

The Angry Register of the Bikol Languages of the Philippines¹

Jason William Lobel
University of Hawai'i

This paper offers an overview of the angry speech register in three of the languages of the Bikol Region of the Philippines, including its usage, its historical development and reconstructibility, and the processes by which its forms were derived.

1. Register and Bikol

Register,² or *speech register*, refers to “situationally-defined varieties” of a language (Biber 1995:7), as opposed to *dialects*, which are defined by geographical areas or social groups of speakers. Biber (ibid.) quotes both Ure and Ferguson in his *Dimensions of Register Variation*: “The register of a language comprises the range of social situations recognized and controlled by its speakers-situations for which appropriate patterns are available (Ure 1982:5). Register variation is the linguistic difference that correlates with different occasions of use (Ferguson 1994:16).” In the case of the Bikol languages, one of these “social situations” or “occasions of use” is the situation of being angry.

A considerable amount of work has been done about register in English, and work has also been done on other languages like Korean and Somali (Biber 1995). However, little if any literature is readily available on the kind of speech register that concerns us here, i.e., a speech register defined by the speaker’s emotional state.

This rather peculiar feature of the languages of the Bikol Region-absent from their closest relatives like Tagalog and Cebuano-consists of a parallel strata of synonyms for over 100 nouns, verbs, and modifiers,³ a sample of which is illustrated in Table 1 below.

¹ I am honored to have this opportunity to dedicate this article to Dr. Laurie Reid, whose contribution to our knowledge of Philippine languages and cultures has set a standard that future generations can only hope to achieve. Many thanks are due to the following people for their invaluable help in the writing of this paper: Grace Bucad Lobel, Manay Glen Newhall, Esting Jacob, Cheryl Mercado, Michelle B. Bigueja, and Dr. Dominga Portugal, who provided data; Dr. R. David Zorc, Dr. Hsiu-chuan Liao, Dr. Carl Rubino, and Chris Sundita, who provided helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

² This usage of “register” should not be confused with the completely different usage for many Mon-Khmer languages and even Austronesian languages like Western Cham, in which “voice register” or just “register” is used to describe phonemic differences in vowel pitch, breathiness, and tongue height (cf. Headley 1991 and Gregerson 1976, among others).

³ See Appendix 1 at the end of this paper for a full list of meanings that are represented in the angry register.

Table 1. Some angry words and their normal register equivalents

		Naga	Nabua	Buhi	Bulan	Old Bikol
‘cat’	(normal)	<i>ikós</i>	<i>opós</i>	<i>ongaw</i>	<i>kutíng*</i>	<i>ikós</i> ⁴
	(angry)	<i>kurasmág</i>	<i>kurasmág</i>	<i>kurasmág</i>	<i>kusmág*</i>	—
‘dog’	(normal)	<i>áyam</i>	<i>ayám</i>	<i>ayám</i>	<i>áyam</i>	<i>áyam</i>
	(angry)	<i>damayô</i> ⁵	<i>dayô</i>	<i>dayô</i>	<i>asbû</i>	<i>ngarabngáb</i>
		<i>dayô</i>		<i>damayô</i>		
		<i>dusngáb</i>		<i>ngabngáb</i>		
‘eat’	(normal)	<i>kakán</i>	<i>kaón</i>	<i>kaón</i>	<i>káon</i>	<i>kakán</i>
	(angry)	<i>sibâ</i>	<i>sibâ</i>	<i>sibâ</i>	<i>lamon</i>	<i>sóngay</i>
		<i>hablô</i>	<i>ablô</i>	<i>ablô</i>		
		<i>gutók</i>	<i>amíl</i>	<i>amíl</i>		
		<i>habháb</i>	<i>abô</i>			
‘hungry’	(normal)	<i>gútom</i>	<i>alóp</i>	<i>ponáw</i>	<i>gútom</i>	<i>gútom</i>
	(angry)	<i>guslók</i>	<i>gulsók</i>	<i>gəlsək</i>	<i>guslók</i>	<i>golsók</i>
		<i>gustók</i>				<i>gotók</i>
					<i>gostók</i>	
‘woman’	(normal)	<i>babáye</i>	<i>babayí</i>	<i>babayí</i>	<i>babáye</i>	<i>babáye</i>
	(angry)	<i>babaknít</i>	<i>babaknít</i>	<i>babaknít</i>	<i>babaknít</i>	<i>babaknít</i>
		<i>siknít</i>	<i>siknít</i>	<i>siknít</i>		
			<i>simiknít</i>			

*these two forms are from the dialect of Sorsogon town, not Bulan

⁴ To avoid confusion and facilitate reading, the spellings of Old Bikol entries have been regularized to follow modern Bikol spelling. However, I have not altered the spellings of the graphemes <a, e, i, o, u> when used to represent vowel phonemes, even though Lisboa uses both <e> and <i> to represent /i/ and both <o> and <u> to represent <u>.

⁵ Following a convention used by many Philippine linguists, a circumflex accent mark on an orthographically word-final vowel indicates the combination of final syllable stress and a word-final glottal stop; a grave accent mark on an orthographically word-final vowel indicates a word-final glottal stop without final syllable stress; and a hyphen is used to indicate a glottal stop before or after another consonant. Furthermore, the orthographic vowel <ə> represents an unrounded high central vowel /i/ with both tense and lax allophones.

As can be observed in Table 1, the angry register forms are not generally predictable from the normal register forms, although there may at times be a slight resemblance between the two. Indeed, they would be incomprehensible to a nonnative speaker who had only learned the normal register of the language.

Although previously mentioned in passing in other publications, Mintz (1991) was the first to publish a description of this angry register. Mintz (1991) concentrates on the Northern Bikol language, covering both the modern language and the 17th-century Old Bikol recorded in Lisboa (1865). Mintz (1991:231) describes “about fifty words used only in anger”, only thirty of which are from modern Bikol. It is notable that Mintz (*ibid.*) does not acknowledge a difference between modern Bikol and Old Bikol, simply marking “words which are no longer current” (232) with the code [MDL]. However, current research on the structure of Old Bikol (Lobel 2004 and forthcoming) justifies the positing of a sharper distinction between the modern language and that of Lisboa’s time (i.e., around 1610). Furthermore, the present study includes 114 meanings as compared to the “about fifty” reported in Mintz (1991:231). Similarly, while Mintz (*ibid.*) concentrates only on the Northern Bikol language, data for the present study has been collected from native speakers of three Bikol languages: (i) Northern Bikol as spoken in Naga City,⁶ the variety used in Lisboa (1865) and Mintz and Britanico (1985); (ii) the Rinconada dialect of Southern Bikol as spoken in the municipality of Nabua, Camarines Sur, closely related to Buhi-non as illustrated in Portugal (2000); and (iii) the Southern Sorsoganon dialect of Sorsoganon-Masbateny, as spoken in the town of Bulan. Due to my lack of access to speakers, no data from a fourth Bikol language, the remote Northern Catanduanes Bikol, will be included in this paper.

Besides Mintz (1991), only three publications have made even a passing mention of this angry register. Fr. Marcos de Lisboa’s (1865) *Vocabulario de la Lengua Bicol*, a Bikol-Spanish dictionary compiled around 1610 but first published in 1754 (Danilo Gerona, pers.comm.), contains at least 47 entries described by Lisboa with notes like *hablando con enojo* ‘speaking with anger’. Mintz and Britanico’s (1985) *Bikol-English Dictionary* mentions in at least 36 entries that the given word is “said in anger”. Most recently, Portugal’s (2000) *Buhi Dialect (Boîñan)* cites 108 forms in Buhi-non (a Southern Bikol dialect) covering 71 meanings in a section entitled “synonyms”, marking the angry words with an asterisk and explaining that they are “substandard forms, vulgar or lacking in refinement, spoken in anger or in a cursing manner.” (78)

This angry register is not only an apparent oddity among the languages of the world, but also an object of curiosity among Bikol speakers themselves. This curiosity is reflected by the fact that a number of Bikolanos have asked me as a linguist why words in their language like *ngúsò* ‘face’ and *ikós* ‘cat’ change into *ngurápak* and *kurasmág*, respectively, when the speaker is angry.

1.1 A note on LISBOA (1865)

Lisboa (1865) presents a glimpse of the Northern Bikol language as spoken at the beginning of the 1600s. As Lisboa was stationed in modern-day Naga City, this “Old Bikol” — referred to as such because it represents the oldest written record of the Bikol language — is the direct ancestor of the Naga dialect of Northern Bikol, and not directly ancestral to any of the other three Bikol languages. Most importantly, however, Lisboa’s rare dictionary reinforces comparative evidence (and on occasion contributes to it) with

⁶ For purposes of cross-referencing, my “Northern Bikol language”, “Southern Bikol language”, “Sorsoganon-Masbateny language”, and “Rinconada” are roughly equivalent to McFarland’s (1974) “Coastal Dialects”, “Inland Dialects”, “Southern Dialects”, and “Iriga”, respectively.

first-hand documentation that an angry register existed in the Northern Bikol language at least four centuries ago. Specifically, the *Vocabulario* contains at least 47 entries whose definitions include notes like *cuando hablan con enojo* ‘when they speak with anger’ and *dicen cuando estan enojados* ‘spoken when they are angry’. The following is a typical angry-register entry in Lisboa:

ASQUET. pc. Llamam asi al muchacho cuando están enojados, lo mismo que *aquí*; ut, *Alodo yca yning asquet na yni*, ó que ruido hace este muchacho. (1865:54)

(ASKÉT. What they call a child when they are angry, the same as *akì*. *Alodoy kaining asket na ini*. ‘How noisy this child is!’)

The above entry illustrates the general format of the angry register entries in Lisboa’s *Vocabulario*. First, the root word (in the above example, *asquet* /askít/ ‘child, said in anger’) is given, along with an abbreviation indicating the placement of stress (“pp.” indicating penult stress, or “pc.” indicating ultima stress), followed by the definition, including the note that the word is used in anger, noting its synonym in the normal register (in the above example, *aquí* /áki?/ ‘child’), often supplemented by a sentence example and its translation. Sentences (1)–(4) below, from Lisboa (1865), are representative of Old Bikol utterances in the angry register, with angry register words in boldface.

- (1) Kiisáy na **dayô** iní? (p. 113)
 who.OBL LIG domestic.animal this.NOM
 ‘Whose pet is this?’
- (2) Kiisáy na **ngarabngáb** iní? (p. 153)
 who.OBL LIG dog this.NOM
 ‘Whose dog is this?’
- (3) Hahaén an kakánon digdí tigbák na
 where NOM food here.OBL dead LIG
 akón **gostók?** (p. 149)
 1SG.OBL.LIG hungry
 ‘Where is the food here? I’m dying of hunger.’
- (4) Kaisáy na **dungháb** iníng kiminagát
 who.PL.OBL LIG animal this.LIG bite<AF.PAST>
 ninsi sakóng manók? (p. 129)
 GEN.REF 1SG.OBL.LIG chicken
 ‘Whose animal is it that bit my chicken?’

As we will see in Section 1.3, these angry register sentences are identical in all respects to normal register sentences except for the substitution of applicable angry register words for certain normal register words.

1.2 The angry register in context

The usage of this register does not require the use of curse words or other vulgarities, although such curse words and vulgarities do exist and may be used

Table 2. Conjugations of ‘to eat’ in the normal and angry registers of three Bikol languages

		Northern Bikol (Naga)	Southern Bikol (Buhi-non)	Southern Bikol (Rinconada)
Root	normal	<i>kakán</i>	<i>kaón</i>	<i>kaón</i>
	angry	<i>hablô</i>	<i>ablô</i>	<i>ablô</i>
Infinitive	normal	<i>magkakán</i>	<i>magkaón</i>	<i>magkaón</i>
	angry	<i>maghablô</i>	<i>mag-ablô</i>	<i>mag-ablô</i>
Past	normal	<i>nagkakán</i>	<i>nagkaón</i>	<i>nagkaón</i>
	angry	<i>naghablô</i>	<i>nag-ablô</i>	<i>nag-ablô</i>
Present	normal	<i>nagkakakán</i>	<i>nagikaón</i>	<i>nagkakaón</i>
	angry	<i>naghablô</i>	<i>nagiablô</i>	<i>nag-aablô</i>
Future	normal	<i>mákakán</i>	<i>miablô</i>	<i>migkaón</i>
	angry	<i>máhablô</i>	<i>miablô</i>	<i>mig-ablô</i>

Furthermore, the angry register is generally used only among same-age speakers or by older speakers to younger listeners, as usage by younger speakers in addressing their elders would constitute great disrespect. On occasion, the angry register is used in sarcasm or humor, but the majority of its usage is in anger.

2. On the Historical Development of the Angry Register

It is unclear whether the angry register of the Bikol languages is an innovation unique to these languages or a retention from Proto Central Philippine (PCPh). Lisboa’s (1865) documentation of the Old Bikol angry register is proof that it was a part of the Northern Bikol language at least 400 years ago. However, far from being a recent introduction in 1610, it appears on the basis of comparative evidence that this register was preset in Proto-Bikol, and at least 33 forms (as in 9–41) can be reconstructed at this level:

- (9) *alimanták ‘head (angry)’ > Nab, Buh, Bln *alimanták*, Buh *alinták*
- (10) *babaknít ‘woman (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh, Bln *babaknít* (probably from PCPh *baknit, note Akl *bágnit* ‘woman (slang)’)
- (11) *dayá? ‘domesticated animal (angry)’ > OBik *dayô* ‘domesticated animal (angry)’, Nag, Nab *dayô*, Buh *dayâ* ~ *damayâ*, Nag *damayô* ‘dog (angry)’
- (12) *dunág ‘rain (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh *dunág*
- (13) *gabsák ‘night (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Bln *gabsók*, Buh *gabsók*, Nab *labsók*
- (14) *gadyá? ‘carabao (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh *gadyâ* (also OBik, Tag ‘elephant’; originally a loan from Malay)

- (15) *gəlsək ‘hungry (angry)’ > OBik, Nab *gulsók*, Nag, Bln *guslók*, Buh *gəlsək* (reconstructed with the *-ls-* sequence instead of *-sl-* because Nag *guslók* < OBik *gulsók*, plus the Bln form can be explained as a regular metathesis of *-ls-* to *-sl-*, cf. PCPh *alsəm > Bln *aslóm*)
- (16) *gusgús ‘old (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh *gusgós*
- (17) *gusnáb ‘old (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh *gusnáb*, Nag *gusngáb*
- (18) *hablú? ‘eat (angry)’ > Nag *hablô*, Nab, Buh *ablô*, Buh *abô* (also OBik *hablô* ‘swallow whole without chewing’)
- (19) *kaməlmóg ‘hand (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Bln *kamulmóg*, Buh *kaməlmóg*
- (20) *kurasmág ‘cat (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh, Lib *kurasmág*, Sor *kusmág*
- (21) *kuspád ‘lice (angry)’ > Nag, Buh, Bln *kuspád*, Nab *kulakpád*
- (22) *labláb ‘drink (angry)’ > OBik, Nab, Buh *labláb* (also Nab ‘drink, said of animals’, OBik ‘drink excessively’)
- (23) *l<am>agyúng ‘umbrella (angry)’ > Nag, Buh *lamagyóng*, Nab, Buh *lagyóng*
- (24) *l<am>as(u)gás ‘rice (angry)’ > Nag, Buh *lamasgás*, Nab, Buh *lasgás*, Nag *lasugás*
- (25) *ləsŋóg ‘deaf (angry)’ > Nag, Nab *lusngóg*, Buh *ləsngóg*
- (26) *lu<s>bút ‘butt, anus (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh *lusbót*
- (27) *lVsrát ‘drunk (angry)’ > Nag *lusrát*, Nab *lasrát*
- (28) *ma(ta)lsók ‘eye (angry)’ > Nab *malsók*, Buh *malsək*, Bln *matalsók*
- (29) *ŋ<ar>abŋáb ‘dog (angry)’ > OBik *ngarabngáb*, Buh *ngabngáb*, Nag *dusngáb*
- (30) *ŋ<ar>akŋák ‘laugh (angry)’ > Buh, Bln *ngarakngák* (also Buh, Nab *ngarakngák* ‘to cry’)
- (31) *ŋurápak ‘mouth (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh *ngurápak*
- (32) *pəsək ‘blind (angry)’ > OBik *posók*, Buh *pəsək*
- (33) *sagták ‘money (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh *sagták*
- (34) *s<am>iŋkíl ‘foot (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh *samingkíl*, Nag, Buh *singkíl* (also OBik ‘to kick with the toes’)
- (35) *sapuyún ‘spank, slap (angry)’ > Nab, Bln *sapuyúng*
- (36) *sibá? ‘eat (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh, Bln *sibâ* (also OBik ‘to catch and carry in the jaws, as a crocodile’)
- (37) *siknít ‘woman (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh *siknít*, Buh *simiknít*
- (38) *ta(l)sik ‘salt (angry)’ > OBik, Nag *tásik*, Nab *talsík*, Buh *saltík* (the Buh form is probably under influence from English ‘salt’)
- (39) *til?áb ‘drink (angry)’ > Nag, Buh *ti-láb*, Nab *til-áb* (cf. OBik *tilháb* ‘great thirst, as if rabid’)
- (40) *tuka(?)ríg ‘pig (angry)’ > OBik *tokríg*, Nag, Nab *takríg*, Buh *tuka-ríg*
- (41) *tusmág ‘sleep (angry)’ > Nag, Nab, Buh *tusmág*

Yet in spite of the above 33 reconstructions, interviews with speakers of a dozen Central and Northern Philippine languages — including Tagalog, Cebuano,

Kapampangan, and Ilokano — have failed to find any such register in any of these languages.⁷ A considerable amount of materials on Philippine languages, and Austronesian linguistics in general, have also been consulted, and not even a passing mention of such a register in any other language has been found. Coupled with the fact that written records of Philippine languages are non-existent prior to the late 1500s, we can say that there is currently no available evidence supporting reconstruction of this angry register for even Proto Central Philippine. Dr. R. David Zorc (pers. comm.) concurs, conjecturing that this angry register is “an areal feature” and “an innovation within the language family.” Only further research will reveal whether or not other related languages have such a register, and if so, whether its forms will allow us to unambiguously reconstruct angry register lexicon for an earlier proto-language.

3. Derivation of Angry Lexicon

While we cannot answer the question of where and when the angry register developed, we can attempt to answer the question of how it developed. Even at first glance, a number of the angry register items look similar in some way to their normal-register synonyms. A more thorough analysis of these items reveals that many can be explained as either morphologically-derived coinages, semantic shift, register shift, or even combinations thereof. Considering that many of the normal lexical items have been reconstructed for proto-languages at various stages as far back as Proto-Austronesian, we can assume that the normal-register equivalents predate their angry counterparts. Thus, our task becomes how to explain the derivation of the angry words from the normal words. This section will explore the processes by which some of these words may have been derived.

3.1 Coinage by morphological processes

The proposition that much of the angry lexicon was derived via morphological processes is far from without justification in Austronesian languages. It has already been established that many words in Austronesian languages were formed by affixing, reduplicating, or combining monosyllabic roots or radicals (see Blust 1988, Zorc 1990, Nothofer 1991, and Potet 1995, among others). It has also been shown in French (1988) and Zorc and San Miguel (1997) that speakers of Central Philippine languages like Tagalog play word games in which they similarly affix, reduplicate, or combine already existing words. Zorc and San Miguel (1997:xvii) comment that such word games involve “the rearrangement of sounds” and “may involve dropping or adding sounds or syllables to words”, or metathesis, which “involves switching sounds within a word, either by the inversion of syllables or by a complex rearrangement of the letters”. Similar is a phenomenon described in Botne and Davis (2000:321):

In opposition to transposition games in which various constituents (usually syllables) are moved about in the word, insertion games disguise words by adding specified segments to the word at a fixed point. Such games fall into one of three types: syllable prefixing, syllable suffixing, or syllable infixing.

⁷ Carl Rubino (pers. comm.) reports eliciting two angry words from a Tausug informant, *darahalan* ‘meal’ and *banglus* ‘mouth’. Without further data, however, this remains but a tantalizing hint of what may or may not be a fuller register similar to that of Bikol, and is certainly in need of further research.

3.1.1 Infixation

One example of Botne and Davis's insertion in the angry register is the infixation of -s- into otherwise unmodified lexical items, e.g. Nag *basdô* 'clothes (angry)' < *badô*; Nag *tasgo* 'hide (angry)' < *tago*; and Nab *gusbát* 'heavy (angry)' < *gubát*. More complex infixation is found in Nab *samarigwál*, Nab, Buh *sarigwál* 'pants (angry)' < Nab *sarwál*, Buh *saruwál* 'pants'. The most common infix in the angry register is -am-, which has been found in 12 angry words across three Bikol dialects:

- (42) Nag *damayô*, Buh *damayâ* 'dog' (< PBik *dayó?)
- (43) Nag *kamarig* 'pig' (< *oríg*)
- (44) Buh *lamagyóng* 'umbrella' (< *lagyóng* < *páyong*)
- (45) Buh *lamaknít* 'clothes' (unknown etymology)
- (46) Nag *lamasdák* 'vagina' (unknown etymology)
- (47) Nag *lamasdî* 'priest' (< *lasdî* < *padî* < Spn *padre*)
- (48) Nag, Buh *lamasgás* 'rice' (< *lasgás* < PBik *bəgás)
- (49) Buh *raməkrək* 'palay' (< *rəkrək*)
- (50) Buh *samagrák* 'money' (< *sagrák* < *pirák*, probably a loanword of Khmer origin)
- (51) Nab *samarigwál* 'pants' (< *sarwál* < Persian)
- (52) Nag, Nab, Buh *samingkíl* 'foot' (< OBik *singkíl* 'to kick with the toes')
- (53) Nab *samonsamón* 'gather' (< *sunsón*)

3.1.2 Partial replacement

Additionally, many of the angry words appear to have been derived via a process that might best be described as "partial replacement", or the replacement of part of an already existing word by a new phonological sequence, as in examples (54)–(58) from Rinconada.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| (54) <i>lasgás</i> 'rice (angry)' | < <i>bugás</i> 'rice' |
| (55) <i>loskíd</i> 'mountain (angry)' | < <i>bukíd</i> 'mountain' |
| (56) <i>babaknít</i> 'woman (angry)' | < <i>babayí</i> 'woman' |
| (57) <i>gabsók</i> 'night (angry)' | < <i>gab-í</i> 'night' |
| (58) <i>ngipngíp</i> 'teeth (angry)' | < <i>ngipón</i> 'teeth' |

Note that the replaced segment may be an initial syllable as in (54)–(55), or a final syllable as in (56)–(58), and as Zorc and San Miguel (1997:xv) note, although the coined angry word is based on the original non-angry word, "the new form is barely recognizable".

Several of the angry register replacement syllables appear in two or more lexical items, and in three or even all four of the dialects surveyed. The following segments can be identified as occurring more than once in the data:

Replacement by full syllable reduplication, 5 occurrences

- (59) Nag *galgál* ‘gamble’ (< *sugál* < Spn *jugar*)
 (60) Nab *gumágà*, Buh *muga-gâ* ‘land’ (< *ragâ*)⁸
 (61) Buh *lādlād* ‘midnight’ (< *lawād*)
 (62) Buh *māgmāg* ‘wet’ (< *sāmāg*)
 (63) Nab, Buh *ngipngíp* ‘tooth’ (< *ngipón* ~ *ngipón*)

-sək/-sok, 5 occurrences

- (64) Nab, Bln *gabsók*, Nab *labsók*, Buh *gabsók* ‘night’ (< *gab-í* ~ *ga-bí*)
 (65) Nag *gulsók*, Nab *gulsók* ‘hungry’ (< *gutom*)
 (66) Nab *malsók*, Buh *malsék*, Bln *matalsók* ‘eye’ (< *matá*)
 (67) Nab *tapsók*, Buh *tapsók* ~ *oripsók* ‘servant’ (< *tabang*, *orípən*)
 (68) Nab *tipsók*, Buh *tipsók* ‘sleep’ (unknown etymology, but note also Nab *tiplā* ‘sleep (angry)’)

ləs-/lus-, 4 occurrences

- (69) Nag, Nab, Buh *lusbót* ‘hole; butt’ (< *lubót*)
 (70) Nab *luskíd* ‘mountain’ (< *bukid*)
 (71) Nag, Nab *lusngóg*, Buh *lāngóg* ‘deaf’ (< *bungóg* ~ *bāngóg*)
 (72) Nag *lusrát* ‘drunk’ (< *burát*)

las-, 3 occurrences

- (73) Nag *lasdî* ~ *lamsdî* ‘priest’ (< *padî*)
 (74) Nab, Buh *lasgás*, Nag, Buh *lamsgás*, Nag *lasugas* ‘rice’ (< Nag *bagás*, Nab *bugás*, Buh *bəgás* < PBik **bəgás*)
 (75) Nab *lasrát*, Nag *lasngáw* ~ *lasngág* ‘drunk’ (< *burat*, *bangág*)

-ltok, 3 occurrences

- (76) Bln *hultók* ‘drunk’ (unknown etymology)
 (77) Nab *maltók*, Buh *galtók* ‘chicken’ (< *manók*)
 (78) Nab *sultók* ‘lamp’ (< *sulô*)

In addition to the above segments which are found in more than one dialect of Bikol, the segment *mil-* is found in at least two words in the Buhi-non dialect only: *milpís* ‘skirt’ (< *tapís* ‘skirt’), and *milbíg* ‘water’ (< *túbig* ‘water’).

⁸ Attribution of Rinc *gumágà* and Buh *muga-gâ* to repetition of the final syllable of *ragâ* is supported by (1) the retention of the glottal stop in medial position in the Buhi-non form, and (2) the obligatory lengthening of the penult in the Rinconada form to compensate for the reduction of the **ʔC* cluster from earlier **gaʔgaʔ*. The frozen prefix *mu-* in the Buhi-non form appears to correspond to Rinc *-um-*. Note that the related Coastal Miraya dialect of Southern Bikol (spoken in Jovellar, Albay, and Donsol, Sorsogon) attests both an infinitive *-um-* infix and a future *mu-* prefix.

3.1.3 Phoneme replacement

Another method by which a few angry words were derived is the replacement of one phoneme, in particular the word-initial phoneme, a process found in three dialects although only in a handful of items.

- (79) Buh *bawag* ‘call’ (< *tawag*, with /t/ > /b/)
 (80) Nag *layág* ‘testicles’ (< *bayág*, with /b/ > /l/) (also note Ceb *lagáy* ‘testicles’)
 (81) Nab *lugtô* ‘break’ (< *bugtô*, with /b/ > /l/)

Note that both (80) and (81) have replaced /b/ with /l/, but without additional similar examples, it is impossible to determine whether this was the result of a specific phonological rule or simply a coincidence.

3.1.4 Morphological processes in Old Bikol

A similar analysis can be made of the angry lexicon in Old Bikol. Four angry words in Lisboa (1865) were derived from their nonangry counterparts via partial replacement by (C)tok, as in (82)–(85):

- (82) *gostók* ~ *gotók* ‘hungry’ (< *gutom* + -(s)tok)
 (83) *sigtók* ‘fish’ (< *sirâ* + -(g)tok)
 (84) *tokríg* ‘pig’ (< *orig* + tok-)
 (85) *wogtók* ‘to have lost something’ (< *warâ* + -(g)tok)⁹

Six Old Bikol angry words appear to have been derived from nonangry words via syllable reduplication, as in (86)–(90).

- (86) *kokô* ‘earthenware cooking pot’ (< *koron* + R-)
 (87) *ngosngós* ‘mouth’ (< *ngusò* + R-)
 (88) *rakrák* ‘broken’ (cf. Bik *rasák* ‘the sound of breaking crockery’)
 (89) *yamyám* ‘annoying’ (< *oyam* + R-)
 (90) *babâ* ‘broken’ (cf. Bik *gabâ* ‘destroyed’, Tag *gibâ*, Hil, Ceb *gubâ* ‘broken; destroyed’, War *rubâ* ‘broken’, War *gubâ* ‘destroyed’)
 (91) *rirî* ‘broken’ (cf. Bik *barî* ‘to break, as a bone’)

Four additional forms with repeating syllables existed in Old Bikol, but unlike (86)–(91), these do not resemble any known nonangry Bikol root:

- (92) *balbál* ‘to steal’ (cf. Ceb, War *bála* ‘carry on shoulder’)
 (93) *gadgád* ‘pull something off with force’ (possibly < *guyód* ‘pull, drag’, *gudgód* ‘drag’; cf. Ilk *guyód* ‘pull’, Hil, Ceb *guyód* ‘drag’)
 (94) *pospós* ‘bolo knife’ (cf. Bik, Hil, Ceb, War *puspós* ‘heavy stroke’)
 (95) *tibtíb* ‘bolo knife’ (cf. Tag *tibtíb* ‘sugarcane tip used for planting’)

3.2 Semantic shift

In addition to the items that have been derived morphologically from preexisting words, a large number of the angry register vocabulary are the result of semantic shift

⁹ The occurrence of a /g/ reflex for the PPh *D of *waDa[], however uncommon, is not unique. Note Tag *hagkán* ‘kiss (s.o.)’ < *halikán < PPh *haDek + -an ‘location focus suffix’.

or register shift with some generalization of the meaning. Some exist in both angry and nonangry meanings in the same dialect, in which case the angry register usage can be attributed to a register shift accompanied by a semantic shift, e.g. Nab *ugbón* ‘child, said in anger’ < *ugbón* ‘offspring of animal like pigs’, Nab *damulág* ‘big, said in anger’ < *damulág* ‘water buffalo’.

Others are traceable to a nonangry word in Old Bikol but have angry register usage in modern Bikol dialects, such as items (96)–(100).

- (96) Nag, Buh *ti-lab*, Nab *til-ab* ‘drink, said in anger’ < OBik *tilháb* ‘great thirst, as if rabid’
- (97) Nag *hablô*, Nab, Buh *ablô* ‘eat, said in anger’ < OBik *hablô* ‘swallow whole without eating’
- (98) Nag, Nab, Buh, Bln *sibâ* ‘eat, said in anger’ < OBik *sibâ* ‘to catch and carry in jaws like a crocodile’
- (99) Nag, Nab *lumpát* ‘jump, said in anger’ < OBik *lumpát* ‘for a fish to jump into the water’
- (100) Nab, Buh *kolbó* ‘run, said in anger’ < OBik *kolbó* ‘to take flight (said of some types of birds)’

Still others exist in the angry register of one Bikol language or dialect but in the normal register of another Bikol language or dialect, like (101)–(104). This may indicate some past register shift, probably from the normal register to the angry register. As in items (96)–(100), there is a shift from a specialized meaning to a more generalized one.

- (101) Nab, Buh *amíl* ‘eat, said in anger’, Nag *hamíl* ‘to swallow something that has not been completely chewed’
- (102) Nab *ungós*, Buh *ingós* ‘mouth, said in anger’, Nag *ungós* ‘the snout or nose of animals’
- (103) Nag *baktín* ‘pig, said in anger’, Rinc *baktín* ‘pig’
- (104) Nag *sikí* ‘foot, said in anger’, Rinc *sikí* ‘foot’ (cf. OBik *sikí* ‘the feet or hands of livestock’)

Finally, some angry words in the Bikol languages like (105)–(107) have possible cognates in other Central Philippine languages.

- (105) Nag, Buh *gadyâ* ‘animal’, OTag, OBik *gadyá* ‘elephant’
- (106) Nag, Buh, Bln *kuspád* ‘lice’, cf. Ceb *kuspág* ‘for the hair to be in disarray’ and Ceb *kuslád* ‘host of lice and nits’
- (107) Nag, Nab, Buh, Bln *kamulmóg* ‘hand’, cf. Tag *bulbóg* ‘to bruise’, Tag *bugbóg* ‘pounding; a very hard blow’

At least one lexical item, Nag, Nab, Buh *siknít* ‘woman’, appears to be an innovation, although the related *babaknít* which exists in the same Bikol dialects points to two possibilities: 1) the preexistence of the innovation *siknít* from which *babaknít* was coined, or 2) the preexistence of *babaknít* from which *siknít* was coined via syllable replacement. It is noteworthy that Aklanon slang has *bagnít* ‘woman’, which is possible evidence for a Proto-Central Philippine *baknít from which the forms in Bikol and Aklanon derive.

A final word deserves special mention, Nab, Buh *kabogtô* ‘sibling’, which parallels the Tagalog *kapatíd* in that both Rinc, Buh *bogtô* and Tag *patíd* mean ‘split off, broken’

and both root words are prefixed with *ka-* to produce the meaning 'sibling'. Yet while the derivational process and underlying semantics are the same, Rinc, Buh *kabogtô* is only used in the angry register, while its normal register equivalent is Rinc *ngood*, Buh *ipatngód* 'sibling'.

4. Conclusion

The data in this paper shows that an angry register exists in at least three of the languages of the Bikol Region, and existed in the Bikol language at least as far back as the opening decades of the 17th Century. While at present no similar register is known to exist in any other Philippine language, some of its forms have been shown to be reconstructible for Proto-Bikol, and it will be interesting to find out if such a register indeed exists in any other Philippine language. Also, the existence of angry register lexicon cognate with lexicon of other Central Philippine languages, if pointing to contact between these Central Philippine languages, may someday reveal the attitudes the early Bikolanos had towards their neighbors and even the possible sociolinguistic reasons for them.

Abbreviations

1SG	1st person singular	Nab	Rinconada dialect of Southern Bikol as spoken in Nabua
2SG	2nd person singular		
AF	Actor Focus	Nag	Northern Bikol as spoken in Naga City
Akl	Aklanon		
Bik	Northern Bikol	OBL	Oblique case
Bln	Southern Sorsoganon dialect of Sorsoganon-Masbateny, as spoken in Bulan	OBik	Old Bikol, as recorded in Lisboa (1865)
Buh	Buhi-non dialect of Southern Bikol	OF	Object Focus
Ceb	Cebuano	OTag	Old Tagalog
GEN	Genitive case	PBik	Proto Bikol
Hil	Hiligaynon/Ilonggo	PCPh	Proto Central Philippine
Ilk	Ilokano	R-	Reduplication
INF	infinitive	Rinc	Rinconada dialect of Southern Bikol
Lib	dialect of Libon, Albay (Southern Bikol)	Sor	Central Sorsoganon
LIG	Ligature	Spn	Spanish
NEG	Negative	Tag	Tagalog
NOM	Nominative case	V	Vowel
		War	Waray-Waray

Appendix 1

Table 3. The 114 meanings represented in the angry register

animal	fish	pants
big	flow	pig
bite	fold	pinch
blind	food	plant
bolo	foot	priest
box/punch (v.)	force	rain
break	frowning	rice, husked
burn	full	rice, unhusked
bury	gamble	run
butt/anus; hole	gather	saliva
call	get	salt
carabao	go down	scrotum; testicles
careless	gossip	search
cat	greedy	see/watch
chew	hand	servant
chicken	head	shoes
child	horse	shout
chop	house	sibling
clothes	hungry	skirt
cough	jump	sleep
crumple	keep	slow
crush	lame	small
cry	lamp	spank/slap
cut	land	steal
deaf	laugh	stomach
destroy	lazy	stop

dirty	lice	strong
dog	lie down	talkative
drink	look	tear
drive away	midnight	teeth
drunk	money	throw
ear	mountain	umbrella
eat	mouth	vagina
eye	move	vulgar
false	mucus	water
feed	mute	wet
fight	night	whip/lash
fire	old	woman

References

- Biber, Douglas. 1995. *Dimensions of register variation: A cross-linguistic comparison*. Oxford: Cambridge University Press.
- Blust, Robert. 1988. Beyond the morpheme: Austronesian root theory and related matters. *Studies in Austronesian linguistics*, ed. by Richard McGinn. Athens: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Ohio University.
- Botne, Robert, and Stuart Davis. 2000. Language games, segment imposition, and the syllable. *Studies in Language* 24:319–344.
- Ferguson, Charles A. 1994. Dialect, register, and genre: Working assumptions about conventionalization. *Sociolinguistic perspectives on register*, ed. by Douglas Biber and Edward Finegan, 15–30. New York: Oxford University Press.
- French, Koleen Matsuda. 1988. *Insights into Tagalog reduplication, infixation, and stress from nonlinear phonology*. Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics.
- Gregerson, Kenneth J. 1976. Tongue root and register in Mon-Khmer. *Austroasiatic Studies*, Vol. 1, ed. by Philip N. Jenner, Laurence C. Thompson, and Stanley Starosta, 323–369. Oceanic Linguistics Special Publication 13. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Headley, Robert K. 1991. The phonology of Kompong Thom Cham. *Austroasiatic languages: Essays in honour of H. L. Shorto*, ed. by Jeremy H. C. S. Davidson. London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.
- Lisboa, Marcos de. 1865. *Vocabulario de la lengua Bicol*. Manila: Establiciamiento Tipográfico de Colegio de Santo Tomás.
- Lobel, Jason William. 2004. Old Bikol *-um-* vs. *mag-* and the loss of a morphological paradigm. *Oceanic Linguistics* 43(2):340–368.
- Lobel, Jason William. Forthcoming. Grammar notes on Old Bikol. 28pp.
- McFarland, Curtis Daniel. 1974. The dialects of the Bikol area. Doctoral dissertation, Yale University.
- Mintz, Malcolm Warren. 1991. Anger and verse: Two vocabulary subsets in Bikol. *VICAL2: Papers from the Fifth International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics: Western Austronesian and contact languages*, Parts I and II, ed. by Ray Harlow. Auckland: Linguistic Society of New Zealand.
- Mintz, Malcolm Warren, and José Del Rosario Britanico. 1985. *Bikol-English dictionary, Diksiyonaryong Bikol-Ingles*. Quezon City: New Day Publishers.
- Nothofer, B. 1991. More on Austronesian radicals (or roots). *Oceanic Linguistics* 30 (2):223–258.
- Panganiban, Jose Villa. 1972. *Diksiyunario-Tesaurus Pilipino-Ingles*. Quezon City: Manlapaz Publishing Co.
- Portugal, Dominga L. J. 2000. *Buhi dialect (Boînən)*. San Francisco: D. J. Portugal Publications.

- Potet, Jean-Paul G. 1995. Tagalog monosyllabic roots. *Oceanic Linguistics* 34 (2):345–374.
- Ure, Jean. 1982. Introduction: Approaches to the study of register range. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 35:5–23.
- Wolff, John U. 1972. *A dictionary of Cebuano Visayan*. Southeast Asia Program Linguistics Series VI, Data Paper 87. New York: Cornell University.
- Zorc, R. David. 1977. *The Bisayan dialects of the Philippines: Subgrouping and reconstruction*. Pacific Linguistics Series C–44. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.
- Zorc, R. David. 1990. The Austronesian monosyllabic root, radical or phonestheme. *Linguistic change and reconstruction methodology*, ed. by Philip Baldi, 175–194. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Zorc, R. David, and Rachel San Miguel. 1997. *Tagalog slang dictionary* (3rd ed.). Manila: De La Salle University Press.