.
 'The child did not jump.'
- (79) *diiq mikádtu ḡádtu butuwán si mírsi
 NEG REAL-AF.go DEMP-Distal Butuan FM Mercy
 'Mercy did not go to Butuan over there.'

Diiq likewise negates non-verbal clauses headed by a noun, an adjective, and a preposition. Just like verbal clauses, the negator is also found before non-verbal clauses.

- (80) diiq maqístru si dyun
 NEG teacher FM Jun
 'Jun is not a teacher.'
- (81) diiq mayumúq qan máḡga
 NEG ADJ-sweet FM mango
 'The mango is not sweet.'
- (82) diiq pára kan husí qan sawaá
 NEG PREP PAM Jose FM pants
 'The pants are not for Jose.'

5.2.1.2 Waáq 'no' or 'not'

Waáq is another type of negator. However, unlike **diiq**, **waáq** negates only verbal predicate clauses whose verbs may be expressed in realis aspect. **Waáq** may also be used with verbs in their infinitive form in lieu of the realis aspect.

- (83) waáq gaqusíbaq huḡ baskítbul qan maḡá qusúḡ duqún
 NEG REAL-AF.play NFM basketball FM Pl boy ADV-now
 'The boys are not playing basketball now.'
- (84) waáq miqiyák qan daága
 NEG REAL-AF.shout FM girl
 'The girl did not shout.'

- (85) waáq muqiyák qarj daága
 NEG INF-AF.shout FM girl
 ‘The girl did not cry.’

5.2.2 Interrogative clauses

Interrogative clauses may be content questions, yes-no questions, alternative questions, or confirmation questions.

5.2.2.1 Yes-no questions

Yes-no questions are questions that require yes or no answers. This type of question is formed with the particle question **ba** optionally inserted between the predicate and the focus argument.

- (86) qistudyánti ba qarj daága
 student PRT-Q FM girl
 ‘Is the girl a student?’

All yes-no questions elicit either a ‘yes’ **huqu** or ‘no’ **diiq** or **waáq** response.

- (87a) misiqáb ba siyá huñ kinabuú
 REAL-AF.eat PRT-Q 3SG-NOM NFM crunchy sago crumbles
 ‘Did she eat kinabuú?’

- (87b) huqú
 ‘Yes.’

- (87c) waáq
 ‘No.’

5.2.2.2 Confirmation questions

Confirmation questions are questions that are usually placed after affirmative or negative clauses, set off by a comma. Confirmation questions after affirmative clauses are formed using the negator **diiq** and the particle question **ba** in Butuanon. These may also be fronted without altering the meaning of the constructions when they are placed in the sentence-initial position.

(88a) mibilí siyá huŋ baqúnun diiq ba
 REAL-AF.buy 3SG-NOM NFM pomelo, NEG PRT-Q
 ‘She bought a pomelo, didn’t she?’

(88b) diiq ba mibilí siyá huŋ baqúnun
 NEG PRT-Q REAL-AF.buy 3SG-NOM NFM pomelo
 ‘She bought a pomelo, didn’t she?’

When propositions to be confirmed are expressed in negative clauses, the same confirmation questions consisting of the negator **diiq** and the particle **ba** are used.

(89a) diiq pa qabugádu si dyan diiq ba
 NEG PRT-yet lawyer FM John NEG PRT-Q
 ‘John isn’t a lawyer yet, is he?’

It is also possible that the confirmation question **diiq ba** may precede the negative clause yielding the same meaning as shown in example 89a.

(89b) diiq ba diiq pa qabugádu si dyan
 NEG PRT-Q NEG PRT-yet lawyer FM John
 ‘John isn’t a lawyer yet, is he?’

5.2.2.3 Alternative questions

Alternative questions in Butuanon consist of two parts. The first part is a yes-no question with interrogative intonation while the second part includes an alternative conjunction **qu** ‘or’ followed by the alternative element with a statement intonation.

(90) musiqáb kaw qu mag-qusíbaq
 IRR-AF.eat 2SG-NOM CONJ-or IRR-AF.play
 ‘Are you going to eat or play?’

(91) mahaábaq qañ kaába qu hayupúq
 ADJ-long FM dress CONJ-or short
 ‘Is the dress long or short?’

5.2.2.4 Information questions

Information questions are *wh*-questions which are used in eliciting various kinds of information. They are formed by fronting the interrogative pronoun which is followed optionally by a particle which is in turn followed by a focus argument. Interrogative pronouns in Butuanon consist of **ɲan** ‘what’, **sínqu** ‘who’, **kaɲ sinqu/kanínqu** ‘whose/to or for whom’, **kúnqu/gúnqu** ‘when’, **kaqín/diqín** ‘where’, **ɲánsi** ‘why’, **gánqu** ‘how’, and **pilá/mánqu** ‘how many/how much’.

(92) ɲan bay qapilyídu mu
 what PRT-Q-INDEF PRT family name 2SG-GEN
 ‘What is your family name?’

(93) sínqu ba qaɲ kaqíban mu
 who PRT-Q FM companion 2SG-GEN
 ‘Who is your companion?’

6. Conclusion

The phonemic inventory of Butuanon is composed of 16 consonants /p b t d k g q m n ɲ s h l r w y/, three vowel /i a u/, and two suprasegmental phonemes consisting of word stress / ‘ / and vowel length represented by two identical vowels. Vowel length is one of the distinctive features of Butuanon. It results from the deletion of /l/ when it is between identical vowels and in word-final position. Word stress in Butuanon is said to be phonemic. Some words in the language change their meanings as the stress shifts from one syllable to another. Butuanon also demonstrates morphophonemic processes consisting of assimilation, deletion, epenthesis, metathesis, and substitution.

Butuanon morphology is composed of open and closed classes. Open classes generally include nouns, verbs, and adjectives, which may occur affixed or unaffixed. Affixes associated with each word class are divided into inflectional and derivational affixes. Noun inflections that mark gender and diminutivity in Butuanon are all borrowed from Spanish and occur only in Spanish-loaned words. Verbs in Butuanon are generally inflected for focus, aspect, and mood. Two of the examples of closed classes in Butuanon are the nominal markers and pronouns.

As a predicate-initial language, Butuanon exhibits a clause structure consisting of a predicate and a focus argument. Clause types in Butuanon are divided into two: verbal and non-verbal. Verbal clauses are headed by a verb which is inflected for focus and aspect. A verbal predicate may contain a one-argument verb

which requires only one participant, a two–argument verb which allows two participants, or a three-argument verb which accepts three participants. Non-verbal clauses in Butuanon are headed by a noun, an adjective, or a preposition. The non-verbal predicate head can be distinguished from the verbal predicate head in that the former is not inflected for focus and aspect and that it only requires one argument. Other types of clauses in Butuanon include negative and interrogative clauses.

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