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**A Description of Nominal Phrases in Paranan**

**Edward Jay M. Quinto**

*Mapúa Institute of Technology, Manila*

*ejmquinto@mapua.edu.ph*

**Shirley N. Dita**

*De La Salle University, Manila*

*shirley.dita@dlsu.edu.ph*

**Abstract**

Paranan belongs to the Northeastern Luzon language family and is spoken by around 16,000 people most of whom live in the coastal municipality of Palanan in Isabela Province. Despite the number of speakers, the language is one of the less documented languages in the Philippines. This paper addresses this gap by describing the structure of nominal phrases in Paranan. Using a corpus of 113,000 words from written and spoken Paranan texts, the paper describes the nominal marking system and structure of nominals in Paranan. Paranan has two primary nominal markers: determiners and demonstratives. Pluralization in Paranan is marked by the use of the plural marker *hidi*, which may either be postnominal or prenominal. Besides gender, properties of common nouns, and borrowed nouns, Paranan has at least seven types of derived nouns. Other aspects of Paranan grammar warrant further investigation.

**Keywords:** *Paranan, nominal phrases, Philippine languages Northeastern Luzon language family*

**ISO 639-3 language codes:** prf

Paranan (also *Palanan* or *Palanenyo*) is one of the languages of the northeastern part of northern Luzon in the Philippines. It enjoys Level 4 or Educational status in the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS), which means that it 'is in vigorous use, with standardization and literature being sustained through a widespread system of institutionally supported education' (Lewis, Simons, & Fennig, 2016).

Ethnologue claims that Paranan is similar to Pahanan Agta, while Casiguran Agta and Kasiguranin share 83% and 82% intelligibility with it, respectively (Lewis, Simons, & Fennig, 2016). There are about 16,000 speakers of Paranan most of whom live in the coastal municipality of Palanan in the province of Isabela. There are, however, speakers of the language along the entire east coast of Isabela province, between Divicalan bay and Dinapigue town and inland to San Mariano.

Paranan was previously categorized under the Northern Cordilleran subgroup; however, Robinson and Lobel (2013) argued, based on evidence on historical phonology, functors, and lexicon, that Paranan, along with Dupaningan Agta, Pahanan Agta, Casiguran Agta, Nagtipunan Agta, and Dinapigue Agta, belongs to the Northeastern Luzon language family, a primary subgrouping of the Northern Luzon (Cordilleran) languages.

**Examining the Language in the Courtroom Interrogation  
of Vulnerable and Non-Vulnerable Witnesses**

**Virna Villanueva**

Ateneo de Naga University, Naga City, the Philippines  
University of Santo Tomas Graduate School  
España, Manila, Philippines  
virns8@yahoo.com

**Marilu Rañosa-Madrurnio**

University of Santo Tomas Graduate School  
España, Manila, the Philippines  
malumadrurnio@gmail.com

**Abstract**

Testifying in court is a stressful experience for witnesses, most especially to abused children. One of the reasons that makes this experience more difficult is the manner of questioning of some lawyers. Recognizing the need to examine this use of language in the cross-examination of vulnerable witnesses, this paper sought to identify the types of questions commonly used by lawyers and the kinds of replies usually given by witnesses. This descriptive study employed a mixed paradigm design as it applies qualitative and quantitative analysis to the corpus consisting of 1,866 questions and 1,811 replies in the transcript of stenographic notes. The study also employed semi-structured interviews. Findings reveal that for both the vulnerable and non-vulnerable witnesses, the types of questions most frequently asked are the close-ended leading questions, yes/no and tags. One type of close-ended question, the wh- question, is also frequently used. In terms of replies, both vulnerable and non-vulnerable witnesses give the same types of replies with compliance mostly being employed. All these findings show that leading and forceful questions commonly used in cross-examinations might deter the child witnesses from telling the real truth. Some lawyers could, therefore, attend more training in investigating child-related cases while courtroom conditions deterring the child witnesses from confidently answering the lawyers' questions should be improved.

**Key words:** *Cross-Examination, child witnesses, vulnerable and non-vulnerable witnesses*

The language of the courtroom is described as complex for those who are non-regular courtroom participants and simple for those who regularly comprise the judicial investigation. In fact, Gibbons (2008) described the courtroom investigation, particularly the cross-examination, as a 'verbal battle field' between the lawyers and the witnesses. Witnesses have to deal with comprehending the lawyers' questions during interrogation and at the same time have to deal with verbalizing their perceptions about particular events and circumstances. It is no wonder that testifying in court is an experience that most witnesses find excruciating and threatening.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Testifying in court is truly a stressful experience for witnesses more so, for child witnesses, and doubly excruciating for sexually-abused children. Perhaps, some lawyers could consider the vulnerability of child witnesses. The study's findings show that leading and forceful questions commonly used in cross-examinations might deter the child witnesses from telling the real truth or from elaborating some details since these children are of no match to the powerful language use of some lawyers and simply conform to the lawyers' propositions. Furthermore, certain conditions in the courtroom like facing the public while waiting for the child's turn to take the witness stand, viewing other cross-examination of witnesses in other cases, and facing the child's assailant and other witnesses of the assailant affect the child witness' ability to narrate her testimonies. It is recommended that lawyers could perhaps attend more training in investigating child-related cases and that courtroom conditions that deter the child witnesses from confidently answering the lawyers' questions should be improved.

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