# THE CUYONON VERB SYSTEM: A FIRST APPROXIMATION

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## ABSTRACT

Cuyonon, a West Visayan language, is one of the eight indigenous languages of Palawan. Of the eight it is the most dominant one, since it is spoken over the province.

This paper is a descriptive analysis of Cuyonon verbal sentences. The underlying semantic relationship that exists between verbs and noun phrases is described using Fillmore's Case Grammar. Classification of verbs is made according to the environment that accepts them as reflective in the case frames and the semantic features that they co-occur with. A case frame is the total number of noun phrases that may co-occur with a verb relationship. It is a convenient way of putting all verbs that may have the same number and kinds of verb phrases together. Another area examined in the study is aspect. Aspect is the characterization of an event as begun or not begun, and if begun, as completed or not.

## 1.      Introduction

The 2000 Census of the Philippines identifies 72 languages spoken in private households in Palawan. The two largest language groups are Tagalog and Cuyunon, followed by Hiligaynon and Palaw'an. In the urban setting, Tagalog outnumbers Cuyunon, whereas in the rural areas, Cuyonon predominates.

The languages of Palawan can be divided into two main categories: those that are indigenous to Palawan and those that are "immigrant languages" McFarland (as cited by Quackenbush, 1989) lists six Palawan languages on the basis of genetic classification: Calamianon, Agutaynon, Batak, Tagbanua, Pinalawan (or Palawan) and Molbog. The first two form a northern grouping, the second four, a southern group. In addition to McFarland's list of six languages, two northern languages, Cuyonon and Cagayanon should be included in the list of indigenous category on the basis of geographic location alone. (Cuyonon is classified genetically as West Visayan and Cagayanon as North Manobo). The most important immigrant language by far is Tagalog. There are also sizable minorities of Cebuano, Ilocano and Karay'a along with many other lesser minorities.

## 2.    Purpose

The main purpose of this paper is to present the verb system of Cuyonon using Case Grammar. A general survey of the verb forms was made taking into consideration perfective, imperfective, contemplative, recent and intensive-recent perfective aspects, including affixes, case and nominal markers.

## 3.    The Cuyonon Case System

A basic Cuyonon sentence may be non-verbal or verbal. A non-verbal sentence consists of either nominal, adjectival or adverbial predicate and a topic. A verbal sentence on the other hand, consists of a verb and one or more nominal phrases (NP).

A verbal predicate with several nominal phrases does not have a rigid order. The components of a basic sentence may occur in two or more different orders without change in meaning and loss of grammaticality.
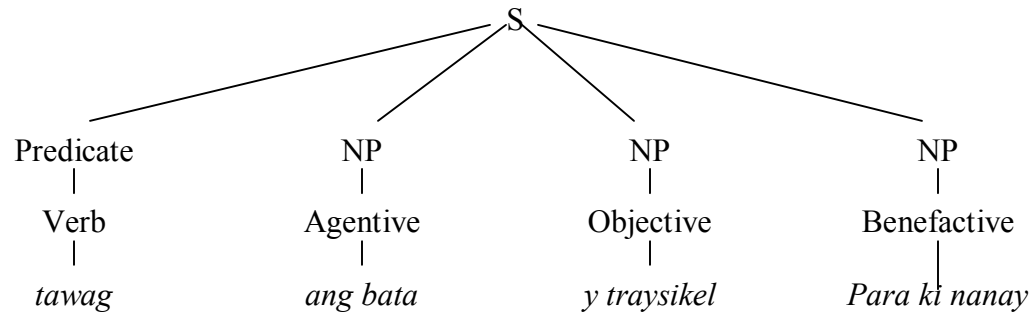
For example:

*Nagpopo    si Dodoy    y pomangga    sa solar.*
                  NP              NP                NP
 picked     Dodoy          mango       in the backyard.
'Dodoy picked mangoes in the backyard.'

The sentence could be: Nagpopo y pomangga si Dodoy sa solar. Or Nagpopo sa solar y pomangga  *si Dodoy.* (Note: When verbs which take *mag-* as prefix are inflected for aspect, both perfective and imperfective, the *nag-* and *naga-* become *ag-* and *aga-*, respectively, in rapid speech. There is *n* deletion.)

Each of the NPs that co-occurs with a verbal predicate can be described in terms of its relation to that particular verbal predicate through case. The case relation makes direct reference to underlying functional relations such as those expressed by agent, object, beneficiary, source, goal, etc., as they are conceived in relation to the verb. For example:

*Nagtawag* *ang bata* *y traysikel* *para* *ki nanay.*
called     the child    tricycle    for    mother
'The child hailed a tricycle for mother.'

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                              S
        ┌───────────┬─────────┴────────┬────────────┐
   Predicate       NP                NP             NP
       │            │                 │              │
     Verb        Agentive          Objective     Benefactive
       │            │                 │              │
     tawag       ang bata         y traysikel    Para ki nanay
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*Bata* is said to be in agentive relation to the verb, that is the agent or the doer of the action *tawag; traysikel* is in *objective* relation to the verb, and *nanay* is in benefactive relation to the verb because it is the in beneficiary of the action.

Another example is:

*Ingpanggeret* *y saging* *ang kotsilyo.*
was used to slice  banana    the knife.
'The knife was used to slice the banana.'

The sentence has the following underlying structure.

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                              S
        ┌────────────┬────────┴─────────┬────────────┐
   Predicate        NP                              NP
       │             │                               │
     Verb        Objective                      Benefactive
       │             │                               │
     geret         y saging                     ang kotsilio
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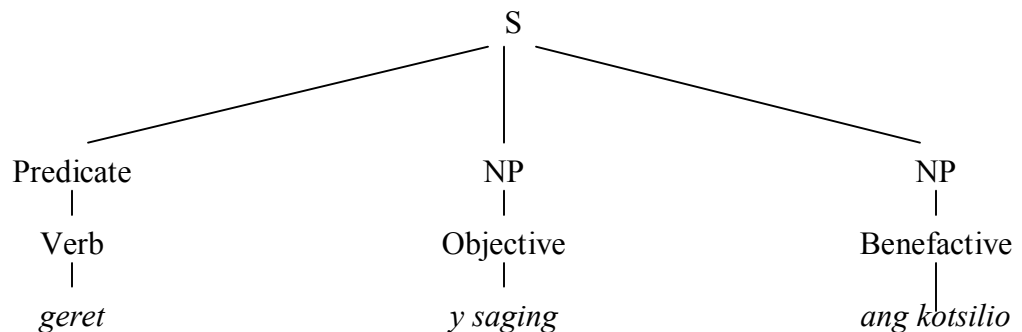
*Saging* is in objective case since it is the object of the verb *geret*, while *kosilio* is in an instrumental relation to the verb. It is the instrument used to cut *saging*.

**The Cases and Their Markers**

Cuyonon has many markers. These are agentive (A), objective (O), experiential (E), directional (D), locative (L), benefactive (B), victim (V), instrumental (I), causative (C), and associative (As).

Nouns are formally marked for case by case markers. The case of noun is indicated by such nominal markers as *si, ang, y, sa, para sa*, etc. The nominal markers *ang, ng, sa,* etc. signal the relationship each nominal complement in a sentence has with the verb and other nominals.

For example, in the sentence

*Nagloto      y pansit    si nanay    para sa mga bata.*
 cooked       pansit      mother      for the children.
‘Mother cooked pansit for the children.’

There are three NPs. These are *y pansit*, *si nanay* and *para sa mga bata*. The nominal *pansit* is preceded by *y, nanay by si,* and *bata* by *para sa*. These are nominal markers. Since *y pansit* is the object of *loto*, it is in objective case. *Y* becomes a nominal marker for objective case. *Si nanay* is the agent or performer of the action. Since *si* introduces nanay, *si* is an agentive case marker, while *para sa mga bata* is in benefactive case. *Para sa* is the benefactive marker.

If any of the NPs mentioned above becomes a topic or is made a topic, the marker always becomes *si* for proper nouns and *ang* for common nouns.

For example:

*Ingloto    ni nanay     ang pansit.*
 cooked    by mother    the pansit.
‘Mother cooked the pansit.’

*Inglotoan   ang mga bata y    pansit.*
 cooked      for the children    pansit.
‘Pansit was cooked for the children.’

In these sentences, a corresponding change is made on the verb through the verbal affixes. So when *y pansit* is topicalized to become *ang pansit, nagloto* becomes *inglotoan*. In these examples, the verbal affixes mark the grammatical relation between the verb and the topic (focused noun).

As per example given, when the agentive phrase is topicalized, it is generally marked by prefix *mag-* in the verb. Hence, the verb *loto* becomes *nagloto*.

When the objective phrase is topicalized, it can be marked in the verb by *ing* – as *Ingloto ni nanay ang pansit*. The benefactive phrase, on the other hand is marked in the verb by *ing - - an* as *Inglotoan ang mga bata y pansit*.

Affixes in Cuyonon verbs mark case relationships between the verb and the topic of sentence, while the markers (particles) introducing noun phrases mark the same kind of relationship, but do so between verbs and non-topic phrases.

The case relationships marked by the verbal affixes are the same type of relationship as those obtaining the non-topic nominal expressions and the verb.

The different examples that follow show how Cuyonon nouns are marked for case and how these noun phrases are topicalized and generally marked by verbal affixes to show the grammatical relation between and verb and a focused noun (topic).

1.  **The agentive case**. This refers to the performer, doer or agent of the action. It is the case of the typically animate perceived instigator of the action identified by the verb.

    The agentive case is indicated in the noun by the nominal marker *si* and *ang* as in:

    *Nag-adal   si Amy   y anang liksion.*
    studied      Amy       her lessons.
    'Amy studied her lessons.'

    *Nagaboroniog-boniog   ang mga tao   ki Mitra.*
    are united                   the people        with Mitra .
    'The people are united with Mitra.'

    *Nag-ampang   kami ren.*
    talked             we already.
    'We talked already.'

    The grammatical relation between the verbs and the topic is indicated by the verbal affix *mag-*.

2. **The objective case**. This refers to the case which identifies the object, being or place affected by the action or state identified by the verb.

    The objective case is indicated in the noun by the nominal marker *y* and in the verb basically by the verbal affix *ing-* as exemplified below.

NP Marker

> *Nagtimes      ako   <u>y koarta</u>.*
> saved/collected  I    money.
>  'I saved/collected money.'

> Magaopak ako   <u>y saging</u>.
> will peel    I     banana.
>  'I will peel the banana.'

Objective NP as topic

> <u>*Ingtimes ko <u>ang koarta</u>.*</u>
> 'saved    I  my money.'
>  I saved my money.

> <u>Ing</u>-opakan  ko     *ang saging*.
> peeled        I    banana.
> 'I peeled the banana.'

Other examples:

> *Nagbonga    ren      <u>ang pomangga</u>.*
> bore fruit   already  the mango.
> 'The mango (tree) bore fruits already.'

> *Naglopok    <u>ang ribintador</u>.*
>  burst        the firecracker.
>  'The firecracker exploded.'

> *Nagateyeb <u>ang eleng</u>.*
> rotate        top.
> 'The top is rotating.'

3.  **The experimental case**.  This refers to the case of the animate noun that is affected by the action or psychological state expressed/identified by the verb.

    > *Nagaagoanta pa ra y getem*     *ang mga Pilipino.*
    > suffering still          hunger    the Filipinos.
    >  'The Filipinos are still suffering from hunger.'

    > *Nademdeman   ko     si nanay.*
    >  remember       I      mother.
    >  " I remember mother.'

    > *Nagarispito   ako   sa mga malam.*
    > respect         I     the elders.
    >  'I respect the elders.'

    The experimental case shares with the agentive the use of markers *si* and *ang*.

4.  **The directional case**.  The directional case is the case of the animate or inanimate object from or toward which the action of the verb is directed.  This case actant occurs with verbs in motion.  This case may be divided into two: the directional source and the directional goal.

    a.  The directional source(DS).  This refers to the object or place which is the original or starting point of the action or state identified by the verb.

        > *Ingbeel ko  ang koarta     sa koartamonida.*
        > got     I   the  money    in the wallet.
        > 'I got the money from the wallet.'

        > *Nagpakitaw ako y  langgaw    sa akeng kamalay.*
        >  asked            I    vinegar     my neighbor.
        >  'I asked for a vinegar from my neighbor.'

        > *Nag-osoy  kita    sa mga Amirikano.*
        >  imitated      we     the Americans.
        >  'We imitated the Americans.'

    b.  The directional goal (DG). This refers to the case which indicated the object, or being or place toward which the action or state is directed or the actual recipient or end point indicated by the verb.

*Malagted      ang mga Santos <u>sa siodad</u>.*
will transfer  the Santoses in the city.
' The Santoses will transfer to the city.'

*Naglekas      ang mga   Muslim     <u>sa Luzon</u>.*
 transferred   the            Muslims   in Luzon.
 'The Muslims transferred to Luzon.'

*Nagpirma   tana  <u>sa pitision</u>.*
signed      he     in the perition.
 'He signed the petition.'

The directional NPs are marked by *sa* before common nouns and *ki* before proper nounds. *Sa-* pronouns or demonstratives can replace directional NPs marked by *sa/ki*.

                    A          DG
*Nagpakon si <u>Ana</u>   <u>sa iskwilahan</u>.*
     went      Ana   to school         Ana went
                      <u>ki Pipay</u>                     to Pipay.
                      <u>doto</u>.                        there.
                      <u>kananda</u>.                     to them.
 'Ana went to school'

5. **The locative case**. This refers to the location or place where the action occurs.

*Nagkatorog   si Lolo   <u>sa saheg</u>.*
slept          lolo     on the floor.
 'Lolo (grandfather) slept on the floor.'

*Magaeseb      ang mga bata    <u>sa soba</u>.*
 will swim    the children      in the river.
  'The children will swim in the river.'

*Nagaistar  sanda  <u>sa mi dagat</u>.*
Live       they    on the seashore.
'They live on the seashore.'

The locative case is indicated in the noun by the marker *sa* and in the verb by the case-marking affixes *ing - - an*. The following are the examples:

Nominal Marker

> *Nagkatorog  ako  sa katri.*
> slept            I     in bed.
>  'I slept in bed.'

> *Nagpakon ako sa palingki.*
> went        I     to the market.)
>  'I went to the market.'

Locative NP as Topic

> *Ingkatorogan   ko   ang katri.*
>  slept               I     on the bed.
>  'I slept on the bed'

> *Ingpakonan   ko ang palingki.*
>  went              I   to  market.
>  'I went to market'

There is a distinction between a place as DG and a place as locative. A place as DG is an obligatory case or part of the sentence, whereas, a place as locative case is optional. It may be there or not.

Take the following examples:

> *Mabalik    tana   sa probinsia.*
> go back    he      to the province.
>  'He will go back to the province.'

*Sa probinsia* is an obligatory constituent of the sentence. It is the place where the topic siya (she) will go back to. The name is true in the sentence

> *Magalagted  ang mga Santos     sa siodad.*
> transfer        the Santoses          to the city.
> 'The Santos family will transfer to the city.'

*Sa siodad* is the goal of Santos' transfer. When one says she is to transfer, the question that follows is where? The answer to this query is a place which is the DG.

In the example, *Nakatorog si Lolo sa saleg, sa saleg* tells us of the place. This is the locative case. This case, however, may be deleted in the sentence. It is optional. In *Maeseb ang mga bata sa soba, sa soba* is the place of the action. Just like the preceding example, it is optional. Besides, in the last sentence, when one thinks of swimming, what comes to mind is the place where there is water, as sea, river, pool, etc. And it is understood, although the additional specification makes the sentence clearer.

6. **The benefactive case**. This expresses the animate being for whose benefit the action is carried out.

> *Nagbakal   ako   y bolong    para ki   Nene.*
>  bought             medicine    for       Nene.
>   'I bought medicine for Nene.'

> *Nagkiwit ako y  pomongga   para sa mga    bisita.*
> (Picked    I       mangoes     for the          visitors.)
>   'I picked mangoes for the visitors'

> *Para ki  Dong  ang   ingbedbed   kong   kalilies.*
> (For       Dong  the    sewed        I        pants.)
> 'The pants I sewed is for Dong.'

The benefactive case is indicated in the noun by the marker *para sa / para ki* and in the verb by the case-marking affixes *ing - - an*.

*Para sa* has the specification [ + common ] which means that the noun following it must be a common noun. *Para ki*, on the other hand, has the specification [+ proper], hence, the noun following it must be a proper noun.

Nominal Marker

> *Nagbedbed   tana y   kalilies   para   sa batang   Vietnamese.*
>  sewed            he/she  pants    for the children    Vietnamese.
>   'He/she sewed pants for the Vietnamese children.'

> *Nagsegnad   ako   para ki  Lola     y anang  iyapon.*
>  cooked rice  I       for       Lola      her       dinner.
>  'I cooked rice for Lola for her dinner.'

If the action carried out is negative, the beneficiary specifically becomes a victim.

7. **The victim case**. The case which designated the being suffers the consequences of the action identified by the verb.

> *Ingtakawan     ang mga Santos     y mga gamit sa balay.*
> (Rubbed          the        Santoses    home appliances.
> 'The Santoses were robbed of home appliances.'

> *Ingdaeg  kami.*
> Lost      we.
> 'We lost.'

> *Nasonogan  y  balay   si Dang Maria.*
> Burned     the house  of  Miss Maria.
> 'The house of Miss Maria was/got burned.'

8. **The instrumental case**.  This refers to the tool or force or instrument involved in the action or state identified by the verb. I verbs identified, the instrumental actant is at the same time body-part of the agent and is not expressed.

> *Ingkirayan (sa mapapagitan ng mata) na anang  "cruch".*
> Winked                              his/her      crush..
>  'He/she winked at her crush.'

> *Ingsontok (sa pamamagitan ng kamay) ni Tito si Dodoy.*
>  Box (by fist)                        by Tito   Dodoy.
>  'Toto boxed Dodoy.'

> *Nag-arek (sa pamamagitan ng labi) ako ki Baby.*
>  Kissed                            I   the Baby.
>  'I kissed Baby.'

*Kiray* (wink), *sontok* (box) and arek (kiss) are examples of verb roots with built-instrumental case.  Cook (quoted in Ladera) calls instrumental cases as being lexicalized.

The instrumental case is indicated in the verb by the case marking- verbal affix *ipang-*.

> *Ipangkiwit mo ang bolo.*
>   (pick/gather using a stick (made of bamboo)
>   (You) Pick (fruits) with the use of stick/bamboo.

*Ipangpotos mo   ang  papil   na dan.*
  use as wrapper      paper   that.
  'Use that paper as wrapper.'

9.  **The causative case.**  The case which refers to the reason why the action or state identified by the verb has, is, or will occur.

    The causative case is indicated in the noun by the marker *samoro* or *t*enged (because of) and in the verb by the case-marking verbal affixes *ingka – or ing -*.

    Nominal Marker

        *Nasilag tana <u>tenged sa</u>   ingboliawan    ko  ang mga tio.*
        mad   he   because of  freed/released  I   the dogs.
        'He got mad because I freed the dogs.'

        *Nagtambek  tana  <u>samoro</u>  nagainem   tana gatas.*
        got fat      she   because drinks     she  milk.
        'She got fat because she drinks milk.'

    Causative NP as Topic

        <u>Ingka</u>silag              na   <u>ang pagboliaw  ko</u>  y ang mga tio.
        caused to get mad   him  freed             I     the dogs.
        'The (my) release of dogs caused him to get mad.'
        'She got mad because I released/freed the dogs.'

        *Ingtambek  na anang pag-inem  y  gatas. or <u>Ing</u>tambek*
        made fat          her    drinking   of  milk
        'Milk made her fat/stout.'

    There are very few examples for this case using the verbal affix *ingka-* or *ing -*

10. **The associative case**.  This case expresses the animate being who joins or associates with another animate being in carrying out the action identified by the verb.

The associative case is indicated in the verb by the marker or verbal affix *magpakig- -an*.

Examples are:

<u>*Nagpakigbailian*</u> *pa*      *tana*.
Joined dancing activity    she.
'She joined the dancing activity.'

<u>*Nagpakigbaritaan*</u> *anang*     *nanay*  *kanamen*.
Chatted            his/her    mother  with us.
 'His/her mother joined our chitchats.'

<u>Nagpakig</u>-arigl<u>oan</u>    anang   tatay kanamen.
Made peace         his/her   father with us.
'His/her father made peace/reconciled with us.'

Cuyonon Case Markers

| <u>Case</u> | <u>Case Markers in the NP</u> | <u>Verbal Affixes Indicating Case Relation Between Verb and Topic</u> |
|---|---|---|
| Agentive | *ang/si; and mga/nanda* | *Mag-, ma-, maka-* |
| Objective | *y/ni; y mga/anda* | *Ing-, Ing-, -an* |
| Locative | *sa/ki y mga/kanda* | *Ing-, -an* |
| Benefactive | *para sa/para ki* | *Ing-, -an* |
| Instrumental | *para sa mga/para kanda* | *Ingpang-, i-* |
| Causative | *samoro/tenged* | *Ingka-* |
| Associative | | *Magpakig-, -an* |
| Directional | <u>*sa*</u> before common nous | |
| | *ki* before proper nouns | |

Case and Topic

In the sentence

1. *Nagboat* <u>si tatay</u>   <u>y balay-balay</u>   <u>sa oto</u>   <u>para kanda Baby</u>.
          NP         NP         NP         NP
      Agent     Object     Location    Beneficiary

     The verbal predicate *nagboat* (made) co-occurs with the four NPs, each having a case relation to the verb; *tatay* (father) is the agent, *balay-balay* (toy-house) is the object, *oto* (outside) is the place or location of the action while *Baby* is the beneficiary.

     The sentence above has a variant:

2. *Ingboat* <u>ni tatay</u>   <u>ang balay-balay</u>   <u>sa oto para</u>   <u>kanda Baby</u>.
           NP          NP         NP         NP
       Agent      Object     Location    Beneficiary

     Sentence 2 has the same grammatical elements as sentence 1, the verbal predicate *ingboat* co-occur with the four NPs *tatay* as agent, *balay-balay* as object, *oto* as location and *Baby* as beneficiary.
     Another variant of sentence 1 is:

3. *Ingboatan* <u>ni tatay</u>   <u>y balay-balay</u>   <u>sanda Baby</u>   <u>sa oto</u>.
            NP         NP         NP        NP
       Agent      Object     Beneficiary   Location

     As in sentence 2, the NPs in sentence 3 have the same kind of case relationship: *ni taytay* stands in agentive relation, to *ingboatan*; and y balay-balayan in an objective relation, and *sanda baby* in benefactive relation, and *sa oto* in locative relation.

4. **Concluding Statement**

     It is clear from the foregoing examples and discussion that case relation between NPs and verbal predicate in Cuyunon remain constant although the forms of the noun markers may change from one sentence variant to another.

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