

Intelligibility between *Iranun* and *Maranaw* Languages through the Lens of Austin's Speech Acts Theory

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Abstract

There are languages in Southern Philippines that are closely related where speakers are mutually intelligible especially on the case of *Maranaw* and *Iranun*. The purpose of this qualitative study employing content analysis is to identify the mutual intelligibility of the two Danao languages-the *Maranaw* and *Iranun*. The analysis of the study was anchored from the framework of Austin (1962) on illocutionary acts in terms of *verdictives*, *exercitives*, *commissives*, *behavitives*, and *expositives*. Results revealed that these languages showed their closeness and easy understanding when speakers converse. In *expositives* for example, the word *affirms*, *confirms*, and *not* have the same equivalent in both languages. The same with *commissives* for vow, promise, and pledge. Almost the same in *behavitives*, however, during the interview, an *Iranun* speaker used a distinct word that is not intelligible among the *Maranaw* speakers. For, *verdictives* and *exercitives*, both languages used the same terminologies with the same meaning and used in the same contexts and situations. Furthermore, this paper emphasizes preservation of the rich cultural heritage. Though, these *Danao* languages are not considered endangered, but because of the scarcity of literatures, findings of this study could fill those gaps.

Keywords: Danao, intelligibility, Iranun, Maranaw, speech acts

1. Introduction

There are languages in Southern Philippines that are closely related where speakers are mutually intelligible. Though these languages vary in other facets and forms, speakers can comprehend the meaning of the utterances expressed. Similarities can be based on tones, words and in syntax. This occurs when these languages originated from the same branch.

The *Danao* languages are spoken by the *Maguindanawn*, *Iranun*, and *Maranaw* where they possessed close genetic relationship (Conklin, 1955; Thomas & Haley, 1962; Llamzon, 1978; Lebar, 1975; Allison, 1979; Walton, 1979). It was however found out that these languages are closely related genetically with the *Subanun* group languages and that of the Manobo languages (Llamzon & Martin, 1976; Walton, 1979) which formed the Meso-Mindanao subgroup of the Southern Philippine languages (Walton, 1979). The term *Danao* was first used by Elkins of the Summer Institute of Linguistics-Philippines (Allison, 1979; Walton, 1979).

The *Maranao/Maranaw* (ISO code mrw) is an Austronesian language of the Greater Central Philippine subgroup spoken on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao specifically in the provinces of Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte closely related to that of *Iranun* and *Maguindanaw* (Blust, 1991). They are subdivided into two groups: the "*Maranaw Ranaw* (*Maranaw* of the Lake) and *Maranao M'ragat* (*Maranaw* by the sea) (Lobel & Riwarung, 2011).

Meanwhile, the *Iranun* (Philippines) (ilp) is a language spoken along the Iliana Bay concentrated mainly in the Municipalities of Buldon, Parang, Sultan Kudarat, Sultan Mastura in the Province of Maguindanao, southeast tip of Lanao del Sur, Kalilangan in Bukidnon, Alamada, Banisilan, Carmen, Libungan and Pigcawayan in the Province of Cotabato. This language has two distinct dialects. One is spoken along the coast of the Iliana bay and the other is *Isebanganen* (or *Idalemen*) for those who live inland (Fleischman, 1981).

Correspondingly, the *Maranaw* language includes four additional heavy consonants which are not only aspirated but have a strong raising and tensing effect on the following vowel (Lobel & Riwarung, 2009). In contrast, *Iranun*

retains the homorganic voiced-voiceless clusters of Proto-Danao which are reflected in *Maranaw* as heavy consonants. To date, there are no studies conducted in the Philippine linguistics on the intelligibility of these *Danao* languages. As such, the *Iranun* is not well-studied as compared to its counterpart because of security reasons faced by language documenters. Looking into the mutual understanding of the speakers of the aforementioned languages by utilizing the speech acts, hence this study was conceptualized.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study employing content analysis is to identify the mutual intelligibility of the two *Danao* languages-the *Maranaw* and *Iranun*. The informants of this study are from the Iliana bay for the *Iranun* and the *Maranaw M'ragat* since they are geographically close. The analysis of the study was anchored from the framework of Austin (1962) on illocutionary acts in terms of verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behavitives, and expositives.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What illocutionary acts are expressed in the *Iranun* and *Maranaw* languages?
2. What are the common speech acts present in both languages that provide intelligibility?

1.3 Theoretical Lens

This study is anchored on the Speech Acts Theory by Austin (1962) on specifically on expressing of the illocutionary acts. He classified it into five which included the five performative verbs: verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behavitives, and expositives. Verdictives includes acts (formal or informal) of giving a verdict, estimate, or appraisal (as acquitting, reckoning, assessing, diagnosing). These may concern facts or values. On the class of exercitives, it includes acts of exerting powers, rights or influence (as appointing, voting, ordering, warning). These presuppose that the speaker has a certain kind of authority or influence. Conversely, commissives includes acts that commit the speaker to doing something such as promising, undertaking, consenting, opposing, and betting. Meanwhile, the class of expositives includes acts that clarify reasons, arguments, or communications such (as affirming, denying, stating, describing, asking, answering). Lastly, on the class of behavitives includes acts having to do with attitudes and social behavior (as apologizing, congratulating, commending, thanking). These include reactions to other people's behavior or fortune and are particularly vulnerable to insincerity.

On intelligibility, I utilized the proposition of van Heuven (2008) on speech intelligibility. He defined it in quite practical terms as the percentage of linguistic units correctly recognized by the listener in the order in which they are spoken. For him, intelligibility can be tested at several levels of the linguistic hierarch, be it at the level of meaningless units (sounds or phonemes), or at the level of meaningful units such as morphemes and words.

Indeed, it has become standard practice in speech intelligibility measurement to test the recognition of linguistic units at several linguistic levels (van Bezooijen & van Heuven, 1997) such as the sounds, words and sentences. Intelligibility gave interests on the applications of establishing the success of communication between speaker and hearer of related language and varieties. Therefore, measuring the success of phoneme identification is only useful in predicting the success of word recognition. As long as the listener correctly recognizes words, he or she will be able to piece the speaker's message together.

2. Methods

Research Design

This study is qualitative research employing content analysis. Qualitative research is inductive in nature, and the researcher generally explores meanings and insights in a given situation (Strauss & Corbin, 2008; Levitt et al., 2017). Also, it refers to a range of data collection and analysis techniques that use purposive sampling and semi-structured, open-ended interviews (Dudwick et al., 2006; Gopaldas, 2016). In addition, it is described as an effective model that occurs in a natural setting and enables the researcher to develop a level of detail from high involvement in the actual experiences (Creswell, 2009, 2014).

Similarly, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) reiterated that it consists a set of interpretive material practices that makes the world visible. A multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. It focuses on words rather than numbers and observed the world in its natural setting, interpreting situation to understand the meanings that people make from day-to-day life (Walia, 2015). Qualitative research comprises of the following methods: logic, ethnography, discourse analysis, case study, open-ended interview, participant observation, counseling, therapy, grounded theory, biography, comparative method, introspection, casuistry, focus group, literary criticism, meditation practice, historical research, etcetera (Cibangu, 2012).

Correspondingly, content analysis is an approach to quantify qualitative information by systematically sorting and comparing items of information in order to summarize them. Often this process entails turning a large set of raw data into useable evidence through data reduction methods (Weber, 1990). It analyzes not only the manifest content of the material but its differentiated levels of content such as the themes and main ideas of the texts as primary content, context information as latent content (Becker & Lissmann, 1973).

In this manner, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) stated that content analysis is a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic process of coding and identifying themes or patterns. This is an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytic rules and step by step models without rash quantification (Mayring, 2004). For Patton (2002), it is a qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings.

Finally, this study is qualitative since I did not use any numbers of percentage in the interpretation of my data. These were gathered through an interview of the identified informants based on the criteria set. Moreover, the content of their responses was interpreted based on the research questions of this study.

Role of the Researcher

My role as a researcher is indispensable on the collection of correct data from the target informants. First, I asked the help of the local leaders of the identified localities where the interviews were conducted. After the identification of the informants, I personally interviewed them based on the prepared interview guide validated by the panel of experts. It was also my sole responsibility to transcribe the audio recordings and translated it into English especially for the Maranao language. However, a help of an expert in the Iranun language was sought to avoid biases and wrong interpretation of the content of the data and to observe the essence of verisimilitude (Inui & Frankel, 1991; Denzin, 1994; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Tracy, 2010).

Informants

To present mutual intelligibility among the *Danao* languages, I focused my study on the *Iranun* informants coming from the Municipality of Barira, Matanog, and Buldon in Maguindanao. For my Maranaw informants, my data gathering was conducted in the Municipality of Malabang and Balagaban in Lanao del Sur. I considered these municipalities since they are geographically close to each other.

My informants were chosen using the following criteria:

- He/she must be a native speaker of *Iranun* language;
- He/she must be a native speaker of *Maranaw* language;
- He/she must be born in the identified localities; and
- He/she must be 50 years old and all professionals

Data Analysis

The data were arranged in accordance to the research questions. The transcribed data were first translated into English. This was done by individuals who were native speakers and linguists. The purpose is to have the best interpretation of the data and to ensure that terminologies used are correct. Also, the results were presented in the tabular form divided into the different illocutionary acts by Austin (1962). Meanwhile, to check the intelligibility of these languages, a comparative analysis was done by identifying the terms used through the utilization of a Swadesh list where it presented of how both the *Maranaw* and *Iranun* speakers showed comprehensibility. These were discussed thoroughly and were supported by the narratives of the informants.

Ethical Consideration

This study observed the following ethical principles by Halai (2006). The researcher is expected to obtain informed consent from all those who are directly involved in research. This principle adheres to a larger issue of respect to the participants so that they are not coerced into participation and have access to relevant information prior to the consent. Hence, I prepared the consent-to-participate form containing the objectives of the study and the rights of the participants including the risks, benefits and a clause stipulating that their participation is voluntary and they have the right to withdraw from the study.

On the basis of confidentiality of information shared and anonymity of the participants, this principle is concerned with offering respect and protection through assurance that the information shared will be solely use for the research

purposes only and that their identities will never be revealed to protect them. Typically, this is done through the use of pseudonyms.

The third principle conveyed that I am expected to provide the participants with an outline of the risks and benefits. Reciprocity requires the researcher to compensate the participants for their time and effort. All the information relative to risks and benefits are expected to be provided in summary in the consent form.

3. Results and Discussions

Illocutionary Acts in *Iranun* and *Maranaw* Languages

The *Iranun* and *Maranaw* languages belong to Austronesian Malayo-Polynesian in specifically the *Danao* language. The Summer Institute for Linguistic assigned the *Iranun* language with ISO 639-3 code as *ilp* to give a distinction to that of the name of a language spoken in Malaysia. Meanwhile, a code assigned to *Maranaw* is *mrw*. *Iranun* is a language spoken by an ethnolinguistic group along the coastline of Illana Bay that covers the Municipality of Parang, Barira, Buldon, some portion of the Municipality of Sultan Mastura in the Province of Maguindanao and in the mountainous areas of the municipalities of Alamada, Pigcawayan, Libungan, and Banisilan in the Province of Cotabato. Conversely, the *Maranao* language is spoken in the Provinces of Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte.

This study presented the different illocutionary acts which was proposed by Austin (1976). These include the expositives, commissives, behavitives, verdictives, and exercitives.

Expositives in Iranun and Maranaw languages

Table 1 shows that both in *Iranun* and *Maranaw* languages expositives are used to affirm and deny as shown in the following examples below:

Myabunaw *akun a da kasala-an ka* (I **affirmed** that you are innocent).-Iranun and Maranaw

Kyatokawan *akun a suka myamanekhaw ko karabaw* (I have **found out** that you took the carabao). Iranun and Maranaw

Naba anan bunar (That is **not** true). Iranun and Maranaw

Table 1. Expositives in *Iranun* and *Maranaw* Languages

Iranun	English	Maranaw	English
<i>Myabunaw</i> <i>akun a da kasala-an ka.</i>	I affirmed that you are innocent.	<i>Myabunaw</i> <i>akun a da kasala-an ka.</i>	I affirmed that you are innocent.
<i>Kyatokawan</i> <i>akun a suka myamanekhaw ko karabaw.</i>	I have found out that you took the carabao.	<i>Kyatokawan</i> <i>akun a suka myamanekhaw ko karabaw.</i>	I have found out that you took the carabao.
<i>Naba anan bunar</i>	That is not true.	<i>Naba anan bunar</i>	That is not true.

This type of illocutionary act provided unique features of a language where the speaker expresses to affirm, deny, emphasize, illustrate, answer, report, accept, object to, concede, describe, class, identify and call. During the course of the interview, the informants who were police officials used this to affirm on the innocence of the person. Also, they used it to make an emphasis on the person who used to be the suspect of stealing the carabao and someone who denied any accusations against him.

Indeed, these acts were expressed in the *Iranun* and *Maranaw* languages considering the fact that those who imposed this discourse are persons in authority. Thus, it implies that these acts signify that a person who is not holding any positions in the society cannot express since their credibility and authority will be questioned and invalid before the law. Thus, speakers of these languages they have the control over the discourse and they used to mark their sentences with specific lexis signifying its purpose in the delivery of the message. A speaker who does not have the knowledge of the events cannot vouch for the truthfulness of the event.

Emphatically, this is in congruence to the study of Ojo and Wasiu Ademola (2015) that this type of illocutionary act shows exercise of power which is related to executions of right, authority, and influence. Expositives are used in acts of exposition by the involvement of the expounding views, the arguments involved and the clarifying usages and references (Austin, 1975). It claimed to be as discourse-controlling acts and bring about their illocutionary effects, changes or modifications in the on-going discourse (Oishi, 2014).

Commissives in Iranun and Maranaw languages

Another illocutionary act is commissives as shown on Table 2. It is expressed when someone is promising, vowing, and pledging.

Both the Iranun and Maranao informants shared the same sentence when they vowed not to drink anymore:

Ibet ka di ako dun phepharuman minom sa pakabereg (I **vowed** never to drink alcohol again). Iranun and Maranaw

Table 2. Commissives in Iranun and Maranaw Languages

Iranun	English	Maranaw	English
<i>Ibet ka di ako dun phepharuman minom sa pakabereg.</i>	I vowed never to drink alcohol again.	<i>Ibet ka di ako dun phepharuman minom sa pakabereg.</i>	I vowed never to drink alcohol again.
<i>Ibet ka pagogopangko suka sataman a kakhagagaa ko ron.</i>	I promise you my best effort.	<i>Ibet ka pagogopangko suka sataman a kakhagagaa ko ron.</i>	I promise you my best effort.
<i>Psapa ako reka a siyapun akun suka</i>	I pledge that I will honor you.	<i>Psapa ako reka a siyapun akun suka.</i>	I pledge that I will honor you.

They also articulated it when they use to promise and pledge:

Ibet ka pagogopangko suka sataman a kakhagaga ko ron (I **promise** you my best effort). Iranun and Maranaw

Psapa ako reka a siyapun akun suka (I **pledge** that I will honor you). Iranun and Maranaw

In *Iranun* and *Maranaw* languages, they expressed *commissives* when they used to vow, promise and pledge. Speakers of both languages vow not to drink alcoholic drinks anymore considering its effects to human body. Also, they promised their best efforts to fulfill their duties and responsibilities. Like vowing and promising, they also pledge to honor someone especially those who are under their power, jurisdiction of loved ones.

This type of perlocutionary act reiterated that speakers can express something that will change their actions, and their willingness to fulfill it based on the context of their discourse. As such, when expressing, one should have to be true and what he/she said. Promises, pledges, and vows cannot be sustained when it is not shown and done. The premise truly satisfies the interlocutor upon seeing the seriousness of the speaker. When, it is not fulfilled, this will destroy someone’s image and credibility since this is focused on the commitment of the speaker towards future actions. In short, speakers are obliged to perform some acts by uttering the sentence.

In consonance to the Austin’s (1962) proposition that the speaker is obliged to vouch for the truthfulness of the statements he makes so that in future action, then he is obliged actually to commit himself if he is to tell the truth. Statements with regards to commit a person to promise which in turn means that he has committed himself to carry out future action. Thus, the actual force when promising is derived from the conventions governing the making of statements in relation with the convention of this type of illocutionary act. Therefore, the communicative action anchored from the insight to the dimension of locutionary aspect which recognized the illocutionary force that often functions as the comprehension to the locutionary dimension of an utterance.

Behavitives in Iranun and Maranaw languages

Table 3 exhibits the illocutionary acts in terms of behavitives in *Iranun* and *Maranaw* languages. It is specific when the speaker of the language asked for apologies. As shown in the following examples, both languages used common words of saying it:

Prilay akongka (Please forgive me). Iranun

Prilaiya ka myawri ako (I apologize for being late). Maranaw

On the contrary, one of the *Iranun* informants, showed that there is another way of apologizing:

Ampon akongka bo ka miyawri ako ka dako makakabalaga (I **apologize** for not being able to come here early because I woke up late this morning). Iranun

Table 3. Behavitives in *Iranun* and *Maranaw* Languages

Iranun	English	Maranaw	English
<i>Prilay akongka.</i>	Please forgive me.	<i>Prilaiya ka myawri ako.</i>	I apologize for being late.
<i>Ampon akongka bo ka miyawri ako ka dako makakabalaga</i>	I apologize for not being able to come here early because I woke up late this morning.		
<i>Sampayn kawn so.</i>	Send my sincere felicitations on her wedding.	<i>Sampayn kawn so.</i>	Send my sincere felicitations on her wedding.
<i>Taros kano sii sa kalilintad.</i>	You are welcome here.	<i>Taros kano sii sa kalilintad.</i>	You are welcome here.
<i>Salamat!</i>	Thanks a lot.	<i>Salamat!</i>	Thanks a lot.

Generally, Iranun and Maranaw speakers employed the same terminologies in the following expressions:

Sampayn kawn so (Send my sincere felicitations on her wedding). Iranun and Maranaw

Taros kano sii sa kalilintad (You are welcome here). Iranun and Maranaw

Salamat! (**Thanks** a lot). Iranun and Maranaw

The findings of the study show that it is used to ask for apology for the mistakes being committed, and from being late of arrival to the promised time. Also, it demonstrates the speakers’ sincerity to extend felicitations to the wedding of the bride. Iranun and Maranaw also convey to welcome their visitors, loved ones and by thanking for the goodness being done to them.

This only implies that in these two ethnolinguistic groups, words of good-will, showing their sincerest care for people that surround them and their abilities to ask for forgiveness behind all the mistakes that they have committed are present in both languages. It manifests that they are peace-loving people since their discourse created a peaceful atmosphere, thus, strengthening the felicity condition. The function of behavitives in the examples gave us the panoramic perspectives that they show their great emotion as to convey a profound meaning.

In agreement, Bigunova (2018) asserted that this type of illocutionary act gives us to register our reaction to other people’s behavior, attitude and conduct. In the same manner, the speaker expresses an emotion or attitude often towards the hearer to create a sense of positivity towards a harmonious atmosphere of communication and if the addressee and the object of evaluation are the same person to encourage them to look or act similarly (Mann, 2019). Words under this category are considered as miscellaneous group and have to do with attitudes and social behavior such as apologizing and congratulating (Austin, 1962).

Verdictives in *Iranun* and *Maranaw* languages

Another illocutionary act is verdictives. It can be seen on Table 4 that *Iranun* and *Maranaw* speakers gave the same example:

Baling kadun ka da karata-an ka (You can leave now because you are innocent). Iranun and Maranaw

Table 4. Verdictives in Iranun and Maranao Languages

Iranun	English	Maranaw	English
<i>Baling kadun ka da karata-an ka.</i>	You can leave now because you are innocent.	<i>Baling kadun ka da karata-an ka.</i>	You can leave now because you are innocent.

Giving order is the main core on the classification of illocutionary act. In terms of *verdictives*, the person in authority is advising the suspect of the crime to leave because he was found to be innocent. A case cannot be filed because of the lack of supporting evidences that will truly put the him in jail. Thus, the Judge, immediately tells him to go home and clear him of all the charges against him.

In legal parlance, a case cannot be filed unless no evidences are presented by the witnesses or by the complainant. With regard to this matter, the power is vested upon the Court of Judge signifying his authority to give such verdict. Thus, no one can give decisions unless he is the person in authority to do so.

This type of illocutionary act signified exercise of judgments and rights (Austin, 1962,1975). The speaker speaks with authority and authority to speak (Langton, 2012) because of the position held. Unique to this is the delivery of the findings, may it be official or unofficial, upon the presentation of evidences or reasons as to value or fact (Searle, 1975).

Exercitives in Iranun and Maranaw languages

One of the features of illocutionary acts is to announce, warn, appoint, appoint and order. These are called as exercitives. Table 5 shows that an *Iranun* speaker is giving an order:

Liyu ka dun ka khapakay dun a makabalingka (You may now **go out** and go home). *Iranun*

Concurrently, a *Maranaw* speaker gives an important announcement to her constituents:

Imanto na ipaganounce akun rekano na dadun imanto a opisina ka adun a pekawma a bagyo (I am announcing that we are postponing our work for today due to the incoming typhoon) *Maranaw*

To give warning, in voting and in appointing a leader, the following illocutionary terms are utilized:

Siyaparan ako o pamomolong mipantag ko karata o kapanigupan (The doctor warned me about the dangers of smoking). *Maranao*

Aya kabaya akun ka maling tano (I vote that we all go home). *Maranaw*

Suka e miyapili aken a olowan a barangay (I **appoint** you as Barangay Chairman). *Maranaw*

Table 5. Exercitives in *Iranun* and *Maranaw* Languages

Iranun	English	Maranaw	English
<i>Liyu ka dun ka khapakay dun a makabalingka.</i>	You may now go out and go home.	<i>Imanto na ipaganounce akun rekano na dadun imanto a opisina ka adun a pekawma a bagyo.</i>	I am announcing that we are postponing our work for today due to the incoming typhoon.
<i>Suka e biyaloy akun a olowan a barangay.</i>	I appoint you as Barangay Chairman	<i>Siyaparan ako o pamomolong mipantag ko karata o kapanigupan.</i>	The doctor warned me about the dangers of smoking.
		<i>Aya kabaya akun ka maling tano.</i>	I vote that we all go home.
		<i>Suka e miyapili aken a olowan a barangay.</i>	I appoint you as Barangay Chairman.

Lastly, there is another way to say the word –appoint in *Iranun*:

Suka e biyaloy akun a olowan a barangay (I appoint you as Barangay Chairman). *Iranun*

This type of illocutionary act manifested someone’s ability to exert rights and authorities. The findings have shown that the *Iranun* speaker gives command to somebody to leave and go home. One of the attributes of this act is to appoint a seat on the vacated position like the chairman of the locality. Meanwhile, an announcement was given by the leader of the community for the suspension of office work because of bad weather. The patient has been warned by the doctor, thus he needed to follow advice or else he may face the consequences. More so, the assertion of right is expressed by the speaker to cast his vote.

Equally important, this signified that one cannot ask the person or give a command unless he is the person in authority. Like the scenario at home where parents have the direct command over their children. Giving of announcements and other legal aspects of leadership in the community, are rights and privileges played by leaders in order to immediately deliver the services to the people. Conversely, on the health issues, doctors have the jurisdiction in applying principles and procedures of medicine in order to prevent certain illnesses and diseases, giving diagnoses, and for the maintenance of physical and mental health.

Thus, the giving of a decision in favor or against a certain course of action of advocacy of it, a decision that something is to be so, as distinct from a judgment that is so (Searle, 1975). In addition, it fixes what is permissible in a certain realm where the speaker must have the appropriate and requisite authority (Austin, 1962). This also means ceremonial in nature (McGowan, 2009).

Intelligibility between Iranun and Maranaw languages

Table 6 portrays the Swadesh list showing the intelligibility between *Iranun* and *Maranaw* languages. By using the illocutionary markers, these languages show their closeness and easy understanding when speakers converse. In

expositives for example, the word affirms and confirms do not have the same equivalent in both languages. The same with commissives for vow, promise, and pledge. Almost the same in behavitives, however, during the interview, an *Iranun* speaker used a distinct word that is not intelligible among the *Maranaw* speakers. For verdictives and exercitives, both languages used the same terminologies with the same meaning and used in the same contexts and situations.

Table 6. Swadesh list on the intelligibility of the *Maranaw* and *Iranun* languages

English	<i>Maranaw</i>	<i>Iranun</i>
A. Expositives affirmed found out not	<i>myabunar</i> <i>kyatokawan</i> <i>naba</i>	<i>myabunar</i> <i>kyatokawan</i> <i>naba</i>
B. Commissives vow promise pledge	<i>ibet</i> <i>ibet</i> <i>psapa</i>	<i>ibet</i> <i>ibet</i> <i>psapa</i>
C. Behavitives apologize/forgive forgive felicitations	<i>prilay</i> <i>sampayn</i>	<i>prilaiya</i> <i>*ampon</i> <i>sampayn</i>
D. Verdictives You can leave now	<i>baling</i>	<i>baling</i>
E. Exercitives go out appoint warn vote	<i>liyu ka den</i> <i>biyaloy/miyapili</i> <i>siyaparan</i> <i>kabaya</i>	<i>liyu den</i> <i>biyaloy/miyapili</i> <i>siyaparan</i> <i>kabaya</i>

Based on the analysis of the data, it can be confirmed that both languages are indeed intelligible. This means that they do understand each other and used almost the same terminologies in the same contexts and situations. In the same vein, this finding apprised that these ethnolinguistic groups are close with each other. More so, their religion, beliefs, and their ideologies made them the true keepers of the Illana Bay, Camp Abubakar and pristine waters of the Lanao Lake which has been the source of their living and the bailiwick of their existence and identity.

Correspondingly, because of the central position of the *Iranun*, speakers of this language have no apparent difficulty in understanding either of its neighbors even though its neighbors have moderate difficulty understanding it (Fleischman, 1981). The recent comparison made by Grimes (2002) showed that *Iranun* is 85% cognate with *Maranaw*. Intelligibility is often used to classify speech varieties as languages or dialects. In drawing the distinction, the degree of intelligibility between speakers of two different speech varieties can often indicate how close these varieties are. While talking about intelligibility as a criterion for the language-dialect classification or to group dialects of one language family, linguistic aspects like phonological and lexical factors are usually considered. Grammatical factors, on the other hand, are normally not focused upon when intelligibility is concerned. Grammatical divergence is an important factor in distinguishing different languages within one language family (Szeto, 2000).

4. Implications for Practice

As part of the *Danao* languages, both the *Iranun* and the *Maranaw* languages share the same language. The findings showed that they are indeed mutually intelligible. The municipalities where this study was conducted are geographically close and the citizens interacted in different ways. Also, since they embraced Islam as a religion, it is indeed easy for them to interact with each other.

In this manner, the linguistic world could be able to sustain to evaluate more into the different surface of the language. This language documentation eventually helps linguists who can use the findings of this study as a reference since it is difficult for the outsiders to enter in the said localities. More so, terminologies can be incorporated in the teaching of MTB-MLE among the *Maranaw* and *Iranun* speakers to encourage them not to bury it oblivion. This is because majority of the younger generation opted not to use their own language. They prefer to switch to the language spoken by the majority in the society.

Lastly, language is a social structure determined by the authority and power of the speaker to express his discourse. Words can be powerless or have no impact to the interlocutor unless it was not fulfilled before. We must be careful with whatever we say to people since all of these have greater impacts. Therefore, we have to keep our word and avoid something that may destroy our image and credibility- may it be within the family, at work or when dealing with people coming from the different walks of life. Everyone deserves respect regardless of position.

Furthermore, this paper emphasizes the important role of linguists in the propagation of languages and by preserving the rich cultural heritage. Though these Danao languages are not considered and not on the list of endangered languages, but because of the scarcity of relative literatures, findings of this study could fill those gaps. Readers will be given the background knowledge of these unique languages spoken by ethnolinguistic groups in Southern Philippines.

5. Implications for Future Research

Indeed, this study gave us the new perspectives especially on the limited resources relative to the *Maranaw* and *Iranun* languages. The Municipalities of Buldon, Barira, and Matanog where the informants were taken, have been the place of conflicts and even the locus of the All-Out-War during the Estrada Administration. Also, the ongoing conflicts among the clans which they called *ridu* (family feud) halted any researchers to conduct a research on the language of this ethnolinguistic group in the Province of Maguindanao.

This study plays a significant role for the next researchers to look into the different facets especially the phonological aspect to identify a difference on the utterances of words based on the geographical location of the speaker. During the course of the study, the informants, especially the *Iranun* expressed that they are considered by the Maranaos as *Maguindanaons* and *Maranaws* by the *Maguindanaons*. In addition, this is also to give a better picture on putting isogloss its domain in the study of these languages whereby researchers could identify the linguistic boundary.

Furthermore, an in-depth study of the *Iranun* language should be carried out to make a comparison of speakers along the coast of the Illana Bay and those along the mountainous areas. This could be the best avenue to have more records of this language and can be presented in local and international fora. Above all, publication of this research in the Scopus Indexed Journal will be of greater consideration and to index the said language in the Ethnologue.

Lastly, since this study shows that the speakers of *Maranaw* and *Iranun* are intelligible, it is a must for a common teaching guide that the Department of Education has to develop. This would not only unite the two tribes for a common goal but for achieving everlasting peace in Mindanao.

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