

Rinconada: The People and its Language Explored

Ronnie B. Rubi (EdD)¹, Maria Cristina C. Molina (MAED)²
Bicol State College of Applied Sciences and Technology, Naga City,
Philippines
¹ronbrubz@gmail.com, ²ceeceemolina@yahoo.com

Asia Pacific Journal of
Education, Arts and Sciences
Vol. 7 No.4, 37-43
October 2020, Part II
P-ISSN 2362-8022
E-ISSN 2362-8030
www.apjeas.apjmr.com
ASEAN Citation Index

Date Received: June 25, 2020; Date Revised: September 18, 2020

Abstract –*Bicol Region is a home of different dialects. It is rich in culture, traditions, and diversity. In this study, Rinconada was explored by utilizing the Qualitative-field research methodology. Specifically, it determined the concentration of BikolRinconada speakers in the region, described the Rinconada dialect, and identified common words and phrases in Rinconada. District 5 of Bicol is known as the Rinconada district. The study have 212 community respondents from 30 household visited. Based on the findings, 90% of the Rinconada district are speaking Rinconada. However, only 37% of the residences in Buhi speak Rinconada. It was also found that there is a significant correlation between the culture and tradition associated with the Rinconada dialect.*

Rinconada People are festive in nature and values family ties. Meanwhile, residents claimed that they are competent enough with the Rinconada dialect despite of low percentage of Rinconada people who can do both writing and speaking the dialect. Based on the correlation test, Rinconada Dialect Competency is highly associated with its culture. Thus, cultivating the rinconada dialect will also cultivate culture. Promoting and implementing programs with an emphasis in rinconada writing and speaking is recommended. Tourism, along with education may also benefit if the dialect is enriched.

Keywords – *Bicol Region, Dialect, Language, Rinconada*

INTRODUCTION

Growing position on this planet has its unique characteristics, culture, and customs. Moreover, various localities have their languages, and also have their dialects. One locality preserves its unique culture through its language, or dialect.

Blended cultures become ordinary as people exchange goods and ideas. It can be argued, however, that communication is restricted by language in this age of globalization. Individual dialects could even further

divide people. Dialects, however, convey the specific qualities of a given region. Dialects are essential to our world's international business and overall well-being.

Dialect is defined as “a distinct linguistic form peculiar to a region or social group but which, nevertheless, can be understood by speakers of other forms of the same language” [1]. A dialect is unique to an area or community. Although a small group is part of a broader community (for example, the United States), they are differentiated by their specific mode of speech. Their individuality gives them a sense of liberation. People from a given region also take pride in their dialects. They are going to defend their pronunciations or phrases towards other groups. Differences are boosting cultural diversity and increasing independence. Our culture wouldn't make headway in industry or technology without variety.

Distinctly different dialects are not inherently a community's negative trait, but such distinctive language distinguishes a specific area or group of people from others. Differences in dialects include pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and everyday words that are readily identifiable from region to region.

The people within the same territory or locality speaks the regional dialect, while the people of the same group, such as class, ethnicity, education, or occupation, speak the social dialect. Thus, the two primary forms of dialects [1]. In general, the enormous diversity of languages exists in heterogeneous communities where the scope of contact from most individuals is limited to a local region. These mixed communities make their people to be bilinguals or multilingual as influenced by their interactions, such as trade and other socio-economic and inter-cultural transactions [2].

The people of Nigeria and Papua New Guinea, for example, speaks about 250 and 800 languages, respectively. And, even the residents of a small state in India, called Nagaland, utter 19 major languages [1].

On the other hand, Japan, which is considered an exception, a vast majority of its people speak a single

language. Language diversity is the norm worldwide. Linguistic variation within a single nation is partially a result of regional scale and geo-climatic diversification. In fact, India, none of its 17 official languages are spoken by 30 percent of its total populace. Likewise, several languages are spoken in other giant countries such as Brazil, Russia, the Central Asian Republics, and China. Smaller nations, by comparison, are more likely to exhibit linguistic uniformity. With the main exceptions of Belgium and Switzerland, the countries within Western Europe, when singularly viewed, speak a homogeneous language, with each prevailing in a reasonably limited region [1].

The Philippines, noted for its enormous diversity, has a wide variety of political, social and economic dialects. Over the last few decades, languages such as Agta Villa Viciosa, Agta Dicamay, Ayta Tayabas and Ermitaño have been extinguished; many Filipino languages are now on the endangered list. [3]. Nevertheless, the greatest challenge to the Philippine languages is the deliberate and unconscious decision of families not to pass on their language and culture, preferring instead to give preference to regional and national languages. In addition, tragic to the extinction of languages that lack writing systems or sufficient historical records. However, for some provinces, children who are fluent in regional and national languages are viewed more favorably than those who are specialized in the native languages of their locality.

The Bicol Peninsula, a Philippine territory with a rich history, customs, and religious activities, occupies the peninsula in the southernmost island of Luzon and extends to Masbate and Catanduanes, which are both island provinces. Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, and Sorsogon are the provinces on the mainland. Most of the languages spoken in this region are subsumed under the heading 'Bikol' and, due to geo-social diversity, also have dialect variations [4].

However, the considerable distinction of some dialect variations from the standard dialect can, upon thorough study, consider them languages in their own right. The languages spoken in the region which are not considered to be Bikol are (1) Tagalog, spoken in most of Camarines Norte up to a line running roughly NE-SW in the general vicinity of the capital city of Daet, and (2) Masbateño, spoken on the main island of Masbate, which is commonly believed to be similar to the southern Visayan languages [4]. Under the heading 'Bikol' the standard dialect is usually attributed to the traditional cultural center of Naga City and its immediate environs. This dialect is spoken without significant variation in

Camarines Norte southeast of Daet, Camarines Sur, except for a section called Rinconada near Western Albay, Eastern Albay, including Legazpi City, and most of Northern Sorsogon. The major influences on this dialect are from the neighboring language areas. Standard Bikol gets influenced by its adjacent dialect, which, in effect, become similar to it. That is the case in Camarines Norte and Western Camarines Sur, which are nearby Tagalog speaking locality [5].

"Rinconada" is a term referring to people who speak Bikol Rinconada. These are the group of communities living in Baa, Bato, Buhi, Bula, Iriga, and Nabua. The study describes the language and people of the Rinconada area. This study may give historical importance in the culture and history of the Bicol Region. Moreover, this study may contribute to educators and curriculum developers by providing insights into the local community learning system, especially now that the K-12 Mother tongue-based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) is implemented [6].

That is to say, MTB-MLE education that starts in the mother tongue and transitions to additional languages, mainly Filipino and English. It is meant to address the Filipinos high functional alphabet, where language plays an important factor. Because the child's language makes it easy for him/her to express himself/herself, there is no fear of making mistakes. It encourages children to participate actively in the learning process because they understand what is being debated and what is being asked of them. They can use their mother tongue immediately to create and describe their universe, express their ideas, and add new concepts to what they already know [7].

Furthermore, the study contributes to the effort of the country to preserve and promote the local community language. It is thus contributing to the preservation and promotion of the culture and tradition of its people.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims to assess the Rinconada speakers. Specifically, it sought to describe the terminology "RINCONADA," determine the numbers of Bikol Rinconada speakers within the district, take notes of the local language used and culture by the community, Residents' competency perception of the Rinconada culture and language, and test the significant correlation between dialect competency and culture.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Method

In this study, a Qualitative-field research method was utilized. The study observed, interacted, and

understood Rinconada’s while they are in a natural environment. A research-made questionnaire is used to gather the data needed in the study. Besides, the researcher conducted direct observation and participation observation with the Rinconada’s. Interviews with the community leaders of the different municipalities of the Rinconada District, namely: Baao, Bato, Bula, Iriga, and Nabua, to gather the necessary data for the study were also conducted. To measure the validity of the inquiry, references and similar researches were incorporated.

Research Locale and Participants

The study was conducted in the Rinconada District of Camarines Sur, Bicol Region, Philippines. There are six municipalities included in the Rinconada District, which are Baao, Bato, Bula, Iriga, and Nabua.

Table 1. Respondents of the Study

Municipalities	Number of Community Leaders	Number of Households observed/visited
Baao	5	30
Bato	5	33
Buhi	5	38
Bula	5	33
Iriga City	5	36
Nabua	5	42
Total	30	212

Shown in Table 1 are the participants of the study. The study interviewed 30 community leaders or barangay captains of the Rinconada district. In addition, 212 households were identified as residents of the Rinconada district for several generations are visited, observed and identified.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data gathering procedures for the study are key informant interviews, interviews, observations, and site visits.

The community leaders are the participants for the Focus Group Discussion. Key informant interviews was also conducted to have first-hand knowledge regarding the Rinconada District; it’s people, language, and environment. The interviews are loosely structured, relying on a list of issues needed in the study, and the discourse was recorded.

Observations and Community Emersion were also conducted to gather the necessary data to understand the Rinconada. Record of observations were secured through

video-tapes, voice records and journals. Thematic Analysis were utilized to analyse the data gathered.

A survey method were also utilized to determine the perception of the respondents in their competency of the Rinconada Dialect and the present culture in the area.

Research Instrument

For the key informant interviews, a list of guide questions were utilized to tackle the needed topics in the study. The research instruments are observations sheets, journals, video and audio recording devices. The list of guide questions are validated by the committee on research.

Data Analysis

To determine the residents’ perception of their culture and language, the data for the culture present in the Rinconada area were analysed through a thematic analysis. It is a scalable data analysis program which is used by qualitative researchers to create themes from data from interviews. This methodology is versatile in that there is no particular study method associated with thematic analysis; to name a few, it can be used for case studies, phenomenology, generic qualitative investigation and narrative investigation [8]. Data were also analyzed through the use of getting the statistical mean and a likert scale. Statistical means were derived by identifying, and including in the interview questions, some key customs and traditions and the respondents were asked on the level of their knowledge and practice of that specific custom and tradition. The likert scale used in the study is presented in Table 2. To examine the relation between Rinconada Competency and Culture, Pearson correlation analysis was employed.

Table 2. Likert Scale

Scale	Verbal Description
1.0 - 1.80	Not at All
1.81 - 2.60	Barely
2.61-3.40	Fair
3.41-4.21	Fairly Well
4.21-5.00	Very Well

Ethical Considerations

The institutional research committee standards guided the conduct of the study. Furthermore, informed consent were secured from the respondents after the explanation of their rights and assurance of their anonymity and privacy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dialect is a specific form of a language that has great significance to a nationality. "Rinconada" is derived from the Rinconada District in Camarines Sur where the language originated, developed, and is primarily spoken [9],[10]. It was also referring to people who speak the Bikol Rinconada.

Rinconada is situated in the southern tip of Camarines Sur Provinces in the main island of Luzon. They are in the fifth congressional district, with a voting population of 240, 559 [11].

The majority of the 5th Congressional district of Camarines Sur speak Rinconada, which is composed of Nabua, Iriga City, Bato, Baao, Bula and Buhi. However, majority of the municipality of Buhi speaks Buhinon. It can also be observed that the dialect is dominant at the neighboring localities such as, Pili (the provincial capital), the western barangays of Ocampo, the northern barangays of Polangui and Libon in Albay.

Table 3. Concentration of the Rinconada Bikol Speakers

Town	Population	No of Rinconada Speakers*	Percentage*
Baao	58,849	58849	100%
Bato	52,137	52137	100%
Buhi	69,430	25457	37%
Bula	69,430	69430	100%
Iriga City	111,757	111757	100%
Nabua	83,874	83874	100%
Total	445,477	401504	90%

Table 3 shows the number of rinconada residents based from the data of the Annual Report of the Provincial Tourism Office, 2016 [18]. It is identified that only 90% are rinconada speaking. Furthermore only 37% are rinconada speaking residents coming from the Municipality of Buhi.

Bikol Rinconda - Dialect Description

For the same thing, many cultures are using different words or pronunciations. Specific pronunciations help to give a culture its identity. Exact translations are many times impossible. One language, for example, may have a particular word for something, whereas another does not. If the same set of words and pronunciations were standardized for each language, cultures would lose their identities.

The Iriga variant is standard for Bikol Rinconada. In Bula, Baao, and even in Buhi and Bato, it is more appropriate, unlike the Nabua version that is only backed by the city of Balatan. Though the population of Iriga and much of the Rinconada District came from Nabua during

pre-Spanish period, it retains much of the original accent, lexicon, and vocabularies of the old RinconadaBikol. But the way they speak the language is much more similar to Iriga than Nabua, though, for example, Baao and Bato lost the schwa sound / ʔ / and have additional intonation. Despite these differences, the different variants of this language are highly and intelligible to one another. However, the standard Rinconada Bikol-Iriga version can and must be used for documentation, legal purposes, and reference. Even if the mother of all Rinconada is Nabua, ethnically speaking, but concerning standardizing and legalizing this rich language, there should always be a variant of Iriga.

Some Words, Phrases, or Sentences you will hear in the Rinconada Community are listed in Table 4.

Table 4. Common words, phrases and sentences in Rinconada

Rinconada	English
Iká	You
Subsubán	To burn
Uno ngaranmo?	What is your name?
Uda	None
Magpánik	To climb
Diri	No
Amo	Yes
Nagraan	Died
Ako nag-aalopna	I am hungry.
Di ko man isi.	I don't know.
Marongóg	To hear
Magkaón	To eat
Buwáy	to live, be alive
Magbukás	to open, uncover
Magtanóm	to plant
Magsábi	to say
mailing	to see
magtayí'	to sew
mag-ola', mag-ula'	to sit
magtúrog	to sleep
magparóng	to sniff, smell
saksák	to stab, pierce
Tindóg	to stand
magtabán	to steal
Ayam	Dog
Napa sari na raw?	Where did it go?
Raraga	Teenage girl
Igin	Child
Ngowan	Now
Sap-na	Cook rice
Istoryanamo	Our story
Tawo	People
Ngud	Sibling

People travel and expand their knowledge that includes new languages and dialects. Opening up one's mind encourages imagination. Accumulation of ideas triggers new ideas. Therefore, these interactions contribute to developments and new ways of thought as we communicate globally.

Table 5. Resident's Competency of the Rinconada Dialect

Indicators	Mean	Description
1. Native speaker of Rinconada	3.88	Fair
2. Speaks fluently in Rinconada	4.41	Very Well
3. Can write in Rinconada	2.55	Barely
4. Knows how to write and speak in Rinconada	2.35	Barely
5. Can understand Rinconada but Can not speak it	3.59	Fair
Average	3.35	Fair

Table 5 shows the residents' competency of the Rinconada dialect. In the study, knowledge of the Rinconada dialect is determined. Shown in Table 5, the residents claims that they can fluently speaks in Rinconada ($\bar{x} = 4.41$), however the residents rated that they can't write in Rinconada ($\bar{x} = 2.55$) and most can not do both speaking and writing in Rinconada ($\bar{x} = 2.35$). This results only confirms that most locals are conversant or know how to speak and use Rinconada as a daily language, except of course the people in Buhi (the majority speaks Buhinon, another language of Bicol). However, even the folks in Buhi can talk and communicate well with the people in Rinconada.

Furthermore, based on the visits and observation in the Rinconada district, every single person encountered while doing the study can speak Rinconada Bikol. Furthermore, most have knowledge with other Bicol languages like Bikol Naga and Albay. It is also observed that some also know how to speak and understand the Tagalog language (the national language of the Philippines) and English language.

Rinconada Culture

Based on the thematic analysis with the interviews of the respondents the following themes are deducted.

1. Family

Family in Rinconada areas is Patriarch in nature. The father is the head of the household regardless in who is the breadwinner of the family. The Rinconada family is also observed to stay within the same community or barangay. As one of the respondent "*Sadi kun uno ah*

sabi ni itay, iyo an dapat masunod. Diri ika pwede sumuway, ta ika malapnitan" (In here, what our father say should be followed or else you will be hit.) At the same time, some families have their relatives as neighbors. As said in an interview with a young woman; "*Makatakot sadi maghanap agumon ta ang samong kataraid sana man, baga samo man sanang kapartidaryo*" (It is hard to look for a husband here in our area, since our relatives are also our neighbors.)

In Rinconada, the father is commonly called as "tatay" or "itay" and the mother is "nanay" or "inay". For older brother, "manoy" and for the elder sister is "manay".

2. Customs and Traditions

People of Rinconada start their day with a cup of coffee early at dawn. They are usually loud and all smiles. Thus, festivities are always the highlight of their year. Each municipality have their own festivals and town fiestas. Most festivals are held to give thanks in the bounty blessings they received throughout the year. Furthermore, they also observe the annual festival of the Bicol Region in honor of the Virgin of Penafrancia. In addition, People of Rinconada also believe in "*mas bonga, mas magayon*" (the grander, the better).

In weddings, as mentioned by most elderly "*Diri kumpleto ah kasal kung uda ang Pantomina*." (a wedding is not complete when it does not have the Pantomina). *Pantomina* is being performed by the newly wed and the guests of the wedding are pinning bills in the clothes of the newly wed. *Pantomina* is a love dance with its movements mimicking or patronizing the mating or love making of doves or the "salampati" (bikol term for dove) [12].

Table 6. Cultural Competency of the Rinconada People

Indicator	Mean	Description
1. Know the prevailing beliefs, customs, norms and values of the community	4.25	Very Well
2. Able to adapt the social protocol within the community	4.06	Fairly Well
3. Know what languages are used by the community	4.34	Very Well
4. Attend cultural events within communities	3.90	Fairly Well
5. Interact with the people in the community	4.34	Very Well
Average	4.19	Fairly Well

Cultural Competence is describe as the ability to comprehend, appreciate and interact with people for cultures or belief systems different from one's own.[13]

In Table 6, cultural competency of Rinconada people were presented. Based on the results, the cultural competency of the rinconada's are fairly well. This results indicates that rinconada's are fairly competent in understanding, appreciating and interacting with people eventhough it have different culture than they are.

Table 7. Correlation between Rinconada Dialect Competency and Culture

Dialect	Pearson Correlation	.942**
Competency	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
& Culture	N	160

Typically one particular language refers to a group of people and being part of the group's identity [14]. With this in mind, association of the Rinconada dialect competency and culture were presented in Table 7.

Based on the results of the Pearson Correlation, Table 7 indicate that the strength of association between the Rinconada Dialect Comptenency and Culture is very high ($r = 0.942$), and that the correlation coefficient is very highly significantly different from zero ($P < 0.001$). Also, it can be said that the 94% of the variation in the culture is explained by the competency of the dialect.

This result confirms that culture of a society and the country is associated with the language the people is using [15]. Being cultural competent, one must understand the language, traditions and social protocols in the local community they are part of and being competent in the local language present is a big advantage. Language is a vehicle of communication, whereas communication is the way for you to rich out to people and converse with them thus understanding their culture.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings, of the total number of the population in the Rinconada district, 90% are Rinconada speakers. Fifth District of the Bicol Region is known as the home of rinconada speakers. Besides, the number of Rinconada speakers implies that the dialect is alive and being preserved however it is not cultivated for most of it are not a native speakers of the dialect and only a few can write in the dialect itself.

Rinconada is a language and also a term referring to people speaking BikolRinconada. BikolRinconada is rich in culture and traditions. Their family system is patriarchal in nature, where the father is the head of the family. They start the day with coffee and likes to

celebrate different events. Furthermore, the people of rinconada celebrates different festivals in honor of the bounty harvest and resources and they also values family ties as observed in their community. The customs and traditions of thanksgiving and strong family ties helps the Rinconada people to be able to face daily challenges for they know that more blessings are coming and they know, too that they have a very strong support group in their families. In weddings, Pantomina dance is religiously observed, which also depict the Rinconada trait of sharing.

Language, or in this case, dialect, just like culture, is an essential characteristic of existence of a society. And, as an important resource, the dialect can be a mover of sustainable community development [16]. Thus it is recommended that programs and projects be implemented with an emphasis of cultivating the Rinconada dialect not just for speaking but also for writing in such a way that will preserve the culture and traditions that is binded by the same dialect. Especially now that in the Philippines, K to 12 education promotes the Mother-Tongue Based Multilingual Education for Grade 1 to 3 students, which let the younger generation embrace not just the dialect but at the same time preserve and promote their identity. On another hand, preservation of the dialect and cultivation of the culture and tradition along with it may also enhance tourism activities. Clear policy on preserving the different languages needs to be in place. As also recommended by Mapolisa [17], to adapt it to local needs, the current language policy needs to be revisited with the goal of rebranding it.

Culture cultivation is a significant aspect in enriching and empowering new generations. As old adage Gat Jose Rizal would profess, "He who does not know how to look back at where he came from will never get to his destination." As we thrive to become better members of our own community, it is therefore important to underscore dialect as an enabling component of a just and progressive citizen.

REFERENCES

- [1] Misra, M. (2012, December 26). *What is a Dialect?* Retrieved from <https://www.shareyouressays.com/knowledge/what-is-a-dialect/111281>
- [2] Wolf, J. (2014, May 21). Preserving dialects is good for creativity, innovation, and business. *Viral Wolf: Inbound Marketing Agency*. <https://viralwolf.com/dialects-matter/>
- [3] Headland, T. N. (2003). Thirty endangered languages in the Philippines. *Work Papers of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, University of North Dakota Session*, 47(1), 1

- [4] National Economic and Development Authority (2017). *Bicol Regional Development Plan 2017 – 2022*. Retrieved from <http://www.neda.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/5-Bicol-RDP-2017-2022.pdf>.
- [5] Mintz, M. W. (1971). Sounds which have entered the bikol sound system through the general usage of foreign words. In *Bikol Text* (pp. 23–26). University of Hawai'i Press; JSTOR. [hj](https://www.jstor.org/stable/23290)
- [6] *Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013* (Republic Act 10533). Philippine Congress.
- [7] Mother Tongue- Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) | Capitol University. https://www.cu.edu.ph/?page_id=3290. Accessed 5 June 2020.
- [8] Statistics Solutions (2017, November 7). *Thematic analysis*. Retrieved from <https://www.statisticssolutions.com/thematic-analysis/>
- [9] Bicolano (Iriga) | project gutenber self-publishing—Ebooks | read ebooks online. (n.d.). Retrieved June 1, 2020, from [http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/Bicolano_\(Iriga\)](http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/Bicolano_(Iriga))
- [10] Infogalactic: The planetary knowledge core. (n.d.). *RinconadaBikol language*. Retrieved from https://infogalactic.com/info/Rinconada_Bikol_language
- [11] City Population (n.d.). *Philippines: Regions, provinces, cities, municipalities, urban agglomerations, barangays - population statistics in maps and charts*. Retrieved from <https://www.citypopulation.de/en/philippines/>
- [12] Sarmiento, R. F. A. (2012). Pantomina, Catandunganon Version: Choreographing Identity and the Politics of Dance in Insular Bicol. *Agham-Tao*, 18(1).
- [13] Watson, J. R., Siska, P., & Wolfel, R. L. (2013). Assessing gains in language proficiency, cross-cultural competence, and regional awareness during study abroad: A preliminary study. *Foreign Language Annals*, 46(1), 62-79.
- [14] Hani, U., Azzadina, I., Sianipar, C.P.M., Setyagun, E.H., & Ishii, T. (2012). Preserving cultural heritage through creative industry: A lesson from Saung Angklung Udjo. *Procedia Economics & Finance* 4(2012), 193 – 200. DOI: 10.1016/S2212-5671(12)00334-6
- [15] Kim, L. S. (2003). Exploring the relationship between language, culture and identity. *GEMA Online® Journal of Language Studies*, 3(2).
- [16] The relationship between language and culture defined. (2018, May 11). Day Translations Blog. <https://www.daytranslations.com/blog/language-and-culture/>
- [17] Mapolisa, T. (2013). Indigenous Languages Endangerment in the Universities: A Focus on the Zimbabwe Open University's (ZOU) Tutors and Students' Perceptions. *International J. Soc. Sci. & Education*, 3(2), 278-285.
- [18] Annual Report of the Provincial Tourism Office (2016), Naga City, Philippines