

## Accent in Bikol\*

Alan M. Stevens

Like other Philippine languages, Bikol<sup>1</sup> has a contrastive accent. This means that the position of the accent in one syllable is meaningful against its position in another syllable. The term "accent" as used here is not equivalent to stress, but is rather a combination of phonetic features which will be discussed below. Contrasts between the presence and absence of accent can be seen in the following examples (accent is marked acute):<sup>2</sup>

<i>sálug</i> 'river'	<i>salug</i> 'floor'
<i>táú</i> 'person'	<i>tau</i> 'to give'
<i>kakánun</i> 'food'	<i>kakanun</i> 'be eaten'
<i>kákakanun</i> 'will be eaten'	<i>kakakánun</i> 'way of eating'
<i>máuran</i> 'will rain'	<i>mauran</i> 'rainy'
<i>máyáman</i> 'will be rich'	<i>mayáman</i> 'rich'.

Note that a word may contain more than one accented syllable. As has been seen above, accent may also vary morphophonemically.<sup>3</sup> Further examples are:

<i>lakaw</i> 'walk'	<i>lakawlákaw</i> 'walk around'
<i>uma</i> 'field'	<i>paráuma</i> 'farmer'.

Accent is limited in appearance to an open syllable, that is, a syllable ending in a vowel. It cannot occur on the closed first syllable of words such as: *igdi*, 'here'; *haqbun*, 'steal'; *sinda*, 'they'; or on the closed final syllable of *uran*,

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<sup>1</sup> The dialect of Naga, Camarines Sur, forms the basis for the data of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> In the transcription used here, *q* indicates glottal stop. It is not written in predictable positions such as morpheme initial and intervocalic. Details of the segmental phonology, or the sounds of vowels and consonants, will be given in a future publication.

<sup>3</sup> Morphophonemics is the study of the shapes of morphs, or the minimally meaningful units in a language, in various occurrences. An example of a morph is *w a y f* (wife), which changes into another morph, *w a y f v* in the plural (wives); in this case number brings about the change. A morpheme is a unit that is a class of morphs.

'rain'. It is also extremely rare on the final syllable of a word if it is an open syllable. An example in this position can be found in the contrast between *sa*, 'in, on', and *sá*, 'marker before plural personal name'; e.g., *sá Pedro*, 'Pedro and company'. An accented syllable, however, is automatic on a word final open vowel in certain syntactic positions, as will be seen below.

The root in Bikol is generally composed of two or three syllables. Root accent, if it occurs, is therefore usually on the second to the last, or penultimate, syllable. It occurs on the third to the last syllable, or antipenult, in only a few loan words. Given the above limitations, there is no way of predicting the presence or absence of accent on the root, or on prefixes ending with an open syllable. Examples of the latter contrast are:

<i>ma-</i> 'adjectival'	<i>má-</i> 'future'
<i>na-</i> 'past potential'	<i>ná-</i> 'imperfective'
<i>naka-</i> 'past potential'	<i>naká-</i> 'past accidental'.

If the root and prefix accents are given, however, the presence and location of accent in derived forms is largely predictable from a set of morphophonemic rules; and once the location of accents is known, the correct phonetics can be produced by another simple set of rules.<sup>4</sup> These rules will form the main body of this paper.

### *Morphophonemic Rules*

It is first necessary to assign accents to some roots and prefixes in the dictionary. For example:

<i>sálug</i> 'river'	<i>salug</i> 'floor'
<i>káwat</i> 'play'	<i>kakan</i> 'eat'
<i>yáman</i> 'rich'	<i>inum</i> 'drink'
<i>ádal</i> 'study'	<i>atig</i> 'dirty'
<i>bása</i> 'read'	<i>rani</i> 'near'
<i>súrat</i> 'write'	<i>rayug</i> 'far'
<i>báyad</i> 'pay'	<i>lima</i> 'five'
<i>má-</i> 'future'	<i>ma-</i> 'adjectival'
<i>ká-</i> 'accidental'	<i>ka-</i> 'potential'.

*Segmental morphophonemic rules.* In the formation of derivatives, the first step is to go through the segmental morphophonemics, or those changes in the form of morphemes which do not involve the accent, e.g., changes in the vowels and consonants. Without going into the detailed problems involved, a number of examples follow.

<sup>4</sup> Phonetics is that branch of linguistics concerned with speech sounds, sound production and combination, and sound representation by written symbols.

If a suffix beginning with a vowel is added to a root ending with a vowel, an *h* appears between them:<sup>5</sup>

*bása-un* → *básah-un* 'be read'.

Final *d* changes to *r* in some roots before a suffix beginning with a vowel:

*báyad-an* → *báyar-an* 'be paid'.

Some unaccented vowels are deleted:

*gakud-an* → *gakd-an* 'be tied'.

Another type which involves generating an intervocalic *q* and vowel deletion is:

*tau-an* → *taqw-an* 'be given'

*kaag-an* → *kaqq-an* 'be placed on'.

If a word ends with a certain phoneme, or speech sound, and the next word begins with the same phoneme, the first one is deleted in rapid speech:

*má-uran na* → *má-ura na* 'will rain now'

*mag-kakan na* → *mag-kaka na* 'eat now'

*má-duman na aku* → *má-duma na aku* → *má-duma n aku* 'I will go now'.

The above are, of course, only a few examples of the many segmental morphophonemic rules which must be given in a complete description.

*Proper location of accents in derived words.* The next set of rules assigns the accent or accents to their proper location in the derived word or phrase. There are a number of possible ways of doing this. The least insightful would be to simply assign accent to individual words. Another possibility would be to note the change of accent or lack of change of accent which each affix occasioned, i.e., assign an accent process to each affix. In his study of Tagalog, Bloomfield (1917) worked very much along these lines. For example, in Bikol, the verbal suffix *-un* shifts the accent, if there is one, one syllable to the right, e.g.:

*bása-un* → *básah-un* (by previous rule) → *basáh-un* 'be read'

*kakan-un* → *kakan-un* 'be eaten'.

On the other hand, the nominal prefix *para-*, 'professional agent', deletes an existing root accent and creates one on the penultimate, or second to the last, syllable if there is no root accent, e.g.:

*para-lútuq* → *para-lutuq* 'cook'

*para-uma* → *para-úma* 'farmer'.

There is still another way of handling these changes. This would involve assuming that what we have been calling a root with no accent has one on

<sup>5</sup> Note that what appears on the right side of the arrow is not the final stage in the derivation of the word. At this point in the process of derivation, for example, the accent of some of the words that follow is in the wrong place.

its final syllable. This accent is then shifted left in such formations as *para-umá* → *para-úma*, 'farmer'; and shifted right in *para-lútuq* → *para-lutúq*, 'cook'.

This position will multiply the number of entities on which accent must be written, but it will simplify the form of the accent location rules; e.g., the rule for *para-*, 'professional agent', can then be stated: shift accent from one of the last two syllables of the stem to the other syllable.

We reject this position, however, since it will mean that our previous statement that accent does not occur on closed syllables will no longer be correct. At some later point, an accent on closed and final syllables would have to be deleted.<sup>6</sup> Such a rule would also delete the accent on *sá*, 'plural personal marker', and related words to which it properly belongs, unless we choose to treat these words not as separate words, but as preclitics, or words which cannot be used alone but are added in front of independent words.<sup>7</sup>

We would like to suggest a modification of Bloomfield's way of handling accent location, namely, the assigning of each affix to an accent type. In the dictionary and grammar each affix is assigned a number which refers to a rule in the grammar. The accent location rules are thus given independently of individual affixes. Only a small number of patterns occur. There are three major types (A,B,C) and one minor type (D). The major types have slightly different rules depending on whether a prefix or a suffix is being added to the stem (the form to which the affix is added).

A few general statements are necessary first. The term "prefix" covers prefixes, infixes, and reduplications. The term "suffix" covers suffixes and circumfixes, i.e., syllables added to a stem simultaneously as a prefix and a suffix. If an accent is imposed on a closed syllable by the following rules, the rule is voided and the accent, if any, remains where it was; e.g., *para-haqbun* would yield *para-háqbun* by the rules. The rule is voided and the correct form is *para-haqbun*, 'thief'. In the rules to be given below, the two *x*'s refer to the last two vowels of the stem. For ease of reading, only the stem is italicized in the examples.

In type A, "same," the accent is on the same-number syllable from the end of the derivative as in the stem, if possible, i.e., taking into account the non-occurrence of accent on final or closed syllables. The rules are:

A1 prefix.  $\acute{z}z \rightarrow \acute{z}z$

$zz \rightarrow zz$

A2 suffix.  $\acute{z}z \rightarrow \acute{z}z$

$zz \rightarrow zz$ .

<sup>6</sup> Or the phonetic statements about accent would have to be seriously changed.

<sup>7</sup> There is some evidence for this in *súisay*, 'who', and *sávisay*, 'who (pl.)', where *si* and *sá* seem to be part of the word and not separate words, and in the fact that these two elements cannot appear before pause.

For example:

- A1. mag-*súrat* → mag-súrat 'to write'  
*k-in-akan* → k-in-akan 'was eaten'  
 A2. *súrat-an* → surát-an 'be written to'  
*kakan-un* → kakan-un 'be eaten'.

This type has by far the largest number of members. Over 50 prefixes and 15 suffixes follow this pattern.<sup>8</sup>

In type B, "reverse," accentuation is on the opposite-number syllable (considering only the last two syllables) from the end of the derivative as in the stem, if possible. The rules are:

- B1 prefix. *íz* → *zz*  
*zz* → *íz*  
 B2 suffix. *íz* → *zz*  
*zz* → *zíz*.

For example:

- B1. para-*lútuq* → para-lutuq 'cook'  
 para-*uma* → para-úma 'farmer'  
 B2. nag-*súrat-an* → nag-surat-an 'wrote each other'  
 nag-*hiling-an* → nag-hiling-an 'saw each other'.

Only one prefix, *para-*, 'professional agent', and about 15 suffixes belong to this type.

In type C, "penult," the accent appears on the penultimate syllable, if possible, regardless of where it was in the stem. About 15 prefixes and eight suffixes belong to this type. The rules are:

- C1 prefix. *íz* → *íz*  
*zz* → *íz*  
 C2 suffix. *íz* → *zz*  
*zz* → *zíz*.

Examples are:

- C1. nag-para-*súrat* → nag-para-súrat 'wrote often'  
 nag-para-*kakan* → nag-para-kákan 'ate often'  
 C2. ma-*liput-un* → ma-lipút-un 'very cold'  
 ma-*kusug-un* → ma-kusúg-un 'very strong'.

Type D, "delete," is very rare, and some speakers do not use such prefixes or null affixes. In this type, any existing stem accent is deleted. The rules are:

- D prefix. *íz* → *zz*  
*zz* → *zz*.

<sup>8</sup> The figures given here are minimal numbers since other affixes than those in my corpus may exist.

Examples are:

- túrug* (plus null affix) → *turug* 'asleep'.  
*báyad* (plus null affix) → *bayad* 'paid'  
*nápa-húlug* → *nápa-hulug* 'fell down'.  
*nápa-luwas* → *nápa-luwas* 'made to go out'.

If a word has more than one affix, in certain cases the accent location rules must be applied in a particular order, e.g.:

- haqbun-an* → *haqbun-an* 'be stolen from' [type A]  
*para-haqbun-an* → *para-haqbún-an* 'be constantly stolen from' [type C].

If the derivation were done in the opposite order, the resulting form would be incorrect.

- para-haqbun* → *para-haqbun* [type C]  
*para-haqbun-an* → *para-haqbun-an* [type A] (incorrect).

The ordering generally agrees with one's feeling about which affixes are most closely tied to the root. In the above example, *-an* is closer to the root than *para-*.

In some cases, combinations of affixes belong to a class different from that of the affixes alone; e.g., the infix *-Vr-*, 'plural' (where *V* is the same vowel as the first stem vowel), and the prefix *Curu-*, 'diminutive, not serious' (where *C* is the same consonant as the first stem consonant), are both type A affixes, but together they are usually type C. For example, given the stem *pig-salak*, 'was mixed', we have the following derivatives:

- pig-s-ar-alak* 'were mixed (pl.)' [type A]  
*pig-suru-salak* 'was mixed a bit' [type A]  
*pig-suru-s-ar-álak* 'were mixed a bit (pl.)' [type C].

It is now necessary to generate the morpheme *R*, reduplication. If *R* is adjacent to an accented prefix, the prefix accent is deleted, e.g.:

- ná-R-hiling* → *na-R-hiling* 'being seen'  
*nag-R-ká-hiling-an* → *nag-R-ka-hilíng-an* 'seeing each other'.

Note that elsewhere an accented prefix may precede an accented syllable, e.g., *má-súrat* 'will write'.

The segmental form of *R* is the initial (consonant) vowel of the following syllable. The reduplication syllable is accented if the following syllable is not and vice versa, e.g.:

- nag-R-kakan* → *nag-ká-kakan* 'is eating'  
*nag-R-súrat* → *nag-su-súrat* 'is writing'.

Note that it is necessary to apply the reduplication rule after the rules on accent location; e.g., the suffix *-an*, 'reciprocal', belongs to type B:

- nag-R-súrat-an* → *nag-R-surat-an* → *nag-sú-surat-an*  
 'are writing to each other'.

If the rules had been applied in the opposite order, we would have an incorrect form:

*nag-R-súrat-an* → *nag-su-súrat-an* → *nag-su-surat-an* (incorrect).

The last rule of accent location concerns a kind of word which has been called "enclitic," or a syllable which cannot stand alone that is added to the end of independent words. In certain cases a word preceding an enclitic gets an accent on its final vowel. If a polysyllabic word which is not accented on its penult and which ends with a vowel precedes a monosyllabic enclitic<sup>9</sup> beginning with a consonant, its final vowel gets accented, e.g.:

*igwa pa* → *igwá pa* 'there still is some'

*pira man* → *pirá man* 'and how many'

*ná-kua nya* → *ná-kuá nya* 'was found by him'.

In one exceptional case the first word in such a sequence is itself a monosyllabic enclitic: *na man* → *ná man*, 'already also', which is in contrast to *naman*, 'again'.

The above rule also applies where the correct environment has come about as a result of the loss of a consonant in rapid speech (see above p. 177). For example:

*má-uran na* → *má-ura na* → *má-urá na* 'will rain now'

*mag-kakan na* → *mag-kaka na* → *mag-kaká na* 'eat already'.

These rules account for such distinctions as:

*má-duman aku* 'I'll go'

*má-duman na aku* → *má-dumá n aku* 'I'm going now'.

*Phonetic rules.* These rules have generated the correct placement of accents. It only remains to produce the phonetics. Accented vowels are high-pitched, long, and stressed in contrast to unaccented vowels. If two accented vowels occur in the same word, the first has these characteristics to a greater degree than the second. An accentless phrase is stressed on its final syllable. In addition, closed syllables optionally have stress, though it is weaker than that on an accented syllable in the same phrase. This is marked with a grave accent in the following examples: *igdi*, 'here'; *an salùg na ini*, 'this floor'.

If there is no immediately following closed or accented syllable, a secondary accent may also appear on the initial unaccented syllable of a word containing more than three syllables, e.g., *pàrigusàn*, 'bathing place'; *kàrakánan*, 'dining room'. The presence and level of stress on unaccented syllables is also probably intonationally determined, but the conditions for this are not yet clear.

These rules will, we believe, handle the suprasegmental, or prosodic, phenomena of Bikol except for intonation. It must be noted, though, that

<sup>9</sup> The main one-syllable enclitics in Bikol are *na*, *pa*, *daw*, *man*, and the one-syllable pronouns *ku*, *mu*, *mi*, *ta*, *ka*, and *nya*. The last one, *nya*, is optionally either enclitic or not enclitic.

irregularities and variations, both individual and dialectal, have not been mentioned; for example, in Legaspi the reduplication syllable *R* is always unaccented, whether the following syllable is accented or not. We think this approach will be useful not only for Bikol but also for Tagalog, which appears to have a larger number of patterns, and other Philippine languages, and will provide a basis for a comparative study of suprasegmental phenomena in these languages.

#### REFERENCE

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