Interspeaker Variation in the Negated Perfective Aspect of Zamboanga Chavacano

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***Abstract*---**Framed from four perspectives, (1) Schütze & Curbach (2019), grammaticality judgment and linguistic methodology; (2) Mcwhorter's (2011), description of the complexity of creoles as flourishing over time from an original state; (3) Steinkruger (2013), explanation of negated sentences in the perfective aspect; and (4) Lee (2005), delineation of native speakers of a language, this research paper looked into the combination of the negator nohay and the perfective aspect markers ya and yan (ya man) in the sentence. A negated sentence with a perfective aspect is a structure that seems to be accepted by some native speakers of Chavacano (or Chabacano) but rejected by others. In the literature, only Steinkruger (2013), describes the permissibility of the forenamed combination in the syntactic structure of Chavacano. It was hypothesized that such a combination is acceptable in Chavacano and that there is an interspeaker variation pertinent to its acceptability. To confirm these hypotheses, data were collected via grammaticality judgment from 105

native Chavacano speakers and another set of data were collected via interview from 10 native speakers of Chavacano for corroborative purposes.

Keywords---Chavacano, interspeaker variation, negation, perfective aspect, Spanish-based creole.

Introduction

The Spanish-based creole called Chavacano is a flourishing language (Holm, 2001). It forms its perfective aspect with either of the aspectual markers ya/yan (ya man) alongside the verb. In its negative form, the aspectual markers are dropped. In the current observation, however, some native speakers generate the perfective aspect in the negative form without dropping the aspectual marker, but some native speakers maintained that such a construction was ungrammatical. Prior to the discussion of the syntactic combination, a discussion pertinent to Chavacano verb origin is necessary in that different verb forms and/or origins behave differently. Chavacano allows different morphemes to mark different verbs for aspect. To illustrate, the following sentences are in order:

1. • Ya kome kame na rio.
   PERF eat 1pl.NOM.EX LOC River
   'We ate at the river.'
   • Ta kome kame na rio
   IMPF eat 1pl.NOM.EX LOC river
   'We are eating at the river.'
   • ø/Ay kome kame na rio.
   CONT eat 1pl.NOM.EX LOC river
   'We will eat at the river.'

2. • Yan/Ya man bakacion sila.
   PERF.VRB/ PERF VRB 'go on a vacation' 3pl.NOM
   'They went on a vacation'
   • Tan/ Ta man bakacion sila.
   IMPF.VRB/ IMPERF VRB 'go on a vacation' 3pl.NOM
   'They are on a vacation'
   • øMan /Ay man bakacion sila.
   CONT.VRB/ CONT VRB 'go on a vacation' 3pl.NOM
   'They will be going on a vacation'

In sentence (1), the verb *kome* 'eat' only allows the aspect markers *ya, ta* or *ø/ay*, while the verbalized *bakacion* 'vacation' in sentence (2) requires the markers *yan, tan, øman* or their equivalents, *ya man, ta man, or ay man.* Premised on these sentences, *man* seems to appear before non-verbal Spanish words. For the purpose of this paper, such a lexical item is termed as *verbalizer* (Riego de Rios, 1989). Also, it appears that the verbalizer cliticizes with an aspect marker for Spanish-derived verbs generating *yan* and *tan (ya + man => yan and ta + man => tan)*, and the contemplative aspect retains the implied expression leaving *man* by itself, thereby no encliticization takes place in this aspect most likely due to

phonological grounds. Thus, instead of the two separate morphemes (the aspectual markers and the verbalizer), the Chavacano language can likewise use the aspect markers *yan, tan,* and *øman* for verbs in Chavacano that do not have their origin from the Spanish language. The combination of the negation and perfective aspect in a sentence will hereafter be referred to as *neg+perf* to mean the combination of these features, *marked neg+perf* for the combination where the verb is marked for the perfective aspect as in (5) and (6) below, and *unmarked neg+perf* for the verb unmarked for the perfective aspect as in (7) and (8) below.

With the two sentences above showcasing the different aspectual markers of the Chavacano verbal structure, it can be gleaned that different aspectual markers are indeed utilized to express the different verbs in Chavacano: *ya, ta,* and *ø/ay* for Spanish-originated verbs, and *yan, tan,* and *øman* for non-Spanish words or Spanish verbs inflected by Chavacano morphology. For the avoidance of any amount of mischaracterization and misunderstanding, two sentence structures can appear structurally identical but are essentially not. To illustrate, the following sentences exhibit differences:

3 (Ay) Man jogging sila mañana.
  (CONT) VBZ jog 3pl.NOM tomorrow
  'They will jog/will go jogging tomorrow'

4 Man pungus dao tu.
  VBZ 'tie hair' PRT 2sg.NOM
  '(You) tie your hair'

Sentence (3) is finite, that is to say, it has an aspect, as opposed to the second one that has a non-finite verb which is specifically an imperative sentence. These sentences do seem, at the surface, to be syntactically identical. The difference is that the first sentence can also be expressed with the contemplative *ay* before *man*, while the second one is unpermitted to appear with the contemplative *ay*. This is because contemplativeness can be expressed with or without *ay* while an imperative sentence like the second one above cannot co-occur with *ay* as it is non-finite. Hence, *man* can figure in a non-finite sentence in that it is not an aspect marker but a morpheme verbalizing non-Spanish verbs, thereby fortifying its state as a verbalizer. With that said, the verbalizer can be analyzed as a separate element from the aspect markers in Chavacano.

The grammatical impetus of this paper is the observed variation in the syntax of some utterances of some native speakers of the Chavacano language. When a sentence in the perfective aspect is negated by *nohay* 'did not', the aspectual marker is dropped, leaving only the verbalizer with the non-Spanish-derived verb. For Spanish-derived ones, the same syntactic phenomenon occurs only without the verbalizer. The following seek to clarify the preceding claims.

5 For non-Spanish verbs:
  Nohay sila man print el project.
  NEG 3pl.NOM ø VBZ print DEF.DET project
  'They didn't print the project.'

6   For Spanish-derived verbs:
        Nohay yo anda na Manila.
        NEG1sg.NOM ø go DIR Manila
        'I did not go to Manila.'

The aspectual markers in the verbs *man print* 'print' and *anda* 'go' do not surface in the preceding sentences. These verbs are apparently semantically expressing an action that has begun and completed at the moment of speaking; however, the comparison of these sentences to the succeeding ones presents a variation as some native speakers seem to accept the following constructions:

7   For non-Spanish-derived verbs:
        Nohay sila yan recommend con-el mujer.
        NEG 3pl.NOM PFV.VBZ recommend ACC-DEF.DET lady/woman
        'They didn't recommend the lady/woman.'

8   For Spanish-derived verbs:
        Nohay yo ya mira TV.
        NEG 1sg.NOM PFV see TV
        'I didn't watch TV.'

The sentences negated by *nohay* allow the appearance of the aspect marker *yan* and *ya* respectively. Although unacceptable to some native speakers, it is acceptable to others. Because the speakers were native speakers of the language, and they naturally generated utterances of this structure in conversations, constructions like the foregoing must be grammatical. When asked about the surety of their utterances, they confirmed it without any hint of doubt. There now seems to be a division among the speakers of the Chavacano language, thus the idea of variation is entertained.

Furthermore, Riego de Rios (1989); Steinkruger (2013), syntactically describe how the *neg+perf* is phrased in Chavacano. The variant spoken in Cotabato which is highly related to the variety spoken in Zamboanga is described, though implicitly alluded by the authors, as expressing the *neg+perf* without the need for an aspectual marker to appear (Riego de Rios (1989), and other authors describe Zamboanga Chavacano's *neg+perf* similarly (Lipski & Santoro, 2007; Forman, 1972). However, Steinkruger (2013), describes the *neg+perf* with the negative particle and the perfective aspect marker co-existing, further stating that the negative particle and the perfective aspect marker can co-occur and that this is another manner how *neg+perf* is expressed. This is interesting because this construction is deemed ungrammatical by some native speakers of Zamboanga Chavacano, and becomes even more interesting in that sentences like (8) and (9) were naturally produced by some native speakers of Chavacano and were adjudged by them as grammatical.

With this at hand, it was hypothesized that there exists a variation of such a construction, that is, a variation across speakers; it was likewise hypothesized that the combination of the *marked neg+perf* can be an acceptable description of the Chavacano syntax. In other words, some native speakers accept sentences in the negative perfective where the negative particle or marker co-figure with the

aspectual marker in a sentence. To address these hypotheses at hand, 105 informants were given research instruments where they had to (1) take a Chavacano Grammar Test, and (2) check the grammaticality of the sentences whose syntactic structure was being investigated. To substantiate the data, another 10 native Chavacano speakers were interviewed to ascertain that there indeed is an interspeaker variation in the use of the *neg+perf* and that the syntactic combinatorial feature of the grammatical elements is permissible as in *marked neg+perf*.

Research questions

To help in addressing the above-stated hypotheses, the following research questions guided the conduct of this research at hand:

- Is there an interspeaker variation in the acceptability of the combination of the two syntactic features in Chavacano: negation and verb marked for the perfective aspect?
- Is the combination of negation and verb marked for the perfective aspect a permissible syntactic construction in Zamboanga Chavacano?

Review of the Related Literature

Creoles

Because Chavacano is a creole, a discussion about creoles is beneficial especially because of the current debate about their genesis that appears to divide scholars of creole studies. The following related literature briefly discusses what creoles are and how they have come about. Mufwene (2015), claims that creoles in a strict sense are a new language varieties developed from contacts between varieties of a language from Europe and many non-European languages in the Indian and Pacific Oceans and from around the Atlantic from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries. Anderson (1991), argue that if members of two or more cultures come into a regular contact with each other over a prolonged period, usually resulting from trade or colonization, a pidgin is developed which becomes the means of their communication though not native to any of the cultures involved. Holm (2000), explains that a creole has a pidgin in its linguistic lineage and is utilized by an entire speech community that speaks it natively.

Often, the ancestors of such a speech community underwent a geographical displacement such that their ties with their identity at a sociocultural level and with their original language were partly disrupted. A pidgin is the provenance of a creole language which is spoken natively by an entire speech community. The reason for it is that there are people who learn the pidgin as their mother tongue so it becomes a creole or put differently, the pidgin can become a creole when it metamorphosizes into the first language of a new generation, as a result of being born at a place where a pidgin is used. Quite relevantly, McWhorter (2018), claims that creoles compose a separate group of languages in that they do not contain some features which are accordingly suggestive of earlier pidginization. Additionally, creoles are natural languages spoken natively by a community that came about from intense-contact situations. Being full-fledged languages, they

are equated with other natural languages in the world with the ability to fulfill any need in the linguistic domain (Velupillai, 2015).

Also, they can be qualitatively distinguished from older languages via linguistic synchronic delineation McWhorter (2005). and do stick out from languages in a general sense as they are lower in the complexity of their structure which is their most salient distinction (Parkvall, 2008). Bakker et al. (2013), explicate that creoles constitute a structurally different and identifiable subgroup within the languages of the world. In contrast, Mufwene (2000); DeGraff (2001); DeGraff (2003), claim that creoles do not have their origin from pidgins but rather belong to a model of a family tree like other languages. It is characteristic of pidgins and creoles to have more than one source language (Kouwenberg & Singler, 2009). It is claimed that in the development of a pidgin language, the superstrate language which is the socially, economically and politically dominant group is the typical lexifier of the pidgin and is considered to be the language pidginized, thus Pidgin English or Pidgin Spanish. Moreover, a pidgin tends to retain many of the grammatical features of the substrate languages (Romaine, 1988; Anderson, 1991).

Chavacano as a language

To be able to understand the Chavacano Creole better, it is appropriate to give a brief discussion about its state as a Creole language. Zamboanga City—where the language is spoken—started out as a military outpost to contain the infiltration of the Moslem in the southern Philippines where the Fort Pilar, being the core defense, was abandoned thirty years later due to having been frequented by attacks. It was only in the year 1719 when the Spanish people returned and were successively present up until the year 1898. It was claimed that like many creoles, the name Chabacano/Chavacano emanated from a Spanish word which can exhibit mockery meaning *'clumsy, ill-formed, and vulgar'* (p. 2), but this negatively connotative meaning has been lost among the Chavacano speakers. Moreover, the provenance of Zamboanga Chavacano is not entirely clear-cut. The Cavite and Ternate varieties of Chavacano had been in existence in the 17th century at least, as compared to the variety in Zamboanga City forming not earlier than the late 18th century. As opposed to the Caviteño and Ternateño Chavacano, the Zamboanga Chavacano has a smaller share of Spanish elements even though their mutual intelligibility is largely evident (Lipski & Santoro, 2007).

Additionally, Chavacano is a creolized language (Lipski, 2001; Lipski, 2012; Barrios, 2006; Wolff, 2006; Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2008; Steinkrüger, 2008; Steinkruger, 2013). Barrios (2006), explicates that Zamboanga Chavacano language is one of the Philippine Creole Spanish variants. It is a Philippine Creole Spanish which is more commonly known as Chavacano, whose variants include Cotabateño, Caviteño, Ternateño, Davaoeño and Zamboangeño. Zamboangeño is the only surviving Philippine Creole Spanish of these five variants (Lipski, 2001). Some of the Chavacano's substrate influences are Filipino and Cebuano. Some properties of the grammar of Chavacano in Zamboanga show clear-cut traces of the Austronesian influence, particularly those of Tagalog and Cebuano (Barrios, 2006). Owing to the fact that some grammatical properties of the Filipino language influence that of Chavacano, in this paper, the aspect system of

Chavacano is analyzed to be like that of Filipino. Because Chavacano is a language with a provenance from a European language and from Philippine languages requires an investigation of its grammatical complexities, and due to the scarce Chavacano grammar description, this paper can prove to be useful in adding up to the understanding of how the structure of this language operates.

Chavacano aspect and negation

Up until this point, linguistics-related research in Chavacano describing the grammar of Chavacano remains to be relatively scanty. For the review of the related literature to be comprehensive, more research work needs to be carried out. With the current state of the research in Zamboanga Chavacano grammar, notwithstanding, a review of the related literature in this area of study is a necessity, thus the following: Payne (2011), explains that a negative clause is one which negates some event, situation or state of affairs, which means it does *not* hold. It is typical for negative constructions to negate a whole proposition. There are negators which figure in the form of derivation and those which figure as quantifiers. Malicsi (2010), indicates that a positive sentence may undergo alteration and be phrased negatively via the addition of a negative morpheme to the verb. In similar vein, Malicsi (2013), states that negation is a process used to form a sentence opposing what is expected. Because an affirmative sentence is the basis, negation adds up a negating morpheme in accordance with the structure of the affirmative sentence (Frake, 1971).

Similarly, Ceña (2012), states that in Tagalog—one of Chavacano's source languages—negation exhibits different forms: opposition, with the use of *hinde* 'not', and prohibition, with the use of *huwag* 'do not'. Another grammatical element this paper analyzed is *aspect* which is referred to as a grammatical element that pertains to the time dimension, but is not linked to a particular point in time, as is a property of tense (Payne, 2011). Similarly, tense which relates to time is compared with aspect which has something to do with an action's internal structure occurring at any time. Similarly, Malicsi (2013), argues that an aspect morpheme indicates that the aspect category morphemes denote the event state of the meaning specified by the verb. The time expressed in the verb in English is premised on a particular *point in time*, and based on *flow of time* in the Filipino language (Schachter & Otanes 1983; Ceña & Nolasco, 2011). Providing an explanation of the syntactic algorithm of the Chavacano verbs, Concepcion (2005), states that compared with English and Filipino, Zamboanga Chavacano being a Creole relatively exhibits fewer bound morphemes. On a similar note, Holm (1988), claims that pidgins and creoles tend to contain little or no inflectional morphology.

Some authors described the aspect system and negation that take place in Chavacano. It was explained that the preverbal marker *ya* indicates past rather than anterior tense, and generally has a punctual and perfective meaning, so that it can also indicate completive aspect. The preverbal marker *ta* indicates non-punctual or durative aspect, referring not only to actions that are in progress but also to those that are habitual. The progressive marker *ta* can be used with future reference, particularly immediate future. The durative marker *ta* can be used to indicate habituality, but Zamboanga Chavacano also has other ways of indicating

habitual aspect. The irrealis marker *ay* can express either future or unreal events: they are predicted, promised, or hypothetical (Lipski & Santoro, 2007). On a similar vein, Steinkrüger (2008), states that *ta* marks the imperfective aspect, *ya* perfective, *ay* irrealis and *kaba* for completive. This paper, however, adopts the aspect system in the description of Chavacano—that is, the perfective, imperfective and contemplative aspects.

Another work on the Chavacano language was carried out by the Linguistic Society of the Philippines and the Summer Institute of Linguistics where the syntax of the Chavacano's variant spoken in Cotabato, which is believed and analyzed to be greatly influenced by the variety spoken in Zamboanga, is detailed as a grammatical sketch of the language (Riego de Rios, 1989). It can be deemed appropriate in this paper in that the Cotabato Chavacano (henceforth Ct) variety is greatly similar with Zamboanga Chavacano relative to their morphosyntactic systems. Riego de Rios (1989), report that the verb is any stem which can occur with the temporal elements of the grammar. In Ct**,** these elements are the pre-posed particles which signal the tense-aspect features of the verb stem. They are: *ta* 'present durative' (+begun; - completed); ya 'past V punctual' (+begun; + completed); and, *ay* 'future' (- begun). It is to be noted that there exists a postposed particle *ya* which means 'already' and should not be confused with the pre-posed temporal particle *ya.*

To describe the Ct V (verb) further, the V stem is classified according to its language source and to the manner by which the V stem occurs in relation to the pre-posed particles of time. Type V-1 consists of V stem from Spanish infinitives with the final *–r* deleted which in this paper is termed Spanish-originated verbs. With V stems under this classification, the tense-aspect features are *ta, ya*, and *ay* by the simple occurrence of the pre-posed temporal syntactic elements.

Examples: cantar 'to sing' Spanish infinitive
           kanta 'to sing' Ct V-1 stem
           ta kanta 'sings'; 'is singing'
           ya 'sang'; 'was singing'
           ay kanta 'will sing'

Type V-2 constitutes of V stems from Philippine source verbs and from English loan verbs. V stems under this classification obligatorily take the overt prefix and verbalizing marker *man* before the temporal particles' placement. Thus, *tuktuk* 'to knock', typically pertaining to knocking at the door, a Philippine source verb, is formed into a Ct V-2 stem by prefixing *man* to it. This results in *mantuktuk.* Only then do the temporal particles get prepositioned: *ta mantuktuk, ya mantuktuk, ay mantuktuk.* The same process occurs with the English loan verb, *aplay* 'to apply'. *Man-* is prefixed to form a Ct V-2 stem after which the temporal particles appear before it: *ta manaplay, ya manaplay, ay manaplay.* Ct V-2 cannot function without the verbalizing prefix *man-* except in imperatives using preverb *ase: ase tuktuk* (imperative). It is deemed unacceptable in the language to say: **ta tuktuk,* or ******ya aplay* (Riego de Rios, 1989).

Notice that above, *man* is analyzed as a prefix; in this paper, however, it is regarded as a free morpheme which is now observed to criticize with the aspectual

markers *ya* and *ta* forming *yan* and *tan* which are used for verbs that are non-Spanish in origin. Now, let's bring our attention to how negation syntactically operates in Chavacano. Riego de Rios, (1989), explain that there are three negative words in Ct: *no, hende,* and *nohay. No* is utilized with the imperative. *Hende* occurs with the future tense (-begun) form of the verb as well as the present or durative form of the verb (+begun, - completed) together with their respective tense-aspect markers. The tense-aspect marker may be dropped or deleted. *Nohay* occurs with the Past or Punctual form of the verb (+ begun, + completed) with the tense-aspect marker deleted. All these combinations are illustrated more clearly in Table 1 below:

Table 1
Negated sentences in the different aspects in Cotabato Chavacano variant

Tense (aspect in this paper)	Negation + Verb Type	Chavacano	Translation
Imperative	No + V-1	No bene	'don't come'
	No + V-2 Phil	No mantabas	'don't cut grass'
	No + V-2 Eng	No man-enrol	'don't enrol'
Future -begun	Hende + V-1	Hende ay/ø baña	'won't take a bath'
	Hende + V-2 Phil	Hende ay/ø manpaspas	'won't go speeding'
	Hende + V-2 Eng	Hende ay/ø mantreyn	'won't [take the] train'
Present/Durative +begun -completed	Hende + V-1	Hende ta bayla	'is not dancing'
	Hende + V-2 Phil	Hende ta mantuktuk	'is not knocking'
	Hende + V-2 Eng	Hende ta manaplay	'is not applying'
Past/punctual +begun +completed	Nohay Ø V-1	Nohay llama	'didn't call'
	Nohay V-2 Phil	Nohay manlaga	'didn't boil'
	Nohay V-3	Nohay manpas	'didn't pass'

Santos, clarifies that the perfective aspect, which he terms past tense, is negated by the negative particle *nohay* + the root word of the verb:

9   Nohay yo anda.
     NEG 1sg.NOM go
     'I didn't go.'

10   Nohay kame anda.
     NEG 1pl.NOM.EX go
     'We didn't go.'

Like Riego de Rios (1989), suggests that the perfective aspect is negated without the aspect marker. On a similar vein, Lipski & Santoro (2007), claim that the durative *ta* and the irrealis *ay* are negated by the addition of *hinde* (spelled handed) which can co-occur with the aspect markers.

11 Hende ele ay deha (asta ay kasa sila dos)
    NEG 3sg.NOM CONT leave
    'S/he will not leave (until the two of them are married).'

Similarly, they clarify that the *ta* and *ay* vary from the perfective aspect in that the verbal negator *nohay* (which they spelled nway) in the latter corresponds to *ya* indicating both negation and the perfective (or past).

12 Nohay sila anda na Caragasan.
    NEG.PST 3pl.NOM go DIR Caragasan
    'They didn't go to Caragasan.'

Further, Yap Aizon (2010), explains that the negative particle *nohay* (spelled no hay) 'no/none' is an adjective. The negation is unlike the previous ones because the negated items are nominal and not propositional.

13 No hay azucar na garapon.
    NEG sugar LOC container
    'There is no sugar in the container.' Or

14 No hay mas azucar na garapon.
    NEG more sugar LOC container
    'There is no more sugar in the container."

Explaining how negation works in Chavacano, Lipski & Santoro (2007), indicate that Chavacano has other verbal negators like *nunca* 'never' and *no*, where the former only occurs with unmarked verbs and the latter with imperatives and sentences regarded timeless, and modal verbs such as *puede*, *quirre*, and *sabe* in the absence of aspect markers.

15 Nunca yo quire combos!
    Never 1sg.NOM like 2sg.ACC
    'I will never love you.'

16 No bos anda!
    NEG 2sg.NOM   go
    'Don't go!'

17 No puede yo combersa (Ingles).
    NEG able 1sg.NOM   speak
    'I cannot speak (English).'

With a rather differing observation, Steinkruger (2013), although he agrees with the description of the *neg+perf* without the aspect marker appearing in the sentence Forman (1972), describes the possibility of the *neg+perf* allowing the aspectual marker to appear, and claims that it is a counterexample of the common description of the *unmarked neg+perf* where the aspectual marker is dropped when a sentence is negated by *nohay.* What is not brought to light, however, is that there are others who deem the *marked neg+perf* ungrammatical.

The following (the glosses and spelling are modified to align with the ones used in this paper) renders the foregoing claims by Steinkruger (2013), clearer:

18   Nohay si John ya tiene motor.
      NEG PERS.NOM John PFV have motorbike
      'John didn't possess a motorbike.'

19   Nohay ustedes ya perde.
      NEG 2pl.NOM PFV   lose
      'You didn't lose.'

20   Nohay le ya compra este libro
      NEG 3sg.NOM PFV buy this book
      'He didn't buy this book.'

Theoretical perspective

This paper is underpinned on four perspectives. The first one is pertinent to the changes that seem to occur in the language the forenamed cliticization of the verbalizer with the aspect markers, and this syntactic phenomenon of accepting the *marked neg+perf* are undergirded in, first, McWhorter (2011), perspective that the complexity of creoles undergo growth in the course of time from an original state. Meaning, the previously simple form of the aspect marker and the verbalizer are now observed to undergo a rather more complex combinatorial process of cliticization. Second, this paper is framed upon Steinkruger (2013), description of the permissibility of *marked neg+perf.* Third, also framing this paper is the description of native speakers as delineated by Lee (2005), which was utilized for the identification of the informants in the paper. Fourth, the challenge put forth by Schütze & Curbach (2019), that as grammaticality judgment serving as a basis for an experimental data, linguists need to be trained in statistics and experimental design in general. Likewise, he advises that in the grammaticality judgment tasks, probing about the intuition relative to a sentence's grammaticality is helpful. The informants may be asked to explain their judgment for rejecting a sentence to ensure that the theoretical issue at hand is exhibited in the sentence. Also, the informant may be asked to fix an ungrammatical construction, for instance, the removal or addition of a word/s to render a sentence correct.

Research Methods

Participants/informants

Chomsky (2014), ideas were patterned in the identification of Zamboanga Chavacano native speakers. He claimed that native speakers have authority over the grammar of the language they speak. Quite relatedly, Davies (1991), explains that native speakers are those who know which structure belongs to their language and which do not. Furthermore, the itemization done by Lee (2005), as to what a native speaker is, was adhered to in this paper. First, a native speaker is someone who has acquired a language as a young child and sustains the use of that language. Second, they have to possess intuitive knowledge of that language.

Third, they are fluent and spontaneous in their discourse in this language. Fourth, they are competent in the communicative sphere and have the ability to communicate in various social settings. Fifth, they identify with or are identified by a community where the language is spoken; and sixth, they do not possess a foreign accent.

Selecting the informants was crucial in this research which propelled the creation of some of the inclusion criteria to select and identify the native speakers of the language under investigation. The first procedure of gathering the data was the grammaticality judgment test performed by 105 informants who were selected premised on the following inclusion criteria they had to be at least in the senior high school, had spoken the language all their lives, and hadn't left the city to live or stay in another place where a different language was spoken and had just recently returned at least within this year or the past year. Apart from the foregoing inclusion criteria, the informants were required to take a researcher-made Chavacano Grammar Test and had to gain at least 75% or 15 out of the 20 as their test result. Non-adherence to any of the above-listed inclusion criteria caused the removal of a would-be participant from being one.

To triangulate the data collected from the grammaticality judgment, 10 native speakers of Zamboanga Chavacano were selected using purposive sampling. Though the identification of the informants for this purpose proved to be a challenge, the right informants were opportunely identified. The inclusion criteria to consider them informants were as follows:

- They had to have been speaking the Zamboanga Chavacano language their whole life since they were children.
- They had to identify themselves as native speakers of the language having acquired it at or before the age of seven or before kindergarten as first graders are typically seven-year-olds.
- They had to have not left the City within this year or the past year and spoken (a) different languages as their main language of communication.
- They had to be at least 18 years old.
- They had to have reached at least college level.

The reason for the inclusion of the first criterion was to ensure that they have acquired the Zamboanga Chavacano language at a young age which is typical for an individual to be regarded as a native speaker of a language anchored on Lee (2005), set of criteria. The second one was to ascertain that they considered themselves with surety that they are native speakers of the language in that a native speaker of a certain language is certain of their status as being one. The third inclusion criterion was to insure that the informants have not used other languages as the main language of communication which could have potentially infiltrated the Chavacano they spoke. The latter two inclusion criteria were included to be certain that they were old enough to answer potentially challenging questions and that at least they had an education in their background for an ease of comprehension for any possible complex questions they may have encountered.

Data collection procedure

For the grammaticality judgment, the informants were individually asked if they regarded themselves native speakers of the Zamboanga Chavacano language, and after consenting, they were sent the instruments which were generated electronically. In the same instrument, the forenamed grammar test was set. Those whose scores were below 75% were ruled out as informants. Likewise, the instrument constituted of questions eliciting responses pertaining to the foregoing inclusion criteria. In the instrument, too, was a query about their agreement to take part in the research to ensure that they were willingly engaging in it. Those whose qualifications in regards the inclusion criteria were inadequate or inappropriate were ruled out as informants, and those who would have opted to disengage in the research would have been permitted to do so. The interview with the informants was carried out online. Each was interviewed separately after obtaining their consent and after confirming that they possessed all the inclusion criteria. A short orientation about why the interview was being done was presented to each of the informants, after which they were asked if they considered the negated sentences with a verb marked for the perfective aspect and the construction where a negated sentence had a verb unmarked for the perfective aspect. Thereupon the questions about the sentence constructions, the informants had to confirm the surety of their judgment and the state of their judgment as devoid of any doubt. They were likewise asked why they thought the sentence was ungrammatical and were asked to fix the sentence, as advised (Schütze & Curbach, 2019). There is a way to access the interviews as they were done virtually. Thus, the interview was recorded but is kept safe for confidentiality and privacy purposes.

Data analysis

The analyses were carried out via the appropriate statistical analyses which were performed by a statistician using the percentage frequency distribution and binomial test to affirm the significant differences of the responses for the grammaticality judgment section of the data collection. The sentences that were statistically different were segregated from those that were not. This was done to know which of the sentences had relevance to the linguistic investigation that concerns this paper. The sentences were likewise subjected to linguistic analysis for the *marked neg+perf*. As for the interview, the data were all qualitative; no statistical treatment was necessary for the analysis of the data generated from this data collection procedure, thus, necessitating only a linguistic analysis. The sentences containing the syntactic features that were investigated were linguistically analyzed. Specifically, those with *marked neg+perf* construction were teased out.

Results and Discussion

The results and discussion present two parts: the first one is a presentation about the grammaticality judgment of the 105 native speakers of the language and the second part, for triangulation purposes, is the interview done with the 10 native speakers of Chavacano. What follows is the details for the grammaticality judgment.

Grammaticality judgment

Table 2
Educational attainment of the participants

Educational Attainment	Raw Data And Percent
High School	8 (7.6%)
College	89 (84.8%)
Master's	8 (7.6%)

It can be gleaned from Table 2 above that 8 or 7.6% of the informants were high school students; 89 or 84.8% reached college; and 8 or 7.6% earned a master's degree.

Table 3
Age ranges of the participants

Age Range	Raw Data And Percent
18-30	95 (90.5%)
31-40	9 (8.6%)
51-60	1 (1%)

Table 3 presents the age ranges of the participants where 95 or 90.5%, composing the most number of participants for this paper, were aged 18-30; 9 or 8.6% were 31-40 years of age; and only 1 or 1% was within the age range of 51-60.

Table 4
Scores in the Chavacano grammar test

Score	No. of Participants and Percent
20	9 (8.6%)
19	14 (13.3%)
18	25 (23.8%)
17	40 (38.0%)
16	12 (11.4%)
15	5 (4.9%)

Majority of the participants—40 of them specifically—got the score of 17. This is followed by 18, where 25 of them got this number of correct responses. 14 of the participants got the score of 19; 12 got 16, and only 5 got 15. The rest of the participants who did not reach 75% or at least 15 were ruled out from the list of participants. The following table shows the results of the Binomial Test at 50% proportion.

Table 5
Results of the grammaticality judgment test with statistical analyses

	Sentence	# Of Participants Considering The Sentence (%)		Computed Level Of Significance	Interp.
		Correct (Grammatical)	Incorrect (Ungrammatical)		
1	Nohay le ase el disu report 'S/he didn't do his/her report.'	93 (88.6)	12 (11.4)	0.000	Significant
2	Nohay came ya mira disu iruh. 'We didn't see his/her dog.'	45 (42.9)	60 (57.1)	0.172	Not Significant
3	Nohay ele yan sandig na dindin. 'S/he didn't lean on the wall.'	55 (52.4)	50 (47.6)	0.696	Not Significant
4	Nohay sila man pacyaw dimi benta. 'They didn't buy all my goods.'	96 (91.4)	9 (8.6)	0.000	Significant
5	Nohay si Rose yan tuktuk antes de entra adentro. 'Rose hadn't knocked before entering.'	55 (52.4)	50 (47.6)	0.696	Not Significant
6	Nohay ele man joke conel disu amiga. 'S/he didn't joke with his/her friend.'	79 (75.2)	26 (24.8)	0.000	Significant
7	Nohay si Joy abla el deberasan 'Joy didn't tell the truth.'	101 (96.2)	4 (3.8)	0.000	Significant
8	Nohay sila ya anda aqui ayer. 'They didn't come here yesterday.'	55 (52.4)	40 (47.6)	0.696	Not Significant
9	Nohay sila saca conel prutas. 'They didn't get the fruit.'	98 (93.3)	7 (6.7)	0.000	Significant
10	Nohay yo ya dale el dimiyo cincillo canila. 'I didn't give my change to them.'	59 (56.2)	46 (43.8)	0.242	Not Significant
11	Nohay le yan tukut na mesa.	60 (57.1)	45 (42.9)	0.172	Not Significant

	'S/he didn't lean on the table.'				
12	Nohay yo man broma con Iris enante. 'I didn't joke with Iris earlier.'	103 (98.1)	2(1.9)	0.000	Significant
13	Nohay yo ya ase el cosa ele ya manda conmigo. 'I didn't do what s/he had told me to do'	68 (64.8)	37(35.2)	0.003	Significant
14	Nohay le liba el disu libro. 'S/he didn't bring his/her book.'	99 (94.3)	6 (5.7)	0.000	Significant
15	Nohay le man hutik conmigo disu sicreto. 'S/he didn't whisper to me his/her secret.'	92 (87.6)	13 (12.4)	0.000	Significant
16	Nohay yan cambrus el gato con Ivy Jane. 'The cat didn't scratch Ivy.'	45 (42.9)	60 (57.1)	0.118	Not Significant
17	Nohay si Marinette ya abla el deberasan canila. 'Marinette didn't tell them the truth.'	53 (50.5)	52 (49.5)	1.000	Not Significant
18	Nohay el bata mira con el salida. 'The child didn't see the movie.'	103 (98.1)	2 (1.9)	0.000	Significant
19	Nohay si Bruce man pacang conel ropa embuenamente. "Bruce didn't properly 'pound the clothes with a customized piece of wood to help in cleaning it.'"	101 (96.2)	4 (3.8)	0.000	Significant
20	Nohay le yan changge diakel dia. S/he didn't go to the market to buy goods the other day.'	70 (66.7)	35 (33.3)	0.001	Significant

Significant at .05 level (2-tailed)

For the Binomial Test at 50% proportion with a significant level of .05 (2-tailed), a result with a *significant* decision means that the choice (grammatical or

ungrammatical) with the bigger percentage is to be interpreted as favored by the participants. For instance, item 1 in Table 5 above is interpreted as significant because there were a total of 93 respondents equivalent to 88.6% who deemed the sentence grammatical and only 12 or 11.4% of the respondents regarded the sentence ungrammatical. With the statistically computed value of 0.000 which is lower than .05, the result is significant, meaning the item is considered to be grammatical by the majority of the participants and gives enough reason to regard the sentence as grammatically acceptable premised on the native speakers' perspective. Contrarily, the one with a *not significant* decision indicates that the division between the groups is to be regarded as equal or the same. For example, item 2 in Table 5 is interpreted as not significant because out of the 105 respondents, 45 or 42.9 % of them accepted the grammaticality of the sentence, and 60 or 57.1 % of the respondents considered the sentence ungrammatical. Statistically, the result of 0.172 which is higher than the significant level of .05 is to be considered not significant, meaning that there is a statistically equal distribution of participants who accepted the grammaticality of the sentence and those who otherwise rejected it (Danilova et al., 2021; Putrayasa, 2021).

For the purpose of the paper, the sentences or items which are statistically not significant are the ones that are more relevant in that for the sentences deemed not significant, there is a divide among the speakers relative to the grammaticality of the sentence. The distribution of the participants choosing grammatical is statistically alike to those who opted otherwise. Simply put, some native speakers accepted the relevant syntactic construction and others rejected it. As can be gleaned in Table 5 above where all the sentences are negated by the negator *nohay*, sentence numbers 1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 15, 18, and 19 all do not contain the *unmarked neg+perf* (the more common syntactic combination) which were interpreted statistically as significant in favor of *grammatical* in that most of the participants adjudged the sentences as correct grammatically. On the other hand, for the sentences 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, 13, and 20, which contain the *marked neg+perf*, the first eight sentences were interpreted as not significant suggesting that there appears to be a division in acceptance of the sentences' grammaticality among the participants, meaning half of them deemed the sentences grammatical and the others, ungrammatical. This suggests that most of the negated sentences with verbs that are marked for aspect are grammatically accepted by some speakers and are rejected by the other speakers. The latter two numbers are statistically significant in favor of the judgment *grammatical*. To more clearly explicate the findings, the following sentences selected from Table 5 above are illustrated:

21   *Unmarked neg+perf* with a Spanish-derived verb
       Nohay le ase di-su report
       NEG 3sg.NOM ø do GEN-3sg report
       'S/he didn't do his/her report.'

22   *Unmarked neg+perf* with a non-Spanish-derived verb
       Nohay ele man joke con-el di-su amiga.
       NEG 3sg.NOM ø VBZ joke OBL-DEF.DET GEN-3sg friend
       'S/he didn't joke with her friend.'

Sentences in (21) and (22) are not contentious as far as the hypotheses in this paper are concerned in that though they are negated, the verbs are unmarked for aspect. The verbalizer *man* is necessary in that the verb *joke* is apparently a non-Spanish verb. Sentences with this construction are deemed grammatical by the participants. On the other side of the spectrum, however, most of the sentences with *marked neg+perf* seemed to be acceptable to some and otherwise unacceptable to the rest. Statistically, the distribution of those who accepted the foregoing construction and those who did not is equal which indicates that some speakers adjudged such a construction grammatical and others did not. The following sentences below taken from Table 5 above seek to clarify the preceding explanations:

23   *Marked neg+perf* with a Spanish-derived verb
     Nohay si Marinette ya abla el deberasan canila.
     NEG PERS.NOM Marinette PFV say DEF.DET truth OBL.3pl
     'Marinette didn't tell the truth to them.'

24   *Marked neg+perf* with a non-Spanish-derived verb
     Nohay le yan tukut na mesa.
     NEG 3sg.NOM PFV.VRB lean LOC table
     'S/he didn't lean on the table.'

An interspeaker variation is evident in the results of the study carried out for sentences like (23) and (24). For a verb that is a Spanish verb in origin as in *abla* 'say' in (23), the perfective aspect marker *ya* is used. This sentence is negated with the negator *nohay* and is adjudged grammatical by some, and otherwise ungrammatical by the rest, thereby answering the first research question and fortifying the claim that there is an interspeaker variation in the negated perfective sentence. 8 out of 10 sentences with this type of syntactic combination are statistically not significant suggesting that there is indeed a division among the participants pertinent to the acceptability of such a construction. (24) Shows that the verbalizer *man* cliticizes with the perfective aspect *ya* forming *yan.* The sentence is negated by the negator *nohay* and the verb is marked for the perfective aspect. Such a construction in the negative form is accepted by some and rejected by others in terms of grammaticality (Bickerton & Escalante, 1970; Dragoy & Bastiaanse, 2013).

In contrast, there are two sentences that contain *marked neg+perf* that were deemed significant by the respondents, sentences 13 and 20 in Table 5. This proposes an inkling that the syntactic combination under investigation will most likely be grammatically acceptable in time, making both constructions acceptable across the speakers where the verb can either be perfectively marked or not in a negated sentence or might even be the accepted structure. The above findings most definitely confirm the description of Steinkruger (2013), of the perfective sentence in Chavacano with *marked neg+perf*. This paper claims, though, that there is an interspeaker variation with the selection of the sentential construction. Moreover, the previous descriptions of Lipski & Santoro (2000); Forman (1972), are made richer as the *marked neg+perf* is confirmed in this paper. Additionally, the finding is a counterexample of the negator being the carrier of both negation and perfective aspect (Lipski & Santoro 2007).

The findings for the grammaticality judgement test confirm the hypotheses and answers both of the research questions. Thus, the syntactic combination of the negated perfective verb in Chavacano is a permissible syntactic structure of Chavacano. The permissibility though is not encompassing in that it has been confirmed, too, that there is an interspeaker variation in the acceptability of the grammaticality of the foregoing syntactic structure (Becker et al., 2013; Sessarego, 2018).

Interview of native speakers

To corroborate the findings in the grammaticality judgment task, and to triangulate the data, another set of informants had to be interviewed to figure out if indeed an interspeaker variation emerges relative to the sentence structure being explored. All the informants were native speakers of Zamboanga Chavacano as they identified themselves as being so. They declared that they have been using the language since very early on in their lives. Three of them were from Manicahan, and the rest came from different places in Zamboanga City: Putik, Sta. Maria, Boalan, Bunguiao, Culianan, Divisoria, and Talon-Talon. Two of them were college instructors, while the other two were basic education teachers in a public school system. Four were tertiary students, while two were basic education teachers in a private institution. Further, the informants were all above 18 years of age (Carston, 1996; Zagona, 2008).

Five of the ten informants validated the grammaticality of a negated sentence with *marked neg+perf*, and the other five otherwise didn't. Those that regarded the *marked neg+perf* as grammatical also accepted the grammaticality of the sentences with *unmarked neg+perf*. However, the other five only accepted the grammaticality of the *unmarked neg+perf*. The following sentences were two of those that were used during the interview whose grammaticality was accepted by five of the informants and rejected by the other five.

25   Nohay yo yan print con-el picture.
      NEG 1sg.NOM PFV.VBZ print ACC-DEF.DET picture
      'I didn't print the picture.'

26   Nohay yo ya anda na d (i)-ila   casa.
      NEG 1sg.NOM PFV go DIR GEN-3pl house
      'I didn't go to their house.'

The difference between (25) and (26) is the construction of the perfective marker. In (25), the verbalizer *man* is cliticized with the perfective. The verb *print* is apparently a non-Spanish verb, while the verb in (26) is a Spanish verb, thereby the verbalizer is not necessary. Nevertheless, both of the sentences contain *marked neg+perf*. The interviews carried out for the syntactic construction at hand most unquestioningly corroborate with the findings in the grammaticality judgement test in that half of the informants accepted and utilized in their conversations the construction where a negated sentence contains *marked neg+perf* and the other half otherwise rejected such a syntactic algorithm. Further, those who accepted *marked neg+perf* also accepted the combination where the verb is unmarked. This finding corroborates Steinkruger (2013),

description of the negated sentences in the perfective aspect. Also, the findings of Lipski & Santoro (2000); Forman (1972), who have described the negated perfective sentence without the mention of *marked neg+perf*, are rendered richer in that a more accurate description as to how negated sentences in the perfective aspect are also formed is described. Moreover, Lipski & Santoro (2000), description of the negator as indicating both negation and perfective aspect is controverted. The findings of this portion of the data collection substantiate the finding of the grammaticality judgment task above where there is a between-speaker variation in the acceptance of the negated sentence with a verb marked for the perfective aspect and the permissibility of *marked neg+perf*. Therefore, the hypotheses are further confirmed and the research questions answered (Zhang et al., 2006; Lifschitz, 1994).

Conclusion

Basically, the grammaticality of the negated perfective sentence in Zamboanga Chavacano is a construction to be accepted in the description of the Chavacano syntax. This was confirmed in the grammaticality judgement performed by the informants and the interview carried out with the other informants. Thus, the findings of this study supplement previous descriptions of the language see Forman (1972); Riego de Rios (1989), that simply claimed that the structure drops the perfective marker; controvert the description that the negator corresponds to both the perfective aspect and negation in the sentence Lipski & Santoro (2007), and confirm the claim (Steinkruger, 2013). The acceptability of the combination of the grammatical elements is not encompassing in that it has likewise been validated that there is an interspeaker variation in the acceptability of marked neg+perf. Those that deem such a construction grammatical likewise accept the combination of negation and verb unmarked for aspect.

The observation of the combination of the verbalizer man and the perfective and imperfective aspect markers has become inevitable because verbs were the grammatical features analyzed in the paper. Hence, as a peripheral finding, man is analyzed as cliticizing with the perfective and imperfective aspects. This finding and the acceptance of the marked neg+perf are deduced to be linguistic instances of a creole undergoing complexity through time as claimed (McWhorter, 2011). No description of this morphosyntactic feature has been previously described in the literature. The answers to the research questions are most definitely helpful in fortifying that between-speaker variation in a language, not separated by dialectology, is possible in a growing language like Chavacano. The confirmation of the emergence of the interspeaker variation in Chavacano will dispel any bewilderment and disagreement in the acceptability of the negated perfective verb. Further, the Chavacano language syntax in regards the permissibility of the combination of the syntactic features will be more accurately described. This paper can unquestionably add up to the scanty literature of the Chavacano language and/or linguistics. This confirms that an interspeaker variation of a sentence construction is permitted in a growing language. It further sheds light to the potential bewilderment of the combination of the negated perfective verb in a sentence. Moreover, this paper more accurately describes the syntax of Chavacano in the negated perfective aspect (Parkvall & Jacobs, 2018; Grosvald, 2009).

Furthermore, the Mother Tongue-based Multilingual Education in the Philippines has just taken off and there is a dire need of a great deal of scholarly work to be carried out in this field. This paper can be contributory to the MTB-MLE in the Philippine educational system, especially in the context of Zamboanga City where Chavacano is spoken natively. It can be essential in the structural and/or communicative pedagogy of the Zamboanga Chavacano morphosyntax to the learners in the aforesaid place. Hence, in the development of relevant pedagogical materials in the teaching of some grammar points like negation and contemplative aspect or the more commonly used grammatical feature called past tense, this paper can contribute to the content to be incorporated therein by way of presenting the current observation taking place in the structure of the Chavacano variety spoken in Zamboanga, thus exhibiting the dynamism of the language to the learners and concurrent prolific users of the language.

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