

# Northern Catandunganon Men and Women Speakers in Focus: Investigating Angry Registers

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47175/rielsj.v4i2.681>

| Richard Sambajon Agbayani<sup>1</sup> | Jimmylen Zuñiga-Tonio<sup>2</sup> |

<sup>1</sup> Mariano Marcos State University, Department of Languages and Literature, Batac Campus, Philippines

<sup>2</sup> Catanduanes State University, Philippines

<sup>1</sup>[rsagbayani@mmsu.edu.ph](mailto:rsagbayani@mmsu.edu.ph)

<sup>2</sup>[jztonio@gmail.com](mailto:jztonio@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

*Angry Registers (ARs) are evident in situations where they are used, such as when someone is angry. This study endeavored to examine the characteristics and functions of angry registers in the discourse of 90 participants (45 men and 45 women) from four municipalities of Northern Catanduanes region in Bicol, Philippines. The data collection was ensured through the use of observation sheets and follow-up interviews. The investigation is grounded on the perspectives of Speech Register Theory, and is quantitative-qualitative in nature. Findings revealed that there are 26 angry registers used; 14 from male and 19 from female speakers. These ARs are classified as nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Noun ARs are related to body parts, person, animals, and inanimate objects. Verb ARs prompt an action or movement or imply a threat. Adjectival ARs are all words that negatively describe a person usually associated to female attributes. Participants also are not merely user of one AR in their utterance as instances of two ARs combined are applied. Further, results specified that the primary functions of speaking ARs across genders are the desire to release the feelings of anger and frustrations, to emphasize emotional reactions to others and to express intense emotion without offending others. Generally, women are more likely than men in using these angry registers in discourse.*

## KEYWORDS

*angry registers; characteristics; functions; Philippines; speech register theory*

## INTRODUCTION

The linguistic distinction that corresponds to different contexts of use is known as 'register variation' (Ferguson, 1994; Nidhal Hadi, H. A., & Kadhim, B. J. 2023). Anger is a social event or occurrence that happens recurrently in the Northern Catanduanes region of Bicol in which the application of angry registers is evident. Angry register, according to Tonio & Agbayani (2019), citing Lobel (2013), is typologically unusual and appears to be restricted to the Greater Central Philippine smaller group. When a speaker gets enraged, they will substitute certain nouns, adjectives, and verbs. Although they are present in the language and may be employed without regard to this type of register, swear words and other vulgarities are not necessary for this. The sentences are syntactically and morphologically identical to sentences from the regular register since most lexical items are simply replaced with comparable terms from the angry register.

Despite occasionally showing a small resemblance, the angry register forms are largely unpredictable from the normal register forms (Lobel, 2005). A non-native speaker who had only studied the language's normal register would, in fact, find it impossible to understand angry registers. As Lobel (2005) maintained, the languages of the Bikol region have an unusual feature known as the angry register, which is absent from their closest available

relatives, such as Tagalog and Cebuano. However, Lisboa (1985) study of the Old Bikol angry register revealed that it was a component of the Northern Bikol language 400 years ago.

At least 36 entries in Mintz and Britanico's (1985) Bikol-English Dictionary have notes indicating that the word is uttered in rage. This is where the first angry register appeared. Lobel (2005) broadened the discussion to include three Bikol languages: Northern Bikol spoken in Naga City, the Riconada language of Southern Bikol spoken in Nabua, Camarines Sur, and Southern Sorsoganon. The author looked into the morphological procedures used to coin the AR lexicon in Old Bikol, including infixation, partial replacement, phoneme replacement, and morphological processes. In contrast, the Northern Catanduanons were the subjects of this present study because they were left out of Lobel's 2005 study due to a lack of available speakers. Tonio and Agbayani (2019), on the other hand, initially had an investigation in the context of Northern Catanduanes Bicol, but only on the factors that influence the use of angry registers in conversations. The findings revealed that the setting, gender, relationship, and age difference between the speaker and receiver of ARs affect their use. Hence, they attempt to extend their investigation this time on the characteristics and functions of using ARs across genders.

Along with the assumption that language and emotions are linked, the concept of the angry register fits well. The idea that language alludes to, and thus 'signifies,' things in the environment, including emotions. Angry register can thus be categorized under the lexical and syntactic features of a language used for emotive purpose. Also, the relationship between language and emotion is concerned with language as a tool for understanding emotions, and as such, it can be used as a springboard to investigate the realm of emotions in various languages as well as in various *language games* (Bamberg, 1997). Further, taking these orientations as starting points, some related studies focused on how to analyze emotions like Wierzbicka's (1995) study of language-dependent conceptualizations.

Emotions should be studied as a semantic metalanguage, or in terms of indefinable or primitives, which Wierzbicka (1999) referred to as semantic universals. She revealed in her comparative study that every language assigns a different classification to human emotional experiences and that words like *angry* or *sad* are cultural artifacts of the English language rather than neutral analytical devices. In contrast, Lutz's (1988) research on Ifaluk emotionology emphasized how emotion words aid in the creation of emotional acts. Therefore, it is thought that the use of emotion words serves as an orientation toward a specific *placement* within social interactions. Furthermore, Lakoff and Kovecses (1987) developed a cognitive model of anger in American English. They contend that, despite the variety of angry displays, the inferences drawn from them follow a consistent pattern. The metaphorical and metonymic expressions of anger indicate a solid intellectual framework. The widely accepted cultural model of rage considers its physiological consequences. Anger has a metonymy system linked to the general metonymic principle, which states that the physiological consequences of an emotion represent the emotion and serve as its basic concept.

Finally, many emotion theorists have described emotion as a social phenomenon, not just anger. For instance, Parkinson (1995) proposes that becoming emotionally charged entails making specific identity claims, while Averill (1982) views emotion as a *transitory social role*. While Stearns and Stearns (1985) emphasized that emotions are a complex set of interactions among subjective and objective factors, mediated through neutral and/or hormonal systems, which gives rise to feelings and also general cognitive processes toward appraising the experience, Retzinger (1995) explains that emotions are deeply embedded in the moment-by-moment context in which they occur.

As can be synthesized, the limited available studies carried out regarding spoken angry register shows that this area is not yet fully explored. Several factors might have contributed for this lack of existing studies, one is that this feature is peculiar and unique for these languages and second, spoken angry register is a feature that is absent to other Philippine languages and to other world languages. The researchers, therefore, hoped that looking into this phenomenon would yield up-to-date knowledge and further illuminate existing literature, particularly on its functionality within spoken discourse and how its use varies between men and women. Hence, this study.

### **Research Objectives**

This paper dealt with the use of angry register in Northern Catanduanes Bikol language toward answering the following questions:

1. What angry registers and their characteristics (i.e., corresponding word classification/s, normal register counterparts, and English translation) are usually found in Northern Catanduanes Bikol discourses?
2. What angry registers are utilized in the discourses of Northern Catandunganon male and female speakers?
3. What are the prime functions of spoken angry registers used by the two genders?

### **Theoretical Framework**

The frameworks of *speech register/ register analysis* served as the basis for the study's conceptualization. As said by Biber (1995), register, also known as speech register, refers to linguistic variants that are determined by a circumstance. Ferguson (1994) added that register variation is the linguistic distinction that corresponds to various contexts of use, that is, registers may be classified according to the specific circumstances in which they are used, such as whether they are generated in writing or speech, whether they are interactive, and what their main communicative goals are.

In addition, Biber and Conrad (2009) contend that when viewed from the perspective of register, linguistic qualities are always useful. To put it another way, linguistic elements frequently appear in a register because they are ideally matched to the goals and situational circumstances of that register. The functional analysis is thus the third element of any register description. The definitions of register given above make it evident that the angry register, which is utilized in Northern Catanduanes discourse, and is determined by the speaker's emotional state, fits within the notion of register.

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

Catanduanes, Philippines was the locale of the study as this is where the 90 randomly selected participants (45 males and 45 females) came from. They have varied educational background (i.e., high school level, college level, and college graduate/professional level), and are residing in any of the following hometowns: Pandan, Caramoran, Viga and Panganiban. The participants' involvement was assured through the aid of the inclusion criteria set by the researchers such as being: a) a resident of any of the municipalities that represent the Northern Catanduanes; and b) a speaker of the Northern Catanduanes Bikol language.

Mixed method was the research design used and speech register/ theory of register provided directions in analyzing the data recorded. On one hand, the quantitative aspect of the study was positioned in determining the most predominant angry registers found in Northern Catanduanes Bikol conversation. The ARs existent in the dialog were listed and tabulated in frequencies according to gender and from these frequencies, percentages were

obtained. To establish the accuracy of the angry register listed, its normal register equivalents were provided. Identification of lexical items classified as angry registers were guided by Biber’s (1995) definition, and Lobel’s (2005) description of angry register. The list of angry registers was then analyzed using Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svatic (1985) open classes’ classification of words. The qualitative components, however, were made up of transcriptions of recorded follow-up interviews and observation sheets (Zhu, Li, & Yuan, 2000) to identify the purposes of spoken angry registers. In order to code the data, subsequent themes were shaped through the qualitative data analysis. Lastly, to highlight the disparities in the primary functions between the two genders, frequency count and percentage were used.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Angry Registers and their Characteristics*

The list of common spoken angry registers found in Northern Catanduanes Bikol, along with its corresponding classification, normal register counterpart and English translation is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Common spoken angry registers found in Northern Catanduanes Bikol discourse

	<b>Angry Register</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>Normal Register</b>	<b>English Translation</b>
1	<i>Yamyam</i>	Noun	<i>Taram</i>	Talk
2	<i>Sihong</i>	Noun	<i>Kimot</i>	Mouth
3	<i>Babaknit</i>	Noun	<i>babahi/babay</i>	Girl
4	<i>Langag</i>	Noun	<i>Harong</i>	House
5	<i>Sapnot</i>	Noun	<i>Bado</i>	clothes
6	<i>taringusngog</i>	Noun	<i>Taringa</i>	Ears
7	<i>sama-il</i>	Noun	<i>siki/bitis</i>	Feet
8	<i>Gamadya</i>	Noun	<i>Ayam</i>	Dog
9	<i>Aripantak</i>	Noun	<i>Payo</i>	Head
10	<i>ngaraspak</i>	Noun	<i>Tingo</i>	Teeth
11	<i>Ngaros</i>	Noun	<i>Kimot</i>	mouth
12	<i>Kurasmag</i>	Noun	<i>kusmag/kuting</i>	Cat
13	<i>Lamagtak</i>	Noun	<i>Palas</i>	Bolo
14	<i>Langak</i>	Noun	<i>Aki</i>	Child
15	<i>Katusla</i>	Verb	<i>katurog/katullog</i>	Sleep
16	<i>Layas</i>	Verb	<i>Hari</i>	Leave
17	<i>Siba</i>	Verb	<i>Kaon</i>	Eat
18	<i>Dapangon</i>	Verb	<i>Sapakon</i>	Spank
19	<i>pagtungka</i>	Verb	<i>Pagtunong</i>	Stay
20	<i>Igtok</i>	Verb	<i>piga-inom</i>	take/drink
21	<i>magparingkat</i>	Verb	<i>Sakat</i>	Climb
22	<i>kaharupan</i>	adjective	<i>Makinaon</i>	insatiable
23	<i>Usmak</i>	adjective	<i>bagra/bagla</i>	Filthy
24	<i>Gamaid</i>	adjective	<i>Maimot</i>	greedy
25	<i>Gatlon</i>	adjective	<i>Barik</i>	Flirt
26	<i>kaduratan</i>	adjective	<i>Barik</i>	Flirt

The table shows that there were 14 angry registers classified as nouns, seven as verbs and there were five angry registers under adjectives. Interestingly, the data reveals that angry

registers could also change in word-class through the morphological process called affixation. For example, the angry register (AR) *yamyam* (talk) can be used as a verb and as an adjective by adding prefixes like **magpar-** (v.) *magparyamyam*, **yapa-** (v.) *yapayamyam*, **gapar-**(v.) *gaparyamayam*, which bear the same meaning that is “to talk incessantly.” Meanwhile, adding the suffix **-on** in the AR *yayam* forms the word *yayamon* which means “talkative” which in turn changes its word class from noun to adjective. Another is the AR *sihong*, which can be used as a noun, verb and adjective like *sihungan* (adj.) which means “talkative,” *sihong* (n.) meaning “mouth,” and *gaparsihong* and *yaparsihong* (v.) meaning “to reveal secret or confidential information or to gossip.” The same in the case of AR *siba* (v.) meaning “to eat,” which can be used as a noun by adding the prefix **par-** to form the word *parsiba* (person who eats too much) or by adding prefix **ka-** to form an adjective word *kasiniba* which means “having a selfish desire to have more of something.” The following excerpts below illustrate this:

- (1) *Pagparyamyam man daw.*  
[Stop talking.]
- (2) *Sabi niya sa ako mei ka magparyamyam.*  
[She told me that you should stop talking.]
- (3) *Parihas man kitang ikan pusta gaparyamyam ka!*  
[We both have a bet so stop complaining/talking.]
- (4) *Sinu daw yu puro yamyam sa atong dawha?*  
[Between the two of us, who do you think who is all talk?]
- (5) *Igtarman ko yu akung kaklase ning sihungan ka.*  
[I told my classmate that you are talkative.]
- (6) *Pigatarman ka ta yung sihong mo mae nakapunok.*  
[I am just saying because your mouth keeps on babbling nonsensical things.]

### **Angry Registers in Northern Catanduanes Bikol Male and Female Discourse**

Table 2 summarizes the common angry registers found in Northern Catanduanes Bikol gendered discourse. It also reveals the frequency distribution of each angry register used by both genders.

**Table 2.** Common spoken angry registers found in Northern Catanduanes Bikol male and female discourse

	Angry Register	Classification	Male Speakers		Female Speakers	
			F	%	f	%
1	<i>yamyam</i>	Noun	18	2.86	11	16.42
2	<i>sihong</i>	Noun	19	30.16	17	25.37
3	<i>babaknit</i>	Noun	4	6.35	12	17.91
4	<i>langag</i>	Noun	0	0.00	1	1.49
5	<i>sapnot</i>	Noun	0	0.00	1	1.49
6	<i>taringusngog</i>	Noun	0	0.00	1	1.49
7	<i>sama-il</i>	Noun	4	6.35	3	4.48
8	<i>gamadya</i>	Noun	5	7.94	3	4.48
9	<i>aripantak</i>	Noun	1	1.59	0	0.00
10	<i>ngaraspak</i>	Noun	1	1.59	0	0.00
11	<i>ngaros</i>	Noun	1	1.59	0	0.00
12	<i>kurasmag</i>	Noun	1	1.59	0	0.00
13	<i>lamagtak</i>	Noun	1	1.59	0	0.00
14	<i>langak</i>	Noun	1	1.59	0	0.00

15	<i>katusla</i>	Verb	1	1.59	4	5.97
16	<i>layas</i>	Verb	1	1.59	0	0.00
17	<i>siba</i>	Verb	5	7.94	5	7.46
18	<i>dapangon</i>	Verb	0	0.00	1	1.49
19	<i>pagtungka</i>	Verb	0	0.00	1	1.49
20	<i>igtok</i>	Verb	0	0.00	1	1.49
21	<i>magparingkat</i>	Verb	0	0.00	1	1.49
22	<i>kaharupan</i>	adjective	0	0.00	1	1.49
23	<i>usmak</i>	adjective	0	0.00	1	1.49
24	<i>gamaid</i>	adjective	0	0.00	1	1.49
25	<i>gatlon</i>	adjective	0	0.00	1	1.49
26	<i>kaduratan</i>	adjective	0	0.00	1	1.49
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>63</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100.00</b>

In addition, there were 14 angry registers listed under male discourse, 11 of which are nouns and there were only three verbs. Also, findings of the study reveal that angry register classified as an adjective is not present in the male discourse.

In terms of common angry registers employed by male speakers, the table shows that the six most common ARs used as ranked from highest to lowest are: first, *sihong* (mouth) with 19 frequency counts; second is *yamyam* (talk) with 18 counts; third, *siba* (eat) and *gamadya* (dog) with 5 frequency counts; fourth, *samail* (feet) and *babaknit* (girl/female) with 4 counts. The following instances are demonstrated below:

- (7) *Babaknit, tumunong ka ning yamyam mo! Pagkasinuhungan mo!*  
[Girl, stop talking! You are so talkative.]
- (8) *Ang ribok ninyo man, igwa бага ning gatalam. Di man nakatunong ang mga sihong ninyo*  
[You are so noisy, someone is talking. You cannot keep your mouth shut.]
- (9) *Ano nang sihong mo an, puro ka yamyam.*  
[What kind of mouth do you have? You are all talk.]
- (10) *Habu, masiba ka man garu gamadya.*  
[I don't want to because you eat like a dog.]
- (11) *Pagturtur daw ning hiwas-hiwas ta bagi ka gamadya.*  
[Fix your demeanour, you're like a dog.]
- (12) *Ata nang iyo, pag dai mo pig isog-isog tataprion ko talaga ang samail mong an.*  
[Yes it does. Move or else I swear I will slap your feet.]

On the other hand, the word class of the common spoken angry registers employed by females in their spoken discourse as shown in the table presents that there were 19 angry registers listed and out of the 19 ARs, there are seven nouns and seven verbs found. Meanwhile, five ARs were classified as adjectives. The following excerpts from the observation sheets are given below:

- (13) *Ang sihong mo бага sagmaw.*  
[Your mouth can be likened to pig's feeds.]
- (14) *Pagtabang man daw na babaknit ka!*  
[Girl you have to help!]
- (15) *Ano man pigaparyamyam mo diyan sa ibang taho, deretsuhon mo ako.*  
[You tell me up front, no need to talk to other people.]
- (16) *Yu samail mong babaknit ka, ibaba mo бага to bukong babaknit.*

[Lower your feet, girl, you are so unladylike.]

(17) *Nakaluto na бага si Papa nin pagkaon, ta mae pa kamo gasiba?*  
 [Your father already prepared the food, why are you not eating?]

(18) *Tayun ta sige katusla kaan?*  
 [How come he keeps on sleeping?]

### **Functions of Angry Registers among Male and Female Speakers**

Table 3 discloses the frequency distribution and percentile of each function identified across genders. With respect to the different functions of spoken angry registers to speakers, it is observed from the table that there were ten functions identified.

**Table 3.** Functions of Spoken Angry Registers for Males and Females

Functions of Angry Registers	Male Speakers		Female Speakers	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
To release the feelings of anger and frustrations	18	21.69	27	27.84
To emphasize emotional reactions to others	16	19.28	24	24.74
To show solidarity and group identity	4	4.82	5	5.15
To display aggression without using swear words	10	12.05	8	8.25
To show dominance over others	6	7.23	2	2.06
To express anger without using swear words	5	6.02	9	9.28
To express intense emotion without offending others	16	19.28	16	16.49
To show vocabulary depth and breadth	5	6.02	3	3.09
To sound feminine/girly	0	0.00	1	1.03
To sound masculine/boyish	3	3.61	2	2.06
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Further analysis of data revealed that in terms of functions of spoken angry registers according to males, it appears that the overall results for functions of spoken angry registers reflect those of males. However, the function “to sound feminine or girly” was not provided by male AR speakers. Thus, there were only nine functions of angry registers and a total of 83 responses reported by male angry register speakers.

To support the results are the actual written responses of the participants in the observation sheet such as: (1) *To express my disappointment and frustrations to the wrong deeds my student has been showing to the class;* (2) *To call the attention of my students,* (3) *Because I can't express my emotions without using bad words (angry registers);* (4) *In order to express my true feelings;* (5) *It is to let my friends and classmates understand what I am trying to say;* (6) *It is because sometimes I can no longer control myself, all the words that my mouth speaks when I get frustrated;* and (7) *I use angry register because of too much emotion which triggers me to speak or say such words.*

In the interview transcript, one respondent expressed his idea of using angry register to assert his masculinity, whereas another male AR speaker explicitly stated that angry registers for him is a way to show his disappointment to something related to his listener.

In contrast, the different functions of spoken angry registers reported by female speakers are presented also in the above table. As shown, all the functions listed in the male counterpart are present in female AR speakers' functions, with the exception of the function, “to sound feminine/girly,” which was not included in the list of functions of spoken ARs for males.

To provide basis for the above results, the following excerpts lifted from the written observation sheets are enumerated as follows: (1) *To express my anger without hurting others*

using bad words; (2) For emphasis to make someone do what I am pointing out; (3) I used this to express my angry feelings; (4) To express my feelings without using harsh words; and (5) I use angry registers instead of hurting physically the person I am talking to or saying that can hurt their feeling.

Similar findings were also obtained from the interview, sample transcripts are given below:

- (19) **Researcher:** If you are using AR *na lelessen ba ang uyam mo?*  
[When using AR, does it lessen your anger?]  
**Respondent:** Medyo. [Somehow]  
**Researcher:** Naexpress mob a gusto mo maipa abot? [Can you express yourself using AR?]  
**Respondent:** Iyo po. [Yes.]
- (20) **Researcher:** So on final note lang XXX, *ano ang function para saimo nin AR?*  
[For you, what is the function of AR?]  
**Respondent:** AR ay kahararom na tataramon namo na gapahiwatig nin kauyaman na kahinararom na. Bako na muda kundi mas kararom pa na word na un.  
[ARs are words that convey deep meaning and emotions. It suggests intense anger compared to swear words and it bears deep meaning.]  
**Researcher:** So *ibig sabihon ba pigagamit mo ang AR para ipaabot sa kausap mo na nauyam ka na talaga?*[So you're saying that you're using AR to inform your listener that you are really angry?]  
**Respondent:** *Iyo po* [yes] for emphasis *po para maalaman niya na seryosong nauyam po ako.*  
[For emphasis to inform him/her that I am really mad.]
- (21) **Researcher:** So *naisip mo ba na pagagamit ka kauni pigapahiling mo na babaye ka?*  
[So you think using angry words represents your femininity?]  
**Respondent:** *Dai mas lalaki ang pigapahiling ko.*  
[No, I think using AR shows masculinity]
- (22) **Researcher:**...*pag yagamit mo ang angry register, anong message yapakita mo?*  
[When you use angry register, what message you convey to your listener?]  
**Respondent:** *Yapakita mo na nauyam ka na, na magpunok na sila.*  
[I show them that I am already angry and that they should stop.]

### **Angry Registers and their Characteristics**

In the pursuit of determining and describing the angry registers of Northern Catanduanes Bikol conversations, 26 ARs emerged from the analysis which justifies the richness of ARs in this culture. Fourteen angry registers were classified as nouns, seven as verbs and there were five angry registers under adjectives. As discovered, angry registers can change word class via a morphological process known as affixation. The findings in this study correlate to the claim of Lobel (2005) that words in the normal register and angry register share morphological commonalities. According to Lobel's (2005) assertion, angry words adopt the same affixes for verbal focus and aspect as do words in the standard register words. However, it should be noted that the findings revealed that affixation of the root angry register not only results in the conjugations of verb angry registers, but it also led to word-class change.

In addition, out of the 14 noun ARs listed and identified, there were six ARs which refer to parts of the body. Meanwhile, there were two ARs which refer to person and for animals. Also, three angry registers found to pertain to inanimate objects. With regard to angry registers classified as verbs, the list shows three ARs which refer to the act of satisfying the basic physiological needs of humans. Conversely, angry registers classified as verbs either



express an action or movement from one point to another or imply a threat that suggests intense emotion. Lastly, adjectival angry registers are all words that negatively describe a person, two of which are associated to female attributes.

The study's findings are consistent with Lakoff and Kövecses' (1987) contention that conceptual metaphors and metonymies are crucial to understanding rage. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) suggested that the notions we live by in the most basic way originate as a result of our contact with the physical environment. Further, Dobrovolskij and Piirainen's (2005) claim that the essential similarity of people and their physiological functioning across cultures results in body-based conceptual metaphor that can be regarded as ubiquitous in all cultures, if not "universal," supports the study's findings on the various angry registers referring to body parts. Also, angry registers denoting animals like dog and cat, for instance, indicates that the aggressive behavior that is typical of a wild animal metaphorically equates to angry behavior, which in turn metonymically stands for anger.

Thus, it can be deduced that the common angry registers identified above are greatly influenced by the context by which Northern Catanduanons live by. The angry register does not only reflect the conceptualization of anger but it also suggests how Northern Catanduanons talk about anger and at least in part, suggests what they feel.

### **Angry Registers in Northern Catanduanes Bikol Male and Female Discourse**

The fact that male speakers of Northern Catanduanes Bikol use angry registers is in line with Kövecses's (2000) claim that the concept of anger is motivated by human physiology and produced by a particular social and cultural environment. This is supported by Wierzbicka's (1999) argument that the emotion terms that commonly appear in the discourse cannot be considered as universal, rather they are culture-specific. Following Kövecses (2000) and Wierzbicka (1999) claims, it can be said that the common angry registers found in male discourse of Northern Catanduanes Bikol represent the males' emotional concepts of anger that have a basis in their bodily/physical, societal and cultural experiences. Likewise, the use of angry registers referring to parts of the body like mouth and feet is in line with the result of the research done by Aksan (2006) on Turkish metaphors of anger. Aksan (2006) study revealed that Turkish aggressive behavior expressions are more often associated with parts of body like the tongue and the eyes. Also, with Yu's (1995) findings that Chinese conceptual metaphors of anger tend to utilize more body parts, especially internal organs when depicting anger.

Moreover, the absence of adjective angry registers in male discourse supports Lakoff's (1973) observation of men's and women's language. According to Lakoff (1973), women tend to use 'empty' adjectives which are strongly marked as feminine. Thus, the absence of adjective angry registers implies that male speakers tend to delimit their expressions of anger to concrete or more direct words like the use of nouns and verbs, rather than to describe their emotional state or feelings.

On the other side of the coin, results of the study suggest that female speakers tend to use more spoken angry registers than males. These findings are similar to Vainik's (2006) study which discusses the notion that women have better competence in emotion, thus are regarded as having higher productivity of emotional words. Also, the findings support O'Kearney's (2004) claims that "females more frequently report or express emotion terms referring to inner-directed emotions and to more intense positive and negative feelings" (p.916). Similarly, the occurrence of more varied word class of angry registers in female discourse in this study corroborates with the study made by Wang and Hsieh (2007) where it was found that women tend to use adjectives and verbs while males tend to use nouns. In addition,

Chentsova-Dutton and Tsai's (2007) findings that women list more emotion words about 1.5 times than men support the results of this study.

Meanwhile, the proliferation of angry registers specifically among female college graduate/professional level can be explained by the age gap between the speakers. Results of the interview conducted revealed that angry registers are mostly learned from old female speakers of Northern Catanduanes Bikol. It was also revealed that women are associated with the use of angry registers than males because the respondents perceived females to be more expressive than males. However, the findings also show that young speakers of Northern Catanduanes Bikol are often reprimanded by their parents whenever they use angry registers, partly due to the negative connotations associated with it. Given this background, it is not surprising that angry registers are commonly found among older generations than among the young ones. To illustrate this claim, the following interview excerpts are provided:

- (23) **Researcher:** *So pag sinabi ta sa luwas, mostly sa kabarkada ba or kaedaran mo siya nadadangog?* [So when you say outside, are you referring to your circle of friends or other kids of the same age?]  
**Respondent:** *Ung mga nakakatanda sako.* [Those who are older than me]
- (24) **Researcher:** I see. So, basically *namatidan mo ang* [you've learned] angry registers *sa* friends, barkada, outside *nin halong?* [The house]  
**Respondent:** O kaya sa mga **gurang**. [Or from old folks]
- (25) **Researcher:** So who do you think use AR more often, male or female?  
**Respondent:** Mga **gurang na babahi** [old women]  
**Researcher:** *Sa hiling mo ngata daw ang mga lalaki bako madalas magamit AR?*  
[In your opinion, why do you think men do not usually use ARs?]  
**Respondent:** **Kimutan kaya pano mga babaye buda mas expressive.**  
[Women are talkative and they are more expressive]  
**Researcher:** *Sa mga lalaki ano sa hiling mo usual form vocabulary ninda pag nauyam?*  
[For males, what do you think is the usual form of their vocabulary when angry?]  
**Respondent:** **Gasamay sila.** [They curse/swear.]
- (26) **Researcher:** *Pero sa harong dai ka gagamit ARs?*  
[But when you're at home, you don't use AR?]  
**Respondent:** *Mi po ta yaungahan ako pag gagamit ako ARs ta kaliaan daa dungogon.*  
[No because my parents scold me when they hear me use ARs because it sounds awful.]

Surprisingly, combination of spoken angry registers is also being employed by the speakers of Northern Catanduanes Bikol. As exposed, some speakers of angry registers do not only use one AR in their utterance, rather there were instances when two registers are combined by the speaker. The most common angry register combinations identified in the discourse are the following: *sihong* [mouth] + *yamyam* [talk]; *sihong* [mouth] + *babaknit* [female]; *yamyam*[talk] + *babaknit* [female]; *sihong* [mouth]+ *siba* [eat]; *gatlon/durat* [flirt] + *babaknit* [female]; *siba* [eat] + *gamadya* [dog]; *yamyam* [talk] + *siba* [eat]; *yamyam* [talk] + *harop*[greedy]; and *yamyam* [talk]+ *gamadya* [dog].

The results of the analysis suggest that angry registers *sihong* and *yamyam* are often used interchangeably by speakers of Northern Catanduanes Bikol. This is not surprising given the fact that the mouth is often associated with talking and vice-versa. The same interpretation applies to ARs *sihong* and *siba* which are interrelated and linked with eating. Interestingly, the combinations of angry registers also imply attributes that are frequently associated with

females. Take for example the case of the AR *babaknit* which co-occurs with the ARs *yamyam* or talking, *sihong* or mouth which also connotes speaking, and *gatlon/durat* or flirt. This only shows that angry registers are influenced by the societal and cultural constructs of the speakers.

Thus, the importance of cultural factors, along with physiological reasons (Kövecses, 2000), in the analysis of gendered spoken angry registers cannot be ignored. The culture of a society determines the patterns of environments in which these angry registers can occur. It only suggests that there is indeed a strong correlation between linguistic and situational factors and that the use of men and women's spoken angry registers is intertwined with the norms of the society.

### **Functions of Angry Registers among Male and Female Speakers**

The interview with the participants clearly depicts the use of angry register to emphasize degree of seriousness and to let the recipient know that the speaker is already angry. Conversely, some participants illustrate the use of angry register to lessen the anger of the speaker and to convey a message to the listener. Unexpectedly, in one of the interviews, the female respondent expressed her view of using angry register to show masculinity or to sound boyish. The respondent explained that she uses AR to show that she could also talk like a man, despite being a woman. It only suggests that in the case of this particular respondent, AR is associated to men's talk and using it enables her to show some degree of masculinity.

Based on the findings, the functions "to release the feelings of anger and frustrations" and "to emphasize emotional reactions to others" are both considered as the top two functions for both male and female AR speakers. Angry registers which are primarily used by male and female speakers to release anger and frustrations can be explained by the interrelationship of anger and frustrations, that is, the use of angry registers is seen by both male and female speakers as a channel to vent out universal emotion like frustration which results in the feeling of anger.

Moreover, the use of angry registers as a tool to emphasize emotional reactions to others is found to be the means for both male and female AR speakers to stress his emotional state to the AR recipient. Both male and female AR speakers take advantage of the use of ARs to express and to regulate their emotional reactions to others. By emphasizing his emotional reaction, AR speakers are able to use angry registers to assume their feelings, that is, by putting their feeling of anger into the emotion words.

Similarly, the function "to express intense emotion without offending others" plays a rather peculiar aspect dictated by social and cultural norm. The objective of the AR speaker to not to offend others is somehow contradictory to the expected reaction from someone who is at the height of anger. Interestingly, AR speakers still take into consideration the perception of the AR recipient, that is, not to offend him/her in any way despite the fact that the listener is the object of the speaker's anger. It only shows that angry registers are perceived to be an expression of anger, rather than as means to inflict insult, sarcasm or threat to the listener. In other words, angry registers are form of expressions to show anger, rather than as a tool to impose emotional and psychological pain to its recipient. Thus, it could be argued that ARs are used to inform other of the emotional state of its user.

### **CONCLUSION**

The findings of the study fundamentally spring the impression that both men and women in Northern Catanduanes Bicol tend to use angry registers, though it was found that females used more of these words compared to men. In addition, a record on combination of spoken

registers among participants was also presented and mixture of two registers such as *sihong* + *yamyam*, *sihong* + *babaknit*, and *yamyam* + *bakaknit* topped the list. These are a manifestation that instances are possible where Northern Catandunganon speakers can use two angry registers at the same time. Hence, there is a strong correlation between linguistic and situational factors, and that the use of both genders' spoken angry registers is entangled with the norms of the society. It is also imperative to mention that the main functions of using angry registers among the two genders recapitulated that they tend to speak angry registers because of their desire *to release the feelings of anger and frustrations, to emphasize emotional reactions to others and to express intense emotion without offending others*. Thus, it is very obvious that the participants are basically triggered to utter these registers due to the peak of their anger. Besides, their emotions greatly affect their utilization.

In this lens, the practice of employing these angry registers in different conversations is by and large believed to be more of Northern Catandunganon women characteristic. Having said this, men are less inclined to speaking these words than women do. This language feature also serves as an indicator in tracing the differences between sexes or genders. That is, differences between men and women can be seen depending on how they are regarded and the motivations behind their use of certain lexis, particularly when they are upset. Results of the present study offer innovative, ground-breaking and new pieces of information to add-on the dearth of available literature about this topic.

While the findings disclosed that ARs are commonly found among older generations, the researchers greatly recommend that elementary level participants may be included also in future studies to determine whether or not at the very young age they are already using angry registers. Moreover, the degree of utilization of these words among the participants may also be investigated. As a final point, a further exploration may be made on how Northern and Southern Bicolano speakers vary or parallel with regard to this phenomenon.

## REFERENCES

- Aksan, M. (2006). Metaphor of Anger: An outline of a cultural model. *Journal of Linguistics and Literature*, 3(1), 31-67.
- Averill, J. R. (1982). Anger and aggression. Springer-Verlag New York Inc.: New York, USA.
- Bamberg, M. (1997). Language, concepts and emotions: The role of language in the construction of emotions. *Language Sciences*, 19(4), 309-340.
- Biber, D. (1995). Dimensions of register variation: A cross-linguistic comparison. Oxford: Cambridge University Press.
- Biber, D., & Conrad, S. (2009). Register, Genre and Style. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511814358>
- Chentsova-Dutton, Y., & Tsai, J. (2007). Gender differences in emotional response among European Americans and Hmong Americans. *Cognition and Emotion*, 21(1), 162-181.
- Dobrovolskij, D. & Piirainen, E. (2005). Cognitive theory of metaphor and idiom analysis. *Jezikoslovlje*, 6(1), 7-35.
- Ferguson, C. A. (1994). Dialect, register, and genre: Working assumptions about conventionalization. In D. Biber & E. Finegan (Eds.), *Sociolinguistic perspectives on register*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 15-30.
- Kovecses, Z. (2000). *Metaphor and emotion: Language, culture, and body in human feeling*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, R. (1975). Language and woman's place. In Bucholtz, M. (ed.). *Language and woman's place: Text and commentaries*. Oxford: University Press, pp. 35-102.

- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, R. & Kovecses, Z. (1987). The cognitive model of anger inherent in American English. In D. Holland & Q. Naomi (Eds.), *Cultural models in language and thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lisboa, M. (1865). *Vocabulario de la lengua Bicol*. Manila: Establecimiento Tipográfico de Colegio de Santo Tomás.
- Lobel, J. W. (2005). The angry register of the Bicol Languages of the Philippines. In L. Hsiu-chuan & C. Rubin (Eds.), *Current issues in Philippine linguistics and anthropology: Parangal kay Lawrence A. Reid*. Manila: LSP and SIL, pp. 149-166.
- Lobel, J.W. (2013). *Philippine and North Bornean Languages: Issues in Description, Subgrouping, and Reconstruction* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://www.ling.hawaii.edu/graduate/Dissertations/JasonLobelFinal.pdf>
- Lutz, I. (1988). Ifaluk emotionology. In S. Niemeier & R. Dirven (1997). *The Language of emotions*. Retrieved from <https://books.google.com.ph/books?isbn=9027283893>.
- Mintz, M. and J. Del Rosario Britanico. (1985). *Bicol-English Dictionary*. Quezon City: New Day Publishers.
- Nidhal Hadi, H. A., & Kadhim, B. J. (2023). A Critical Pragmatic Analytical Framework of Sectarian Discourse. *Randwick International of Education and Linguistics Science Journal*, 4(1), 114-134. <https://doi.org/10.47175/rielsj.v4i1.606>
- O’Kearney, R., & Dadds, M. (2004). Developmental and gender differences in the language for emotions across the adolescent years. *Cognition and Emotion*, 18(7), 913-938.
- Parkinson, B. (1995). *Ideas and realities of emotion*. Retrieved from <https://books.google.com.ph/books?isbn=0415028590>.
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, S., & Svartvik, J. (1985). *A comprehensive grammar of the English language*. London: Longman.
- Retzinger, W. (1995). *Remorse: Psychological and jurisprudential perspectives*. Retrieved from <https://books.google.com.ph/books?isbn=1317066642>.
- Stearns, P. N. & Stearns, C. Z. (1985). Emotionology: Clarifying the history of emotions and emotional standards. *Oxford Journals Oxford University Press*, 90(4), 813-836.
- Tonio, J., & Agbayani, R. (2019). Factors considered in the use of angry registers in Northern Catanduanes Bicol conversations. *Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 2(2), 20-29.
- Vainik, E. (2006). Intracultural variation of semantic and episodic emotion knowledge in Estonian. *Trames*, 10(2), 169-189.
- Wang, M.R. & Hsieh, S.C.Y. (2007). Gender differences in the language for emotion. *Asian Journal of Management and Humanity Sciences*, 2(4), 89-97.
- Wierzbicka, S. (1995). *The emotions: A Philosophical exploration*. Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.ph/search?tmb=bks&hl=en&g=Lutz+%281988%293hl=en&thm=bks&g=Wierzbicka+1995>.
- Wierzbicka, A. (1999). *Emotions across languages and cultures: Diversity and universals*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yu, N. (1995). Metaphorical expression of anger and happiness in English and Chinese. *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*, 10(2), 59-92.
- Zhu, H., Li, W., & Yuan, Q. (2000). The sequential organization of gift offering and acceptance in Chinese. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 32(1), 81-103.