

Title:

How to make a scene in Waray

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Abstract:

Waray is the sixth most widely spoken language in the Philippines, and is the major language spoken on Samar, Eastern Leyte and Eastern Biliran islands. In this paper we provide a fresh look at the system of verb morphology in Waray, taking a layered perspective, similar to that of DeGuzman (1978) for Tagalog. We identify two sets of morphological categories that are employed to construct a verb functioning as a predicate in Waray. These sets, which we name "Stem-forming" and "Perspectivizing" categories, correspond roughly to the traditional distinction between derivational and inflectional categories respectively, though these traditional labels are problematic for our purposes. Stem-forming categories are **non-paradigmatic**, i.e., they are functionally diverse, and several may occur simultaneously in a given verb form. Stem-forming categories express such functions as aspect (imperfective, iterative), actionality (pluraction, distributive, attenuative), and valence (causative, applicative, reciprocal), among others. Perspectivizing categories, on the other hand, are **paradigmatic**, i.e., they are restricted to exactly two well-defined dimensions -- transitivity and modality, and one and only one Perspectivizing category completes a fully independent verb. This approach precludes the necessity of positing circumfixes, ambi-fixes, or multifixes, with such forms as *ginhatagan* 'gave to' consisting of a root *hatag*, plus a Stem-forming suffix *-an*, creating a stem *hatagan* 'give to'. This stem then receives the Perspectivizing prefix *gin-*, thus forming a complete verbal predicate. While certain combinations of Stem-forming and Perspectivizing categories are more common than others, there are few absolute cooccurrence restrictions. What restrictions do exist are semantically motivated (e.g., a requirement that imperfective aspect be accompanied by iterativity for inherently punctual events). We document, exemplify and argue for thirteen Stem-forming and thirteen Perspectivizing categories based on a large corpus of natural spoken and written discourse. Together, these sets of morphological categories provide a rich and very efficient communicative resource for Waray speakers and writers.