The Cebuano Bugalbugal

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Abstract

Bugalbugal, defined in this paper as a verbal event that makes use of playfully derisive language, is examined, interpreted, defined, and given discursive order based on data from dictionaries and fieldwork. Using the Communication Theory on Language by Roman Jakobson to structure the analysis of data gathered from interviewees, this research offers preliminary knowledge on bugalbugal, putting forward its five core elements: it is a social transaction and a cultural practice; it has cultural and historical specificity; it has norms on power and behavior as well as on language; it has laughter and ridicule; and, it has ritualistic qualities.

Keywords: *bugalbugal,* Cebuano culture, Cebuano humor, humor, communication theory

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This paper is part of a dissertation demonstrating that *bugalbugal* is a form of satire in Cebuano culture.[1] Bugalbugal, given a preliminary definition as a verbal event that makes use of playfully derisive language, is examined, interpreted, defined, and given discursive order based on data from Visayan dictionaries and fieldwork. The primary goal of this paper is to present bugalbugal both as a social and cultural practice with distinctive elements and as a component of Cebuano culture.

At the outset, a few things need clarification. First, Cebu, where Cebuano is derived, is a Philippine province in Central Visayas (Region VII). Second, the terms "Cebuano" and "Visayan" refer to both the people and the language and are used interchangeably in this study.[2] Third, Visayans are composed of several ethnic groups that include Cebuanos, Boholanos, Leyteños, Hiligaynons, Butuanons, Zamboangeños, and Cotabateños. This research is delimited to Visayans from Cebu, or as Merlie Alunan (2015, p. xv) has referred to them, the Cebuano Bisayan. It must be noted, however, that bugalbugal cannot be said to be practiced only in Cebu. Based on conversations with family and other Visayan colleagues and friends who live in other Visayan-speaking areas in the country, bugalbugal both as a concept and a practice exists in their communities.[3]

Bugalbugal is observed to be practiced in the speech community in which the researcher circulates. A speech community (i.e., small units like family, social groups, or large units like a municipality or province or region) is a "community sharing rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech, and rules for the interpretation of at least one linguistic variety" (Hymes as cited in Johnstone & Marcelino, 2010, p. 7). It has its own language norms and interpersonal ideologies. Interpersonal ideology, "a system of premises about personhood, relationships, and communication around which people of a speech community formulate lines of action toward others and interpret and evaluate others' actions" (Fitch as cited in Poutiainen, 2015, p. 1), includes "relationships considered as processes that are observable in and through social interaction" (Poutiainen, 2015, p. 1). In other words, social interaction facilitates reproduction of language norms within the speech community. In this research, the Visayans in Cebu are considered a speech community.

Despite the fact that members of speech communities have multiple experiences and differing social realities, they cluster together naturally and communicate with one another more than they do with members of other speech communities. It is a pattern of behavior referred to in sociolinguistics as "communicative isolation" in which "people separated by a river or a mountain range were thought to be less likely to be able to interact with easy access to one another" (Johnstone, 2011, p. 205).

Applying the concept of "communicative isolation" in this study, Cebu is an island with its own language norms. Some of its neighbors considered as Visayans or Bisayans, are Bohol, Leyte, and Negros, each with its own language norms. Largely because of geographical constraint, members of the speech community in each island tend to interact with one another on an everyday basis, more than they interact with members of speech communities in other islands, thereby reproducing the language norms in their respective speech communities as well as developing language norms specific to their community. In communicating with one another, "what speakers do and say, and the communal context such speech occurs in" are two aspects of communication considered inseparable (Hymes as cited in Johnstone & Marcellino, 2010, p. 4) . Indeed, constant social interaction in a speech community can reproduce language practices.

John Gumperz's (1982) concept of "contextualization cue," also referred to as signalling mechanisms, is especially useful in explaining the interactive perspective of meaning making. A contextualization cue, used by speakers to indicate how they mean what they say, is important in interactional sociolinguistics. "Using a speaker's contextualization clues as guidelines, a listener imagines himself or herself to be in a particular kind of situation; this enables a listener to assess what the speaker intends" (Gordon, 2011, p. 8).[4] To reiterate an earlier argument, participants who engage in specific uses of language in specific social groups in a larger speech community understand one another based on common communicative experience. Indeed, there is a strong relationship between language and social relationship. In the study of the nature of bugalbugal, how language is interpreted as either appreciative or sarcastic or even funny lies upon the idea that "the uses and interpretations of contextualization cues—or contextualization conventions" are deeply shaped by individual's cultural backgrounds" (Gordon, 2015, para. 1).

In choosing bugalbugal as a research topic and determining its nature, the condition of the researcher is paramount. She has been exposed to family members who engage in bugalbugal and has formed an assumption that there is a direct relationship between bugalbugal and humor. The paucity of studies on humor in the Philippines and in Cebu, however, posed a problem. A quick search in the worldwide web yielded collections of jokes in the Philippines[5] but studies on humor are scarce. Because it is assumed in this study that there is a relationship between bugalbugal and humor, several concepts on humor shall be discussed.

"Humor refers either to something intended to cause amusement or to whatever quality [that] makes something amusing" (Bardon, 2005, p. 1). In the Philippines, it is rooted in our cultural and literary traditions. In a

1947 publication, Leonardo Dianzon wrote: "Tayong mga Pilipino'y sadyang may katutubong hilig at talino sa mga salita't isipang may uring panunudyo at panunuya, pagbibiro o pagpapatawa't panunukso" [We Filipinos have a penchant and talent for satire and irony and for making jokes and teasing others (pp. 11-12).[6] Dianzon pointed to the Juan Tamad stories as sources of amusement in group gatherings, produced and consumed by uneducated folks (pp. 8-9).

The Juan Tamad narratives are found in Philippine literature particularly in Philippine plays where the iconic jester or clown, also called trickster, evokes laughter. The plays of Iluminado Lucente in Waray literature, for instance, "sparkle with wit and humor" when he "treats human foibles" in critiquing society (Sugbo, 1974, p. 1). Prewar Cebuano playwright Piux Kabahar himself said his plays are "for laughing only" and "all the serious ideas and facts in the plays are presented in the comic viewpoint" (Ramas, 1992, p. 2). Aside from plays set within the postcolonial context that evoke laughter, humor and verbal joust, according to Nicanor Tiongson (1983), are also present in the drama forms of the various ethnic groups in the country.

In fiction, Jose Rizal's *Noli MeTangere* "served to amuse and satirize" (Resurreccion, 1958, p. 137). In the proverb humor and instruction "go together because the attempt to reform behaviour is done through irony" (Lumbera, 1986, pp. 20-21). Humor is likewise found in the parodies of del Pilar as he satirized the Spanish friars during the colonial period. Bienvenido Lumbera (1986) notes, for instance, that aside from blasphemously parodying Pasion Pilapil, del Pilar "changed the wording of the Sign of the Cross, the Act of Contrition, the Our Father, and the Hail Mary to make the prayer refer to hypocrisy and greed of the friars" (p. 143).

A recent study on Filipino humor in popular forms shows that humor in the Philippines is based on superiority, incongruity, and relief (Ancheta, 2015, p. xxiii-xxvi), traditional theories on humor. In superiority theory, laughter is "a sudden glory arising from some conception of some eminency in ourselves by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly" (Hobbes in Morreall, 1987, p. 129). Humor through incongruity takes laughter as "an affection arising from the sudden transformation of a strained expectation into nothing" (Kant in Morreall, 1987, p. 130). Relief theory looks at laughter generally as release of nervous energy, which is similar to Aristotle's catharsis, as well as release of built-up emotion and a realization of the inappropriateness of such emotion (Spencer in Morreall, 1987, p. 131).

Filipino humor could be referred to as "national humor" (Ziv in Ancheta, 2017 p. xxi), its "native emphatic quality" (Blair in Ancheta, 2015, p. xxv) is "so palpably felt but is so elusive to define" (Ancheta, 2015, p. xxv).

Like Filipino humor, Cebuano humor is elusive to define. The same could be said of humor that thrives among other ethnic groups in the Philippines. Cultural differences in humor use can be understood "only when we examine these within the 'continuum [of] the functions of humor'" (Ancheta, 2015,p. xxii). But these questions will remain unanswered at this juncture largely because of the paucity of studies on humor, as stated earlier.

A 1972 master's thesis in Anthropology focused on Cebuano humor, specifically on the green jokes in Cebuano folklore (Garcia, 1972). It analyzes the sociocultural context of the jokes and identifies several functions of green jokes, namely, as a form of sex education, as a way to sidestep normative taboos, and as a means of intensifying group relationships. Among these three functions, it is the last that articulates a kind of social dynamics, and in Lillian Garcia's (1972) study, 91.5% of the respondents claimed that green jokes are told "to close friends and associates only" (p. 115). This demonstrates the presence of exclusivity in relationships when sharing green jokes. Exclusivity is further demonstrated thus:

> One of the privileges which was discussed as some kind of a signal of full-acceptance into the adult age-group was the green joke mechanism" in which a fledgling adult gets the "privilege of telling green jokes without reproach and hearing green jokes as a welcome member in a green joke situation. (Garcia, 1972, p. 126)

The concept of exclusivity as described here is important in understanding the concept of bugalbugal which can be seen in the discussion in the second half of the essay.

As alluded to earlier, one way to understand bugalbugal is to understand humor. How is bugalbugal related to Cebuano humor? It is not incorrect to say that Cebuano humor inscribes bugalbugal. Cebuano humorist Gerard Pareja (personal communication, June 21, 2019) says, "if there is such a thing as a sub-genre in humor then bugalbugal could be considered as one not only in Cebuano but to universal humor". Bugalbugal as a component of Cebuano humor and bugabugal's universality is echoed by poet Michael Obenieta (personal communication, June 21, 2019), who said that the songs of Visayan artists Yoyoy Villame and Max Surban demonstrated the elements of the carnivalesque and grotesque realism in Western Rabelaisian humor, as seen in "the way these two folk singers interlace the liminality of the social and literary, the physical and the metaphysical in some of their songs". While these concepts are Western, Obenieta noted that "their chuckle-worthy creations become unique (to Cebuano culture) to the extent that they utilize and dwell on the distinctive specifics of *Bisdak*[7] reality,

experiences, and ways of engaging with their own social/individual milieu".

Giving the relationship of bugalbugal and humor another perspective is Cebuana poet and fictionist Corazon Sandiego (personal communication, May 16, 2010 and June 26, 2019). Bugalbugal, she said in 2010, is "the backbone of Cebuano humor." Going a notch higher, Sandiego in 2019 asserted that bugalbugal is humor itself. For Obenieta (personal communication, June 21, 2019), "Cebuano humor is more than just bugalbugal, although it is one of its many manifestations". Despite these varying perspectives, all the three interviewees' insights point to the idea that Cebuano humor and bugalbugal are directly related though not necessarily equivalent.

This study contributes to defining Cebuano humor through the study of bugalbugal. Data on bugalbugal were gathered from the field using purposive sampling. Because the study of bugalbugal focused on the Cebuano cultural context, choosing the informants or interviewees who belonged to the same speech community as the researcher's was deemed justifiable in theorizing bugalbugal as a social phenomenon. Three small communities were chosen for accessibility: jeepney and taxi drivers, teachers, and writers. Based on the researcher's experience, data on the concept and practice of bugalbugal can best be elicited or drawn from these groups, particularly the drivers. In fact four of the seven examples have been drawn from drivers. Since language, especially wordplay, is an important vehicle for humor, the propensity and gift to use language thrives best, as Resil Mojares (1997b) wrote, "in the world of jeepney drivers, dock workers, bar girls, street vendors, the istambay, the gay" (p. 164).

All interviews with drivers were done face to face and individually. To gather data from jeepney drivers, the researcher was introduced by the research guide to the clerk at the Lapulapu City Terminal who facilitated the interviews. Available and interested drivers were interviewed. During taxi rides, the researcher initiated a conversation with the driver. If the driver exhibited interest in the practice of bugalbugal, the researcher asked for permission to conduct interview. For the writers and teachers, both real-time and online interviews were done. In all the interviewees from 2010 until 2014, as well as the most recent ones in 2019, guide questions elicited data used in the analysis below.

The Nature of Bugalbugal

Bugalbugal and Its Meanings

The term bugalbugal as well as its derivation is found in different dictionaries. As a noun, it has two shades of meaning in Cebuano-English dictionaries. The first has a negative connotation and has the followjng equivalents in English: "jeer" (Trosdal, 1990; Ruijter, n.d.); "calumny," "defamation,"

"slander" (Hermosisima, 1966); and "ridicule" (Ruijter, n.d.). Its verb form (the infinitive *magbugalbugal*, for instance) is similarly pejorative with the following English equivalents: "to fool, to annoy" (Bas, n.d.) "to mock" (Trosdal, 1990), and "to jeer at, belittle" (Ruijter, n.d.). Its adjective forms, *bugalbugalon* in Mimi Trosdal (1990) and *bugalon* in Juan Ruijter (n.d.), mean "insolent" and "contemptuous," respectively. This shade of meaning is clearly captured by Juan Felix de la Encarnacion's (1885) definition of *bogalbogal*: "Ser tenido alguno en poco. Hablar descortesmente y sin respeto a los padres, a los viejos, a los mayores en edad, dignidad y gobierno, y charlar sin respeto ante cualquiera de ellos" (p. 51), [To have a little of something. Talking impolitely and without respect to parents, to elders, to people of age, without dignity, and to chat without respect before anyone else].[8]

The other shade of meaning is also negative but is connected with humor. In John Wolff's (1972) dictionary, bugalbugal as a noun refers to a "ridicule, a comment about s.o.[9] that is humorous and disrespectful" (p. 151). Its verb form also shows the connection between laughter and ridicule: to "deride, make s.o. the object of contemptuous laughter" (p. 151). The combination of humor and ridicule is also seen in Trosdal's (1990) dictionary in which bugalbugal as a verb ("to jeer, make fun of") dovetails with the meanings in English-Cebuano dictionaries. In Vicente Gullas' (1953) dictionary, for example, "ridicule" means "paghimo mga kataw-anan" (p. 201) and in Jose Maria Cuenco's, (1927) "paghimo ug cataw-anan" (p. 170), both of which, when translated, means "to make fun." It appears then that the elements of laughter and ridicule converge in bugalbugal.

Data gathered through interviews echo the dictionary meanings of ridicule. Its noun form shows its negative quality: "a form of bullying and often verbal in nature" (Tina Marie Cañete, personal communication, April 13, 2013); "sarcasm" (Ester Tapia, personal communication, July 10, 2012; Janet Mananay, personal communication, April 13, 2013); and a "sarcasm, insult, mockery" (Edgermi Gerasta, April 13, 2013). The same quality is seen in its verb form: "'to ridicule', 'to mock' or 'to satirize'" (Adonis Durado, personal communication, March 12, 2011; Angelyn Cullantes, personal communication, April 13, 2013; Efren Tangoan, personal communication, July 27, 2013); "to put another person down, to humiliate, to embarrass" (Elmer Montejo, personal communication, May 29, 2010; Abigail Joy Cesa, personal communication, April 13, 2013); to "treat (a subject) with contempt. . . subject (a subject) to a joke . . . poke fun at, harass, deride. . . play a prank on" (Ian Manticajon, personal communication, June 8, 2012); to make up stories and irritate the target—palagutun ang tawo (Jonel Senon, personal communication, July 29, 2013); and "to call (a subject) a name"

(Anecito Mendez, personal communication, September 7, 2012; Andy Andalajao, personal communication, July 27, 2013; Victor Manlisic, personal communication, July 27, 2013) even if they are strangers (Efren Tangoan, personal communication, July 27, 2013). The definition of bugalbugal in a journal article by Alunan (2004) also echoes this negative nature: "a kind of speech dripping with irony and sarcasm, intended to deliver insult for insult" (p. 114).

Its negative—although humorous—aspect evident in the dictionaries is confirmed in the meanings given by interviewees. It is "a slightly insulting joke" (Rosemarie Arcadio, personal communication, April 13, 2013), a "friendly mockery, all for fun" (Elmer Montejo, personal communication, May 29, 2010), a teasing (Nonie Ty, personal communication, July 25, 2013), "joke lang" [joke only] (Anecito Mendez, personal communication, September 7, 2012), "pakatawa" [for fun] (Ronaldo Sumabong, personal communication, July 29, 2013), "making jokes" (Alma Cabardo, personal communication, April 13, 2013), "lingawlingaw para pakatawa lang" [activity for enjoyment and laughter] (Amel Epe, personal communication, July 29, 2013), "pasiaw nga makasakit [a joke that hurts] (Arnel Carampatan, personal communication, July 25, 2013), "binuangan ang tawo" [poke fun at a person](Johnny Gamboa, personal communication, July 29, 2013), "giving of funny names to a person" (Dennis Mahilum, personal communication, Apri;l 13, 2013); and "joke in words or actions intended for laughter" (Jerome Ramirez, personal communication, April; 13, 2013). It is "making fun of someone's shortcomings with or without reason, with or without intention, with or without taste" (Gerard Pareja, personal communication, June 21, 2019). Looking at all these definitions, it appears that bugalbugal is a form of a joke.

The conflation of laughter and ridicule in bugalbugal is further observed by other interviewees. According to Bonn Aure (personal communication, June 7, 2012), it is "a friendly banter or form of endearment" but it can also be "a thinly veiled insult directed at figures of authority". It can "make a person a subject of a playful joke," but it can also "play a prank on a person" or "ridicule or mock a person" (Ian Manticajon, personal communication, June 8, 2012). It can become "spice that will add laughter to a close group of friends" but will cause problems when done outside the group (Romeo Bonsocan, personal communication, June 12, 2012). It can be offensive but also fun (Salome Pacifico, December 4, 2012); usahay makalingaw, usahay makasakit [sometimes it is enjoyable, sometimes it can hurt] (Benjie Guzman, personal communication, July 27, 2013). It is an activity that doubles as gossiping to entertain the self (Priscilla Pal, personal communication, July 27, 2013); and it is a "colloquial term for the act usually associated with ridicule and joke"

(Emelito Sarmago, personal communication, June 8, 2012). "When a person tells a colleague that her outfit looks like she's going to the circus" [sic] (Ian Manticajon, personal communication, June 8, 2012), one could not deny the conflation of humor or laughter, and ridicule, or to use Michael Billig's term, "unlaughter" (2005, p. 5). On another level, bugalbugal is considered a "form of protest through humor" (Bonn Aure, personal communication, June 7, 2012). Indeed, the meanings from the dictionaries and the interviewees show the convergence of humor and ridicule, an essential quality of satire. It also hints at bugalbugal as a joking relationship.

Bugalbugal as a Social and Verbal Transaction

Other than the elements of laughter and ridicule, the meanings of bugalbugal from dictionaries and interviews show that it involves a verbal transaction, which is actualized in the practice of bugalbugal and which shall be illustrated below. Here, we borrow from Roman Jakobson's model of verbal communication to structure the analysis.

Roman Jakobson's 1960 model of verbal communication outlined in "Language and Poetics" and discussed by Louis Hebert (2011), is composed of the following elements or factors: 1. context; 2. addresser; 3. addressee; 4. contact; 5. code; 6. message.[10] According to Jakobson, context performs the referential function; addresser, the emotive function; addressee, the conative function; contact, the phatic function; code, the metalinguistic function; and message, the poetic function. For Jakobson , in any act of verbal communication, these factors perform their functions in varying degrees. Below is a table that shows the various communication factors and functions in the Jakobson communication model:

Factors of communication and functions of language

Target factor and function no.	TARGET FACTOR	SOURCE FACTOR	FUNCTION
1	Context	Message	Referential
2	Addresser	Message	Emotive
3	Addressee	Message	Conative
4	Contact	Message	Phatic
5	Code	Message	Metalingual
6	Message	Message	Poetic

Figure 1. Actors of Communication and Functions (Hebert, 2011)

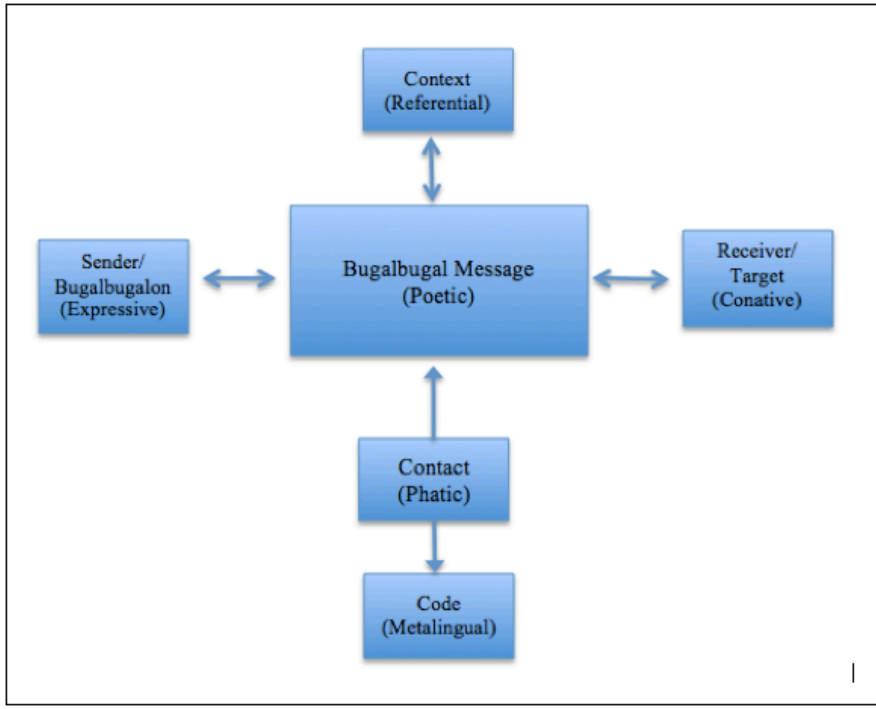

Figure 2. Bugalbugal Communication Model Based on Jakobson's Model (1960)

These communication factors are shown in the figure below, derived from Jakobson (1960) and modified to fit this study. It shows the bugalbugal message as the center of the transaction along with Context, Contact, and Code as well as the Sender and Receiver of the bugalbugal message as the factors that affect it as a social transaction.

In bugalbugal as a verbal transaction, the context is taken to assume the referential function; it carries implicit and explicit information and other details or insights in which the addresser and addressee are located. The addresser or bugalbugalon takes the emotive or expressive function; he or she initiates the trading of playful insults, and "uses expressive features to indicate his angry or ironic attitude" (Jakobson, 1960, p. 3). The addressee or target performs the conative or imperative function; he or she is interpellated to reply to the bugalbugal or playful insult. The contact or channel is the psychological connection or space of contact of the bugalbugalon and the target. It performs the phatic function; both the addressee and the target need to reinforce and ensure, though not necessarily and explicitly articulated that they are still in the same space to continue the trading of playful insults. In bugalbugal, the channel can be immanent or

assumed as existing and functioning because participants may no longer need to confirm through a verbalization that they engage in the language of bugalbugal. Here, the concept of "play" by social scientist and linguist Gregory Bateson (2005) is relevant: human communication operates at many levels of abstraction, one of which is metacommunicative in which messages are implicit. Play can happen only if "participant organisms were capable of some degree of metacommunication, i.e., of exchanging signals which should carry the message of 'this is play'" (Bateson, 2005, p. 142). Participants implicitly know, therefore, that they engage in play. In these metacommunicative exchanges, the "subject of discourse is the relationship between speakers" (p.141). In other words, participants who share the same language norms or participants who are in the same social group or speech community are likely to engage in play. In the Jakobson model, channel is the space where the metacommunication occurs and where bugalbugal as "play" or "a teasing" (Nonie Ty, Personal communication, July 25, 2013) can occur. Code performs the metalingual function; the addresser as bugalbugalon and the addressee as the target of the bugalbugal share the same language and language norms being in the same social group or speech community. At the center of the transaction is the message that performs the poetic function; it uses language both in the literal and supra-literal levels.

A bugalbugal message is sent to the target (addressee) by a bugalbugalon (addresser). Such message is framed within a context, the details and information of which both parties can relate within a speech community. For the participants to enter and stay in the bugalbugal frame or mode, contact or channel is necessary where metacommunication occurs, as much as it is necessary that they share the same code. In other words, they share a similar psychological and metalingual space to enable a successful trading of playful insult. In speech communities where bugalbugal abound, language norms are reproduced and reified.

Examples of Bugalbugal

This section discusses the samples of bugalbugal gathered from the field analyzed using Jakobson's 1960 communication model.

Bugalbugal in married life: The *muinum* example.

The following is an example of bugalbugal during a drinking session as shared by Emelito Sarmago (personal communication, June 8, 2012):

A: Nganong karon pa man ka? [Why are you late?]
B: Nananghid pa ko sa akong asawa. [I asked permission from my wife.]

A: Mananghid pa diay ka og muinom ka? [You need to ask permission when you drink?]
B: Oo oi, ngano gud di. [Yes, why not?]
A: (Addressed to the group) Sunda ninyo sa pareng B, basin mabunalan mo sa inyong asawa og di mo mananghid muinom. Hahaha! [Listen to pareng B, you might get a beating from your wife if you have no permission to drink. Hahaha!].

Drinking, the basic value of which "lies in the sociality of the act" (Mojares, 1997a, p. 144), is an activity traditionally participated in by men. In an article entitled "How to Drink in Cebuano," Mojares uses Cebuano vocabulary for drinking to describe the kinds of alcoholic drinks and the drinking etiquette for various occasions during the Spanish era. He wrote that "traditional drinking condenses in a single act . . . most prized by men: a person's rhetorical skills since oratory and verbal jousting often go with drinking" (p.145). Mojares furthermore said that "the drinking takes place amid banter, challenge, poetic jousting, or the singing of the daihuan, a Cebuano word that refers to a "kind of song in which one of the participants is victimized by a rough but good-natured teasing" (p. 145). Some details in this particular context, though, may no longer be present in today's drinking. For instance, the drinking place is a beer garden and no longer *tarangwayan* (a Cebuano word for a place for drinking); the daihuan singing may have been substituted by karaoke singing. But the banter, challenge, and the teasing could still be observed today. In an article entitled "Tagay-tagay Poetics and Gender in Cebuano Verse," Alunan (2004) showed that the tradition of *tagay*, a "gathering for the purpose of drinking" reserved for the male is still alive among the Cebuanos (p. 105). It is a site in which machismo thrives in the form of "exercise of wit calculated to up one's status over another, a display of argumentative brilliance, for example, or cleverness, or learning, all designed to project oneself as the focus or center of gathering" (p. 105).

With this particular sociocultural context in mind, the condition of a henpecked husband wanting to participate in an activity recognized as a sign of machismo in a patriarchal setup provides the context of bugalbugal in the example. Here is the ironic predicament of a man desiring to submit both to the rules of marriage and demands of patriarchy. Such condition of the husband is reinforced by the use of language that triggers laughter and ridicule. Note the ambiguity or doublespeak in "muinom" (water and alcohol) in the message "Mananghid pa diay ka og muinom ka?" [You need to ask permission when you drink?]. Speaker A seems to suggest that

Speaker B has to ask permission from his wife for the simple act of drinking water when in fact the object of drinking in the situation is not water but alcohol. The target responds to the question with "Oo oi, ngano gud di" [Yes, why not?]. It is presumed that the target is aware of his predicament, and his reply can be taken as a sign of concurrence in a possible attempt to cover up his ironic condition. At the same time, it is a reply that challenges the taunting question of the bugalbugalon or addresser. At this point in the verbal transaction, resistance and assault participated in by both the bugalbugalon and the target have clearly been established.

Using Jakobson's 1960 model of verbal transaction, the bugalbugalon is the addresser who delivers the bugalbugal message "Mananghid pa diay ka og muinom ka?" [You need to ask permission when you drink?] to the target, within the context of patriarchy and marriage. The addresser or bugalbugalon, presumed to be a male in this particular example, delivers this bugalbugal message as soon as he finds the opening in the target's utterance—"Nananghid pa ko sa akong asawa" [I asked permission from my wife]. It is important for the addresser or the bugalbugalon to find and feel the contact or channel, the psychological connection or space between addresser/sender and receiver, so he can determine whether or not he could deliver his playfully insulting message and continue with the exchange. In this case, the bugalbugalon must have found the channel by observing the addressee or target and by reading his reply because he delivers the message and continues with the verbal exchange. He obviously considers the target's reply—B's "Oo oi, ngano di gud" [Yes, why not?]—to his second question "Mananghid pa diay ka og muinom ka?"[You need to ask permission when you drink?] as a confirmation to deliver the final blow addressed to the audience whom he observes as also ready to receive the playfully derisive message, "Sunda ninyo sa pareng B, basin mabunalan mo sa inyong asawa og di mo mananghid muinom. Hahaha!" [Listen to compadre B, you might get a beating from your wife if you have no permission to drink. Hahaha!]. The scene of the wife literally and supraliterally (i.e., with words) beating a henpecked husband in a patriarchal context does warrant derisive laughter.

Here, the verbal event which initially involved only A and B, has progressed to include another addressee in the verbal event—the audience composed of the drinking buddies. In the verbal communication, A as the addresser, B as the primary addressee, and the drinking buddies as audience and consequent addressee must have found the contact or channel to have understood the bugalbugal message. In fact, it could have been the presence of the audience or drinking buddies as consequent addressee that may have guaranteed the success of the last satiric message of the addresser.

It must be noted that the playfully derisive laughter is a mark of a successful bugalbugal message. The participants during the exchange, including the target, are expected to partake in the derisive laughter because bugalbugal is meant to be enjoyed even if one is the target (Jonel Senon, personal communication, July 29,2013; Celia Galito, personal communication, July 29, 2013). It is also a "pakatawa uban sa mga suud o kaila" [enjoyment and laughter with close friends] (Darwin Tulda, personal communication, July 29, 2013), a feature from which bugalbugal is also known by another name, the "pasiaw" [banter] (Jojo Morales, personal communication, July 27, 2013; George Oliverio, personal communication, December 6, 2011; Benjie Guzman, personal communication, July 27, 2013; Victor Manlisic, personal communication, July 27, 2013; Darwin Tulda, personal communication, July 29, 2013; Celia Galito, personal communication, July 29, 2013), the dictionary meaning of which is "to banter" as a verb and "a light, teasing repartee" as a noun. That bugalbugal as pasiaw also "connects people and establishes relationship" (Nonie Ty, personal communication , July 25, 2013) shows that the exchange of playful insults alludes to bugalbugal as a joking, thereby, a social relationship.

It must further be noted that the drinking session as a social activity is repetitive as well as reiterative in nature. Michael Obenieta (2005) pointed out that drinking is an opportunity for fellowship in which established Cebuano poets hand over the tradition to younger poets like himself. Over tuba (coconut wine) and Tanduay, they "binge on Cebuano songs, poetry and tall tales . . . [with] undercurrents of folk wisdom and wisecracks" (Obenieta, 2005, p. 251). Obenieta also spoke of innumerable "drinking tables" in different occasions. Indeed, the Cebuanos of today continue the drinking tradition to which Antonio Pigafetta and Rajah Humabon had been invited (Mojares, 1997a, p. 143).

There are as many occasions for drinking such as birthdays, baptisms, reunions, and death anniversaries, as there are reasons to exchange playful insults or bugalbugal. There are, in other words, as many occasions or instances to reaffirm the participants' social relationships. That bugalbugal as a verbal event is a site in which social relationships are repeated, reiterated, cemented, and reproduced brings out its ritualistic feature. These ritualistic aspects of bugalbugal, of people coming together using stylized language that is also repetitive and reiterative, confirm its sociocultural nature.

In the above example, power underpins the verbal transaction on two levels. On one level, it appears that A as the bugalbugalon addresser controls the conversation or verbal communication. He decides when to deliver the playful mock not only to the target but to the rest of the participants in the drinking session. The situation seems to have allowed the bugalbugalon

addresser to force the target or addressee to give a reply. Here we see how the conative or imperative function operates. The context also gives him the upper hand to use language ambiguously in a playfully taunting manner. The other level lies in the power exercised by the invisible wife over the husband as the target in the derisive or satiric verbal exchange. This power results in the husband's tardiness and being the butt of derisive joke. It can further be noted that the power of the invisible wife within the context of feminism and the power achieved by the bugalbugalon as the instigator/addresser of the message combine and contribute to a successful bugalbugal as verbal communication.

Humor, whether contemporary or prehistoric, according to John Morreal (2009, p. 50), involves a "cognitive shift", a sudden change in our perception or thought, based on stimulus or previous assumption . "The playful enjoyment of a cognitive shift," Morreal wrote, "is expressed in laughter" (2009, p. 49). This is similar to what Gerard Pareja (personal communication, June 21, 2019) referred to as "eureka fashion," in which there is "quick appreciation of what is wrong (or at least out of place) and somewhat hidden". Here, the ambiguity in drinking, whether water or wine, and the absent yet inherent power of the wife within the patriarchal setup are appreciated by the participants. Thus, the laughter.

Bugalbugal involving physical features: The *helmet* and *pangagsa* examples.

Consider the following example provided by Mario Tampus (personal communication, July 6, 2011) :

> A (a bald person):Pahulma kog helmet. [Let me borrow a helmet.]
> B: Nganong manghulam pa man ka nga naa naman kay helmet? [Why do you need to borrow a helmet when you already have one?]

A helmet is a required driving gear by the Land Transportation Office (LTO) among motorists using motorcycles or bicycles. In this situation, A needs to borrow B's helmet so he can use his motorcycle without fear of a driving violation. Similar to the muinum example, the addresser must have found a contact or channel in A's opening line "Pahulma kog helmet" [Let me borrow a helmet] to be able to deliver his satiric message "Nganong manghulam pa man ka nga naa naman kay helmet?" [Why do you need to borrow a helmet, you're already wearing one?]. A's opening line puts himself in a disadvantaged position as the one currying for favor as much as it invests B with power as the possible benefactor/lender. The verbal transaction is completed with the bugalbugalon delivering the playful jeer

that ridicules the target's baldness. Note the visual comparison between helmet and baldness. Despite the joke being at the target's expense, he is expected to laugh with the bugalbugalon for two reasons: not to lose his chance to borrow the helmet and to show he is fine with the bugalbugal. Here the incongruity or near similarity between the image of baldness and helmet is quickly appreciated, a "cognitive shift" (Morreal, 2009, pp. 49-50), triggering laughter. In the Jakobson model, the bugalbugal message demonstrates its poetic function in the metaphor of the helmet.

The second example, provided by Jeffrey Panganiban (personal communication, July 18, 2011) is a single line uttered by the addresser A to addressee B: "Pangagsa ra ta magkita da" [We seldom see each other]. It is assumed that A and B are friends who have not seen each other in a while. The reunion is marked by a bugalbugalon greeting in the witty yet derisive portmanteau pangagsa, a linguistic play of pangag [toothless] and panagsa [infrequent], addressed to B who is a pangag (i.e., a person with missing teeth). The message is supposed to be a playful jab at the target's lack of teeth, a "physical disability" that grants power to the bugalbugalon. It is presumed that the message—note the portmanteau performing a poetic function—is delivered because the bugalbugalon may have previously established the contact/channel or space favorable for bugalbugal at some point in the history of their friendship. Like in the muinum and the helmet examples, the pangag target is expected to partake in the laughter. The examples show that, indeed, bugalbugal is only for individuals who are close to one another (Nonie Ty personal communication, July 25, 2013; Jojo Morales, personal communication, July 27, 2013) and that bugalbugal is a joking relationship.

Bugalbugal in an unfortunate situation: The *pakyaw* example.

For a jeepney driver, being hired on a pakyaw basis means he receives single payment for ferrying his passengers to an agreed destination and may have no more need to ply his usual route for the rest of the day to earn more money. The following is an example of bugalbugal provided by Darwin Tulda (personal communicatioom, July 29, 2013) that focuses on a pakyaw.

Addressed to a fellow driver, the message "Ah, napakyawan man" [Ah, he is hired on a pakyaw basis] refers to the target's condition of being sidelined on the road due to flat tires. Note that the irony in the driver being sidelined not because he was hired on a pakyaw basis but because of a flat tire is understood in the message delivered by the addresser upon seeing the addressee by the roadside. In this example, the misfortune of earning nothing due to a flat tire is substituted with and equated to the idea of a pakyaw. According to Darwin Tulda (personal communication, July 29, 2013), when the receiver of the message or the target, who is a suud (close

friend) arrives in the jeepney terminal presumably after having repaired the tires, he is asked, "Pila may pakyaw ato?" (How much was charged for the pakyaw?). Despite the question that derisively alludes to the target's ironic condition, the target is expected to respond with laughter according to Darwin Tulda (personal communication, July 29, 2013) and Elenito Guiao (personal communication, July 29, 2013). As one jeepney driver has said, one cannot do a bugalbugal to strangers because "Naay puruhan nga masumbagan ka" [Chances are you get hit in the body] (Gideon Muñez, personal communication, July 29, 2013), especially when the target is in an unfortunate situation like the driver in the example. Bugalbugal as a joking and social relationship is demonstrated here.

Here, the bugalbugalon or addresser does not need an opening or channel to deliver the message as seen in the muinom and helmet examples. It is highly possible that, similar to the pangagsa example, the bugalbugalon has already established the contact between them in previous encounters to allow him to deliver the satiric message. As Darwin Tulda (personal communication, July 29, 2013) has noted, they are suud or close friends. Moreover, the target must have sensed through the contact and code that the message is not meant to deride his condition, so he takes the message as playful and consequently partakes in the laughter. Here, we see the phatic and metalingual functions of language operating to ensure effective verbal communication.

It can be noted that the pakyaw example also illustrates bugalbugal as not only a social activity that connects people but also a repetitive activity. The bugalbugalon did not stop at giving the initial message in "Ah, napakyawan man" [Ah, he is hired on a pakyaw basis]. Probably sensing that the bugalbugal has not reached the desired end, the addresser follows up the target later with "Pila may pakyaw nimo ato" [How much did you charge for the pakyaw?]. The ensuing laughter is expected behavior for both parties, along with the other individuals in the group, which also confirms that bugalbugal is a "pakatawa lang gyud uban sa mga suud o kaila" [laughter and enjoyment with close friends] (Darwin Tulda, personal communication, July 29, 2013). On a more personal level, bugalbugal expresses a form of intimacy among and between individuals (Ester Tapia, personal communication, July 10, 2012). Like in the muinum example, the pakyaw example shows the tendency of bugalbugal to reinforce and reiterate the participants' relationship through laughter and banter as much as it reveals its repetitive nature.

There is power involved in the pakyaw example. However, instead of the bugalbugalon wielding power over the target as true in the cases of the muinom, helmet, and pangagsa examples, the bugalbugalon empowers

himself to deliver the message and mitigate the condition of the unfortunate driver. Here, bugalbugal is not only to be enjoyed (Darwin Tulda, personal communication, July 29, 2013) but also to be used as "makapalipay sa tawo" [to make people happy], especially when the target is facing difficult situations (Gerry Perez, personal communication, July 27, 2013). Indeed, this example shows that bugalbugal is not only a site where "humor and camaraderie find expression" (Ma. Theresa Tabada, personal communication, November 4, 2010); it also helps "release pressures in life" (Ester Tapia, personal communication, July 10, 2012) and is a platform, therefore, to support friends and reproduce or even enhance the social order.

Bugalbugal in embarrassing situations: Portmanteau in *itmigims* and *tabsuk* examples.

There are examples that show bugalbugal in which the focus is on the physical condition in which the addressee is located. The first is given by Januar Yap (personal communication, January 3, 2013) who coined word itmigims, a portmanteau from "itlog" (egg) and "migimaw" (showing), used to describe one who, according to Januar Yap, "unwittingly reveals his essentials" because of a hole in his pants. In this case, itmigims may not necessarily be uttered directly to a target with the hole in his pants as the object of derision to another participant in the bugalbugal as verbal event. For it to be fully understood as a bugalbugal, the message itmigims which operates with a poetic function as a portmanteau works within the context: the amusing scenario of a seated male who unknowingly exposes part of his genitals. Certainly, both the addresser and the addressee share the same code, a shared language of wit and humor which also affirms the contact or the psychological connection between them.

Another example of wordplay in bugalbugal is seen in the following example given by Glinoria Sabang (personal communication, June 7, 2012). It is a one-liner delivered to a present target/addressee, much like the helmet and pangagsa examples: "Nindot imong buhok da, murag tabsuk" [Your hair looks nice; it is like tabsuk]. Tabsuk is a neologism, a portmanteau from "tabon (sa) suka" (cover of a vinegar bottle). The message initially appears to be a compliment "nindot imong buhok, da" [what lovely hair you have] but the second clause, "murag tabsuk," contradicts the nicety in the first clause. Here, a "cognitive shift" happens, "a sudden change in thought and perception" that John Morreal (2009) talked about. A tabsuk hair would look like a huge vinegar bottle cover on the head. Vinegar in the rural areas traditionally refers to native coconut vinegar placed in recycled containers such as the lapad ("flat" or slim Tanduay rhum bottles) bottle or plastic galonan (one-gallon container) or even huge five-gallon plastic containers

where the cover, which wraps the neck of the bottle, is cylindrical with minimal height and with a bulky bottom. Taken as hair on the head in the example, tabsuk looks flat, incongruous, and ridiculous. It must be noted again that only those who understand the language used in the speech community can participate in the bugalbugal laughter.

Portmanteaus as wordplay, which point to the poetic function of the bugalbugal message, have always been sources of amusement. Note the pangagsa example discussed earlier. To reiterate, Mojares (1997b) described the people who excel in wordplay: "Being 'prolific and free in word-play . . . is common to those who are, in other things, least 'free'" (p. 164), who belong to "the world of jeepney drivers, dock workers, bar girls, street vendors, the istambay, and the gay" (p. 164) as the place where this ability thrives most. In other words, those who are "free" from society's burden to use English correctly are the most prolific in wordplay.

Bugalbugal on physical disability: The *hupuhupu* example.

The aforementioned examples illustrate a verbal communication in which the bugalbugalon addresser delivers the message to knowing targets/addressees. The following example provided by Efren Tangoan (personal communication, July 27, 2013) is an instance in which the message is delivered to a target with whom the addresser is not fully acquainted: A says to B who is a hunchback, "Ayawg hupu-hupu, bai, kay nakit-an na ka." [No need for you to stoop, bai, you are seen already.]

People with disabilities are prone to abuse and this is a classic case of the bugalbugalon addresser wielding ruthless power over the target/addressee. That the target is a complete stranger with physical disability and is unable to physically resist and fight back may have further emboldened the bugalbugalon to deliver the verbal abuse without having to secure a psychological connection or contact. Here, the phatic function of the message seems to be embedded. The poetic function of language at work in the message can be understood thus: the command not to stoop does not only ridicule the physical deformity itself. It connects with the accusation that the target is literally hiding from someone, a case of adding insult to injury.

This particular negative nature of bugalbugal in which the addresser exercises abusive power over the addressee can be associated with another name of bugalbugal—the *yagayaga* (Jojo Morales, personal communication, July 27, 2013; Celia Galito, personal communication, July 29, 2013; Ronaldo Pansacala, personal communication, July 29,2013). The word yagayaga is also used as a substitute of bugalbugal in some social groups. It is "an act of looking down at a person" [pagdaut sa usa ka tawo] (Ronaldo Pansacala,

personal communication, July 27, 201) and "an act of mocking or making fun of a person" [pagbinuang sa usa ka tawo] (Jonel Senon, personal communication, July 29, 2013). Another related name is biaybiay which echoes the negative connotations of yagayaga (Johnny Gamboa, personal communication, July 29, 2013; Celia Galito, personal communication, July 29, 2013; Gideon Muñez, personal communication, July 29,2013).

Bugalbugal involving sexually-related comments: The *inarte* example.

This example given by Celso Omandac (personal communication, July 25, 2014) is similar to the hupuhupu example. It is a monologue addressed by a male to a lady friend: "Ayawg inarte dinha, iyutun ta ka dinha ron!" [Don't be fussy or I'll fuck you!].[11] This statement is clearly irreverent and can be a basis for filing a sexual harassment case against the male speaker. The context of the declaration is not clear in the text, but it could be that the male friend is asking a favor that may not be necessarily sexual from the lady, but the latter may have shown some reluctance to comply. Hence, the playful taunting.

The sexual chide comes in a verbally abusive language that is allusive of male power over a woman in a patriarchal setup. But this "abuse" is given only to the lady friend who can accept it. A channel must have been found by the bugalbugalon to afford him to send the message. We can see here again the nature of bugalbugal as selective and exclusive as well as exclusionary—only those who understand the rules and expectations in the practice of bugalbugal can successfully participate.

The Core Elements of Bugalbugal

The fundamental elements of bugalbugal are summarized here. First, bugalbugal is a social transaction and a cultural practice that involves verbal communication between the bugalbugalon as instigator of bugalbugal and the target as recipient. Using the communication model of Jakobson (1960), the functions of language have been demonstrated above, along with the target factors (context, addressee, addresser, contact, code, message) and the message as the source factor. The interaction between the bugalbugalon and the target creates the meaning of bugalbugal. That the participants belong to a particular group in a speech community reproduces the practice.

Second, bugalbugal is located within a specific historical and cultural context. Every instance of bugalbugal gathered from the field is based on real life experiences in Cebuano society. As a cultural practice, bugalbugal is performed during ordinary occasions.

And third, the social transaction involves norms. The first norm is on power and behavior. Based on the examples, power is regulatory and

exclusionary: it imposes normative behavior among the participants, and it includes only those who understand the rules and excludes those who cannot behave accordingly. Here, the traditional concept of power that resides in individuals is referred to. It is power that works top-down, exercised by the bugalbugalon as the addresser to the target as the addressee. This concept of power as "oppressive" is seen in the muinum, helmet, pangagsa, hupuhupu, and inarte examples. It is pronounced in the muinum example in which the bugalbugalon possesses the agency to control the conversation by knowing when to start, to continue, and to bring the trading of playful insults to a successful completion. It is more pronounced in the hupuhupu and the inarte examples. Another concept of power is observed here. There is departure from the traditional concept of power that which constrains and oppresses to Michael Foucault's (1979) concept of power as something that is exercised, something like a strategy than a possession (as cited in Lynch, 2014, p. 65). This is especially seen in the pakyaw example, where power is performed to mitigate the target's condition.

To reiterate, bugalbugal as a practice imposes normative behavior among the participants and excludes those who cannot behave accordingly. Among Filipinos, maintaining interpersonal harmony is important (Lynch, 1970). Interpersonal harmony is also called smooth interpersonal relationship (SIR), defined as "a facility at getting along with others in such a way as to avoid outward signs of conflict" (p. 10). It is referred to as interpersonalism by Leonardo Mercado (1974, p. 98) who describes it as a means to mitigate any unease in order to be in accord with the members of the sakop, a Visayan word that refers to a social group in which members subscribe to unwritten rules. Interpersonalism requires diplomacy and that such "diplomatic approach can also be through humor and teasing" (p. 98).

According to Mercado (1974) the *sakop* can be family, a barkada or gang, a circle at work, or an organization. Mercado further wrote that the interest of the self is subordinated to that of the group and that the group's fulfillment is the fulfillment of the self. Consequently, he wrote, one's aspirations, behavior, and identity are constructed within that of the reference group. Here, the bugalbugal participants belong to a sakop where unwritten rules are inscribed and practiced. It can be inferred that because the sakop tends to impose normative behavior on its members, it is suggestive of an immanent disciplinary power it exercises over its members. As such, those who behave according to prescribed though unwritten rules of conduct may remain within the blessings of the sakop while those who do not may therefore be "chastised." This disciplinary tendency of the sakop is at the same time regulatory in order to reproduce the social order. To describe it using Jakobson's 1960 model, the sakop can provide the social framework

through which expected code of behavior among the participants in the bugalbugal can be appreciated and acted out.

It can be said, therefore, that the practice of bugalbugal involves individuals who gather together as a sakop to partake and delight in playful insults, as shown in the examples. The addresser or bugalbugalon ensures that he and the addressee or the target occupy the same psychological space to avoid possible breakdown of relationships. The target in turn endeavors to submit to the unwritten rules of the sakop to maintain the social order by not displaying negative behavior and joining in the ensuing laughter. The addressee or target in this case performs a conative function of language: he or she, even they if it involves audience, is interpellated to respond to the satiric message according to prescribed behavior as members of the sakop.

The next norm at work, which falls under the third element of bugalbugal, is on language: the exclusionary use of the *tanghaga* (or enigma) as metaphorical language. In the examples, the message, which assumes the poetic function of language, comes in the form of literary play or metaphors, and linguistic play through paronomasia and portmanteau. Here, participants engage in literary and linguistic play or "ornamental rhetoric" (Griffin, 1994, p. 84) or rhetorical play in which the bugalbugalon addressers employ metaphorical language to attack addressees/targets. The use of language tends to be exclusionary in the sense that only this level of playful literary language that is "dripping with irony and sarcasm," to use Alunan's words in describing bugalbugal (2004, p. 114), can best epitomize the poetic function of bugalbugal language in the bugalbugal message. But while the use of language is delimited to this level, it is also this very delimitation that animates the exchange of verbal transaction. That is, the metaphorical level of language helps guarantee the success of bugalbugal. The ambiguity in the muinum example, the metaphor in the helmet example as well as the extended metaphor in the hupuhupu example, the paronomasia in the pangagsa and itmigims as well as in the tabsuk examples, connect to Cebuano *balak* or poetry, particularly to the concept called "enigma." Mojares (1988) quoting Francisco Ignacio Encina, described the Cebuano balak: "It is not a balac if it is not enigmatic" (p. 2). Called tanghaga in Cebuano, enigma refers to "use of symbols and metaphors" and "the ambiguity and suggestiveness of metaphor and parabolic speech" (Mojares, 1988, p. 6).

The norms on power and behavior as well as in language use are regulatory and exclusionary. Only those who submit to the norms can partake in laughter and ridicule, the fourth fundamental element. To recall, despite the ridicule or derision in the verbal attack, targets are expected to laugh and not take offense. Bugalbugal delivered as a joke or teasing

provokes laughter and camaraderie in which the social order is reproduced or enhanced. Bugalbugal is "*non ledere, sed ludere*" [not harmful but playful] (as cited in Griffin, 1994, p. 85).

Bugalbugal has been shown to have ritualistic qualities, the fifth fundamental element. That participants converge and perform bugalbugal as often as needed make bugalbugal ritualistic. Corollary to this is the idea that bugalbugal can also be referred to as a joking relationship: it is "a relationship between two individuals or groups that allows or requires unusually free verbal or physical interaction" ("Joking relationship," 2019,). A joking relationship is "the most private and therefore the most ephemeral expression of ritual satire" (Test, 1991, p. 92) and an "an important social relationship for a long time" (p. 95), which can be one way or reciprocal. In Balinese culture, for instance, to be teased is to be accepted (Test, 1991, p. 91). Joking as a reiterative and reciprocal activity to reproduce social order validates its ritualistic nature. When Romeo Bonsocan (personal communication, June 12, 2012) said bugalbugal as a practice "just happens" with the participants not meaning it to happen, bugalbugal is given not only the quality of a naturalness or familiarity with unspoken norms. It is also bestowed the quality of an intimate joking relationship.

Conclusion

Bugalbugal as a verbal event that makes use of playfully derisive language has been examined, defined, and given preliminary discursive order. It is found to have five fundamental elements: it is a social transaction and a cultural practice; it has historical and cultural specificity; it has norms on power and behavior as well as on language; it has laughter and ridicule; and it has ritualistic qualities. Intertextuality, which in this case points to the relationships of knowledges and experiences of the speakers within the social groups and contexts they are located, helps guarantee the success of bugalbugal.

Aside from its core elements, bugalbugal's use of metaphorical language is noteworthy and akin to the use of language in poetic jousts such as the Cebuano balitao, a tradition of song and dance, and the "Hiligaynon loas" (see Pinzon, 1998) that ordinary folks engage in. The bugalbugal message which assumes the poetic function of language in the examples discussed above comes in the form of literary play (metaphors) and linguistic play (paronomasia and portmanteau), which are essentially stylizations of language. As an activity that involves creativity in language, bugalbugal is an art form that can claim connection with the Cebuano balak through the tanghaga (metaphor). Indeed, ordinary people practice bugalbugal not only as a social and cultural practice but as an art form.

Aside from the social, cultural, and artistic qualities of bugalbugal, this study shows that bugalbugal can be described using theories on humor. In the examples of bugalbugal, the three traditional theories on humor are demonstrated. Superiority theory is shown in the bugalbugalon as the power wielder over the other participants in the verbal event. The incongruity theory, the "ambiguity, logical impossibility, irrelevance and inappropriateness" (Smuts, 2019, para. 2) in bugalbugal is shown in the muinum, helmet, pangagsa, and tabsuk examples. The relief theory is shown particularly in the pakyaw example in which bugalbugal is used as a platform to mitigate the condition of the target and enhance the social order.

The place of bugalbugal in Cebuano popular culture, i.e., in contemporary stand-up comedies, television shows, movies, blogs, all of which rely on ambiguous language, laughter, and ridicule performed to large audiences, is recognized. Ma. Theresa Tabada (personal communication, November 4, 2010) noted the presence of bugalbugal in today's media: "a farcical cartoon or skit mocks a government official or Filipino practice is, beneath the immediate effect, intended to expose and criticize to bring about change and renewal" which are generally amusing. Aside from bugalbugal's liberatory function demonstrative of relief theory of humor in cartoons and skits found in periodicals, this research also puts forward that bugalbugal functions as a platform of dissidence to critique society. Despite the norms that structure bugalbugal as a social and cultural practice, it can assume another from in popular culture. Mojares' (1988) "village wit" found in the persona of the bugalbugalon seems to be ubiquitous in Cebuano culture.

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Endnotes

[1] This essay is derived from Bugalbugal as Satire: The Case of Yoyoy Villame, the researcher's dissertation for her PhD degree in Comparative Literature received from the College of Arts and Letters, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City in 2015. The researcher acknowledges the help of Prof. Corazon D. Villareal, PhD, as adviser of the dissertation, though any error contained herein is the sole responsibility of the researcher.

[2] Visayan as a language falls under the Austronesian family and is also called Cebuano, Sugbuanon, Bisayan, Binisaya, Sebuano (Ethnologue: Languages of the World, 2005). According to Wolff (1972), Visayan is spoken in the Visayas, particularly in Cebu, Bohol, parts of Leyte, Negros Oriental, and the smaller islands in the vicinity; and in Mindanao, particularly in the southern parts of Cotabato, Davao, and Zamboanga as well as in some lowland areas. The word is also used to refer to persons who speak the language and who live in the Visayas and other Visayan-speaking areas.

[3] The researcher's first and continuing exposure to bugalbugal is via her spouse, a Visayan who hails from Davao del Sur, Mindanao, Philippines.

[4] Pagination used here is based on the online version.

[5] The search yielded "Ten Classic Bisaya Jokes that Will Make you Laugh," "Pinoy Green Jokes and Tagalog Green Jokes," and "Best Bisaya Jokes, 2015." Among books on humor in hard copies are Humors for Winning Success (Part IV, Tom Andres, 1989, Our Lady of Manoag Publishers); Stupid is Forever (Miriam Santiago, 2014, ABS-CBN Publishing), Pinoy Djoks (Lino Friginal, Jr., 1999, Le Frig Enterprises); The Laughter of My People (Delfin Batacan, 1966, Bookmark); Jestingly Yours, A Collection of Amusing Incidents in Life (Compiled by Diego Yapo, 1993, Rex Book Store); and Joke Lang Tsong (Dan Dominguez, 1992, Renato R. Mateo).

[6] All translations from Filipino to English in this section are those of the researcher. The title of Leonardo Dianzon's paper is translated as "Satire and Humor in Tagalog Literature." Dianzon used "satirico" for mapanudyo and "ironico o sarcastico" for mapanuya. (pp. 5-6). Mapanudyo is from "tudyo," which means joke, jest, teasing, banter. Mapanuya is from "tuya" which means irony, sarcasm, sneering or cutting remarks.

[7] Bisdak, a popular portmanteau, is from "Bisayang Daku" [Bisaya Huge] that, when translated could mean "Hugely Bisaya" or someone who hails from the Visayas and who adheres strongly and faithfully to its cultural and social practices.

[8] English translation by Prof. Genoveva Bartolo (personal communication, July 16, 2010) professor in communication arts in the Arts and Humanities Cluster--now College of Communication, Art, and Design--University of the Philippines Cebu.

[9] S.O. stands for someone

[10] Some other names for the factors are (numbers refer to the numbers in the paragraph above): 1. referent, 2. sender or enunciator, 3. receiver or enunciatee, 4. channel. Some other names for the functions are: 1. denotative, cognitive, representative, informative, 2. expressive, 3. appellative, imperative, directive, 4. relational or contact, 5. metasemiotic 6. esthetic or rhetorical. (Taken from The Functions of Language by Louis Hebert from http://www.signosemio.com/jakobson/functions-of-language.asp accessed March 12, 2018.)

[11] Bawdy examples from the interviewers are hard to come by. This example was given only after much cajoling by the researcher.

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