

AUSTRONESIAN ELEMENTS IN  
PHILIPPINE CREOLE SPANISH\*

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*One hypothesis of creoles is that the superstrate or lexifier language of a creole contributes to its vocabulary, while its grammar comes directly from its substrate (Crowley, 1997). A look at the lexicon and grammar of Philippine Creole Spanish or Chabacano shows that this theory works specifically for its variant Zamboangueño. Terms for numbers, days of the week, months, and body parts are obviously derived from Spanish. Some properties of its grammar, on the other hand, show obvious Austronesian traces, particularly Tagalog and Cebuano. Zamboangueño exhibits a prototypically Philippine-type verb-initial word order. The influence of Cebuano on Zamboangueño is conspicuously manifested in the plural personal pronoun series in the si-type, kon-type, and di-type pronouns. The si-type plural pronouns are the nominative kame (1p, excl.), kita (1p, incl.), kamo (2p), and sila (3p). Zamboangueño has also created the di-type and kon-type forms based on the Cebuano genitive pronouns amo (1p, excl.), ato (1p, incl.), inyo (2p), and ila (3p), resulting in the genitive pronouns diamon (1p, excl.), diaton (1p, incl.), diinyo (2p), and diila (3p), and the accusative pronouns kanamon (1p, excl.), kanaton (1p, incl.), kaninyo (2p), and kanila (3p). The Zamboangueño nominative noun marking si, which marks phrases whose heads are personal names, corresponds to the personal si in Tagalog and Cebuano. Finally, like Tagalog and Cebuano, the Zamboangueño plural marker mga, which is pronounced variously as maga, mana, and maña, is used when the noun it precedes is explicitly plural.*

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## 1. Introduction

Philippine Creole Spanish (PCS) is more familiarly known as Chabacano, whose variants include Caviteño, Ternateño, Cotabateño, Davaoeno, and Zamboangueno. Of these five variants, Zamboangueno is the only surviving PCS (Lipski, 1987).

One hypothesis of creoles is that the superstrate or lexifier language of a creole contributes to its vocabulary, while its grammar comes directly from its substrate (Crowley, 1997). A look at the lexicon and grammar of Chabacano shows that this theory works specifically for Zamboangueno, which is spoken in Zamboanga City. It is easy to see that Zamboangueno words are predominantly derived from Spanish. Number words, days of the week, months, and body parts are obviously Spanish-derived. Some properties of its grammar, on the other hand, show obvious traces of Austronesian influence, particularly Tagalog and Cebuano.

This paper attempts to answer the question: What grammatical properties, particularly of Tagalog and Cebuano, are found in Zamboangueno Chabacano? It attempts to show the similarities in the grammatical properties among Zamboangueno, Tagalog, and Cebuano to draw support for the hypothesis concerning the contribution of the substrate to the grammar of a creole.

It is organized into four main parts to correspond to the four traces of Austronesian influence in Zamboangueno covered in this paper: a. word order, b. plural pronominal system, c. nominative noun marking, and d. plural noun marking. Data are drawn from the researcher's knowledge of Zamboangueno, as well as from previous studies done on Zamboangueno, Tagalog, and Cebuano. Some native speakers of Zamboangueno and a native speaker of Cebuano also participated in the data gathering. Each of the major parts of the paper is provided with a set of sentences presented in the order of Zamboangueno, Tagalog, and Cebuano. Each sentence is numbered consecutively throughout the paper, and is provided with its English gloss, some grammatical information, and a rough translation in English. Some of the grammatical information and translation have been altered from their original sources for uniformity of presentation.

## 2. The Grammatical Features of Zamboangueno

### 2.1 Word order

Like Tagalog and Cebuano, as well as many other Philippine languages, Chabacano exhibits a prototypically Philippine-type verb-initial word order, different from the SVO pattern of Spanish. A number of scholars share the observation that Chabacano is a VSO language: Holm (2001), Forman (2001), and Lipski (1987). They also agree that while SVO order may occur, VSO is still the unmarked order for Chabacano. A look at the structure of Zamboangueno,

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Tagalog, and Cebuano shows that these languages share the same VSO structure, here demonstrated in the following major grammatical categories.

### 2.1.1 Nominal predicate clauses

In sentence (1) *un maestra yo* 'I am a teacher', the predicate noun phrase *un maestra* 'a teacher' is a combination of the determiner *un*, which means 'a', with the base word *maestra* 'teacher', to form a constituent with a nominal use (McKaughan, 1954). The noun phrase in the subject position *yo* 'I' is a first person singular nominative, serving as the subject to the predicate NP *un maestra*. The same construction can be seen in the Tagalog sentence (2) *nars si Maria* 'Maria is a nurse' where the predicate is the noun *nars* 'nurse', and in the Cebuano sentence (3) *bigala naku si Rowena* 'Rowena is my friend' where the predicate is the noun + genitive first person singular pronoun combination *bigala naku*.

(1) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Un maestra yo.  
DET teacher NOM.1s  
'I am a teacher.'

(2) TAGALOG (Reid, 2000, p. 12)

Nars si Maria.  
nurse DET Maria  
'Maria is a nurse.'

(3) CEBUANO

Higala naku si Rowena.  
friend GEN.1s DET Rowena  
'Rowena is my friend.'

### 2.1.2 Adjectival clauses

Predication in Zamboangueño may also consist of an adjective such as *bien sabroso* 'very delicious' in sentence (4) *bien sabroso el comida* 'the food is very delicious' where the intensifier *bien* 'very' (Forman, 1972) combines with the adjective *sabroso* 'delicious' to form an adjectival phrase serving as predication to *el comida* 'the food'. Such a construction is evident in the Tagalog sentence (5) *maganda ang babae* 'the woman is beautiful' where the adjective *maganda* 'beautiful' forms the predicate of the sentence to the subject *ang babae* 'the woman', and in the Cebuano sentence (6) *buutan ang bata nga gamay* 'the little child is good' where the adjective *buutan* 'good' precedes the subject *ang bata nga gamay* 'the little child'.

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(4) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Bien sabroso el comida.  
very delicious DET food  
'The food is very delicious.'

(5) TAGALOG (Schachter and Otones, 1972, p. 61)

Maganda ang babae.  
beautiful DET woman  
'The woman is beautiful.'

(6) CEBUANO (Trosdal, 1992, p. 32)

Buutan ang bata nga gamay.  
good DET child LIG little  
'The little child is good.'

### 2.1.3 Verbal clauses

A verbal clause in Zamboangueno consists of a verb phrase followed by noun phrases. The verb phrase consists of tense markers: /*ya-*/ (punctual, perfective); /*ta-*/ (habitual, durative, present or past imperfective); and /*ay-*/ or /*ey-*/ or /*el-*/ (future) and a verb. In cases where the verb is unmarked, the meaning may be understood from the context (Forman, 1972).

A verbal clause is demonstrated in sentence (7) *ya come el perro konel pescao* 'the dog ate the fish' where the verbal clause *ya come* 'ate' precedes the subject *el perro* 'the dog' and the direct object *konel pescao* 'the fish'. We see the same verb-initial construction in the Tagalog sentence (8) *humawak siya ng libro* 'he held a book' where the verb *humawak* 'held' precedes the rest of the sentence, and in the Cebuano sentence (9) *nagpalit ang babaye sa saging* 'the woman bought bananas' where the verb *nagpalit* 'bought' serves as the predication.

(7) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Ya come el perro konel pescao.  
Asp-Past eat DET dog ACC fish  
'The dog ate the fish.'

(8) TAGALOG (Schachter and Otones, 1972, p. 294; in Reid and Liao, 2004, p. 441)

Humawak siya ng libro.  
held NOM.3s GEN book  
'He held a book.'

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(9) CEBUANO (Dryer, 1977, p. 1)

Nagpalit ang babaye sa saging.  
bought DET woman OBL banana  
'The woman bought bananas.'

### 2.1.4 Prepositional predicate constructions

In sentence (10) *para contigo este cancion* 'this song is for you' the predicate contains a preposition *para* 'for' and the second person singular locative pronoun *contigo* 'you' which takes on a locative thematic role. This prepositional phrase comes before the nominative phrase *este cancion* 'this song', composed of a deictic determiner *este* 'this' and the noun *cancion* 'song'. Tagalog shares this construction where we see a prepositional phrase construction in sentence (11) *nasa mesa ang pambura* 'the eraser is on the table' where the locative *nasa mesa* 'on the table' serves as predication to *ang pambura* 'the eraser'. We also see the same construction in Cebuano where the prepositional phrase *gikan naku* 'from me' in sentence (12) *gikan naku ang singsing* 'the ring comes from me', where *gikan* means 'from' and *naku* is a first person singular genitive pronoun.

(10) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Para contigo este cancion.  
for LCV.2s this song  
'This song is for you (sg).'

(11) TAGALOG (Ramos, 1971, p. 85)

Nasa mesa ang pambura.  
on LCV DET eraser  
'The eraser is on the table.'

(12) CEBUANO

Gikan naku ang singsing.  
from GEN.1s DET ring  
'The ring comes from me.'

The grammatical categories discussed demonstrate a similarity in word order among Zamboangueño, Tagalog, and Cebuano, giving evidence to the Philippine-type word order characteristic of Zamboangueño, which departs from the word order of its superstrate.

### 2.2 Plural pronominal system

The influence of Cebuano on Zamboangueño is conspicuously manifested in its pronominal system, specifically in the plural personal pronoun series with the exception of *nosotros* 'we' (1p, dual, formal), *bosotros* 'you' (2p, familiar), and *ustedes* 'you' (2p, formal), which are Spanish-derived. The Cebuano

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influence is demonstrated in all the three basic cases: nominative, functioning as the subject of both transitive and intransitive clauses; genitive, as a possession marker; and accusative, serving as the direct object.

Note that in Table 1 the *kon*-type pronouns in Chabacano take an accusative case, different from the *kang*-set in Table 2. Nolasco (2005) argues that Chabacano exhibits an accusative system, rather than the ergative actancy structure characteristic of most Philippine languages, explaining further that this is one feature that Chabacano has inherited from Spanish and Portuguese.

Table 1. Personal pronouns in Zamboangueno Chabacano

English gloss	Si-type Nominative		Di-type Genitive		Kon-type Accusative
	Free	Bound	Preposed, postposed	Only preposed	
1s 'I'	(i)yó	-yó	dimíyo, míyo	dimí, mí	ko(n)mígo
2s 'you' (common)	ebós	-bós	debós		kombós
2s 'you' (familiar)	tú		ditúyo, túyo	ditú, tú	kontígo
2s 'you' (formal)	usté		diusté		konusté
3s 'he, she'	éle	-lé	disúyo, súyo	disú, sú	konéle
1p (ex) 'we' (common)	kamé		diámon	ámon	kanámon
1p (in) 'we' (common)	kitá		diáton	áton	kanáton
1p 'we' (dual) (formal)	nosótro				
2p 'you' (common)	kamó		diínyo	ínyo	kanínyo
2p 'you' (familiar)	bosótro				
2p 'you' (formal)	ustédes		diustédes		konustédes
3p 'they'	silá		diíla	íla	kaníla

(Forman, 1972, p. 107)

Table 2. Personal pronouns in Cebuano

English gloss	Si-set Nominative		Ni-set Genitive		Kang-set Locative
	Non-clitic	Clitic	Preposed	Postposed	
1s 'I'	aku	=ku	aku	naku, ku	kanaku, naku
2s 'you'	ikaw	=ka	imu	nimu, mu	kanimu, nimu
3s 'he, she, it'	siya	siya	iya	niya	kaniya, niya
1p (ex) 'we'	kami	=mi	amu	namu, mu	kanamu, namu
1p (in) 'we'	kita	=ta	atu	natu, tu	kanatu, natu
2p 'you'	kamu	=mu	inyu	ninyu	kaninyu, ninyu
3p 'they'	sila	sila	ila	nila	kanila, nila

(Dryer, 1977, p. 3)

### 2.2.1 *Si*-type pronouns

The *si*-type plural pronouns are *kame* 'we' (1p, excl.), *kita* 'we' (1p, incl.), *kamo* 'you' (2p), and *sila* 'they' (3p). This set is similar to the *si*-set nominative case pronouns categorized by Dryer (1977) as shown in Table 2: *kami* 'we' (1p, excl.), *kita* 'we' (1p, incl.), *kamu* 'you' (2p), and *sila* 'they' (3p).

Sentence (13) *ta pasea kame na pueblo ahora* 'we are walking around town now' shows the use of the first person plural exclusive *kame* 'we', which is similar to *kami* in sentence (14) *mo'ani kami ug humay sa bulan sa Nobyembre* 'we harvest rice in the month of November'. A number of sources attest that *na* in sentence (13) is a general locative preposition which is derived from Portuguese: McWhorter (2000), Forman (1993), and Lipski (1986). In particular, Lipski states that the Zamboangueno *na* is identical to the Portuguese *na*, which is a contraction of the preposition *em* and the feminine definite article *a*. In Zamboangueno, *na* means *at* or *in* (Camins, 1999). In addition, Forman (1972) explains that *na* marks phrases whose head is a common or proper name of a place.

#### a. First person plural exclusive *kame* 'we'

##### (13) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Ta           pasea   *kame*                   na   pueblo   ahora.  
 Asp-Pres   walk   NOM.1p.excl   LCV   town   Adv  
 'We (excl) are walking around town now.'

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(14) CEBUANO (Bell, 1976, p. 59)

Mo'ani *kami* ug humay sa bulan sa  
will harvest NOM.1p.excl OBL rice OBL month GEN

Nobyembre.

November

'We (excl) harvest rice in the month of November.'

### b. First person plural inclusive *kita* 'we'

(15) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

(Ay) anda *kita* na Fort Pilar luego.

Asp-Fut go NOM.1p.incl LCV Fort Pilar Adv

'We (incl) will go to Fort Pilar later.'

(16) CEBUANO

Muadtu (*ki*)ta sa balay ugma.

will go NOM.1p.incl OBL house Adv

'We (incl) will go to the house tomorrow.'

### c. Second person plural *kamo* 'you'

(17) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Entra *kamo* na casa, apura!

enter NOM.2p LCV house hurry

'Enter the house, hurry!'

(18) CEBUANO (Trosdal, 1992, p. 26)

Mugbu man gud *kamu*.

short NOM.2p

'You (pl) are short.'

### d. Third person plural *sila* 'they'

(19) ZAMBOANGUEÑO (Forman, 1972, p. 158)

Ya anda *sila* na Lamitan.

Asp-Past go NOM.3p LCV Lamitan

'They went to Lamitan.'

(20) CEBUANO

Mukatkat *sila* sa kahuy.

will climb NOM.3p LCV tree.

'They will climb the tree.'

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### 2.2.2 *Di*-type pronouns

The genitive plural pronouns in Zamboangueño are formed via the preposition *di* which means *of, from, by, or with* (Camins, 1999) and the Cebuano genitive pronouns *amu* ‘our’ (1p, excl.), *atu* ‘our’ (1p, incl.), *inyu* ‘your’ (2p), and *ila* ‘their’ (3p), resulting in the plural genitive pronouns *diamon* ‘our’ (1p, excl.), *diaton* ‘our’ (1p, incl.), *diinyo* ‘your’ (2p), and *diila* ‘their’ (3p) (Lipski, 1986).

Sentence (21) *no quiere si Fe konel diamon hermano* ‘Fe does not like our brother’ is an example of a sentence containing *diamon* ‘our’ which combines the preposition *di* + *amo*. Cebuano uses *amu* + the ligature *ng* for the preposed genitive personal pronoun as in sentence (22) *nalipay amung Mama* ‘Our mother was happy’. Sentence (21) also exhibits negation of verbal predication (Forman, 1972) with the negator *no* preceding the verb *quiere* ‘like’. Sentence (23) *tiene pa lugar na diaton aparador* ‘there is still space in our cabinet’ is an example of existential predication (Forman, 1972). Both sentence structures also occur in Tagalog and Cebuano. Moreover, the particle *pa* in sentence (23) is also Philippine. Tagalog and Cebuano *pa* means ‘still’ (Schachter & Otanes, 1972; Trosdal, 1992), among other meanings, which the particle *pa* in sentence (23) carries.

#### a. First person plural exclusive *diamon* ‘our’

(21) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

No quiere si Fe konel *diamon* hermano.  
Neg like DET Fe ACC GEN.1p.excl brother  
‘Fe does not like our (excl) brother.’

(22) CEBUANO

Nalipay *amung* Mama.  
was happy GEN.1p.excl=LIG Mother  
‘Our (excl) mother was happy.’

#### b. First person plural inclusive *diaton* ‘our’

(23) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Tiene pa lugar na *diaton* aparador.  
Existential space LCV GEN.1p.incl cabinet  
‘There is still space in our (incl) cabinet.’

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(24) CEBUANO

Nagduwa ang *atung* mga anak ug  
 played DET GEN.1p.incl=LIG Plrl children OBL  
 bula gahapun.  
 ball Adv

‘Our (incl) children played ball yesterday.’

### c. Second person plural *diinyo* ‘your’

(25) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Cre konel *diinyo* tata y nana.  
 obey ACC GEN.2p father and mother  
 ‘Obey your father and mother.’

(26) CEBUANO

Gipalit sa *inyung* higala ang payung.  
 bought GEN GEN.2p=LIG friend DET umbrella  
 ‘Your friend bought the umbrella.’

### d. Third person plural *diila* ‘their’

(27) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Ya lleva sila konel *diila* maga  
 Asp-Past bring NOM.3p ACC GEN.3p Plrl  
 anak na aplaya.  
 children LCV beach

‘They brought their children to the beach.’

(28) CEBUANO

Daku *ilang* tindahan.  
 Adj. GEN.3p=LIG store  
 ‘Their store is big.’

### 2.2.3 *Kon*-type pronouns

Like the genitive plural pronouns, the accusative plural pronouns also exhibit this Cebuano influence in *kanamon* (1p, excl.), *kanaton* (1p, incl.), *kaninyo* (2p), and *kanila* (3p). Lipski (1986) suggests that these accusative pronouns may have been influenced by the use of *con* + subject pronoun, which is supported by their popular pronunciation such as *konamon* and *konaton*.



d. Third person plural *kanila* ‘them’

(35) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Ya            perdona    mi            tata    *kanila*.  
 Asp-Past    forgive    GEN.1s    father   ACC.3p  
 ‘My father forgave them.’

(36) CEBUANO (Morey, 1961, p. 77)

Nagsipa    ka            *kanila*.  
 kicked    NOM.2s    LCV.3p  
 ‘You kicked them.’

Besides these pronouns, Zamboangueño is also rapidly showing the use of *ka* ‘you’ (2s) to replace *tu*, *ebos*, or *uste* (2s). For example, it is common to hear people say ‘*donde ka anda?*’ ‘where are you going?’ instead of ‘*donde tu anda?*’ Another development is the use of the preposition *di* + *ikaw* (2s) to show possession. An example is ‘*cosa di-ikaw nombre?*’ ‘what is your name?’ instead of ‘*cosa dituyo nombre?*’ Although their use is observed to be popular, conservative speakers of Zamboangueño prefer to use the Chabacano pronouns.

2.3 Nominative noun marking *si*

Like *si* which marks a personal subject NP in Tagalog, as well as Cebuano (Forman, 1993), as in sentence (38) *bumili si Rosa ng bigas* ‘Rosa bought some rice’ and sentence (39) *nagbasa si Inday ug libru gahapun* ‘Inday read a book yesterday’, the Zamboangueño noun marking *si* marks phrases whose heads are personal names. An example is sentence (37) *ya quema si Conching konel retrato* ‘Conching burned the picture’.

(37) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Ya            quema    *si*            Conching    konel    retrato.  
 Asp-Past    burn        DET    Conching    ACC    picture  
 ‘Conching burned the picture.’

(38) TAGALOG (Schachter & Otones, 1972, p. 81)

Bumili    *si*    Rosa    ng    bigas.  
 bought    DET    Rosa    GEN    rice  
 ‘Rosa bought (some) rice.’

(39) CEBUANO

Nagbasa    *si*    Inday    ug    libru    gahapun.  
 read        DET    Inday    OBL    book    Adv.  
 ‘Inday read a book yesterday.’

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The Zamboangueno *el* corresponds to the non-personal *ang* in Tagalog and Cebuano as used in sentence (41) *pumasok ang babae* ‘the woman entered’ and sentence (42) *guwapa ang bata* ‘the child is pretty’. Sentence (40) *jendeh ta olvida el madrina konel disuyo ahijado* ‘the godmother does not forget her godson’ contains the NP *el madrina* ‘the godmother’ where *el* marks the common noun *madrina* ‘godmother’. Sentence (40) contains *jendeh* ‘not’, which is another example of negation of verbal predication (Forman, 1972). Both Forman and Lipski (1986) share the observation that *jendeh* ‘not’ is Philippine. Lipski is more specific in saying that it is from the Tagalog or Hiligaynon *hende* ‘not’. In all three languages, these markers are used in nominative noun phrases.

### (40) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Jendeh ta olvida *el* madrina konel disuyo ahijado.  
Neg Asp forget DET godmother ACC GEN.3s godson.  
‘The godmother never forgets her godson.’

### (41) TAGALOG (Reid & Liao, 2004, p. 467)

Pumasok *ang* babae.  
entered DET woman  
‘The woman entered.’

### (42) CEBUANO

Guwapa *ang* bata.  
pretty DET child  
‘The child is pretty.’

## 2.4 Plural noun marker *mga*

Finally, like Tagalog and Cebuano, the Zamboangueno Philippine plural particle *mga*, which is pronounced in three variants (*maga*, *mana*, and *manja*) (Lipski, 1986), is used when the noun it precedes is explicitly plural. Forman (1972) posits that *maga* as in sentence (43) *ya ri el maga gente konele* ‘the people laughed at him’ has a Filipino connotation of lower status, while *mana* carries a Spanish connotation, and is more elitist, reflecting further that Spaniards had difficulty pronouncing the velar nasal. *Mga* carries a younger Filipino connotation and is the more central and important plural marker (Forman, 1972) as used in the Tagalog sentence (44) *wala sa bahay ang mga dalaga* ‘the maidens are not in the house’, and the Cebuano sentence (45) *gimingaw sila sa ilang mga ginikanan* ‘they miss their parents’.

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### (43) ZAMBOANGUEÑO

Ya            ri        el            *maga*    gente        konele.  
Asp-Past    laugh    DET    Plrl    people      ACC.3s  
'The people laughed at him.'

### (44) TAGALOG (Akil, 2000, p. 77)

Wala    sa        bahay    ang        *mga*    dalaga.  
Neg    Prep    house    DET    Plrl    maiden  
'The maidens are not in the house.'

### (45) CEBUANO

Gimingaw    sila            sa            ilang                            *mga*    ginikanan.  
miss            NOM.3p    OBL    GEN.3p=LIG    Plrl    parents  
'They miss their parents.'

The Zamboangueño plural noun marker *mga* is, in some instances, optional, especially when the noun is marked by the plural marker *-(e)s* suffix. However, both the plural marker and the plural suffix may also occur in the same noun phrase (Forman, 1972).

### 3. Conclusion

In summary, traces of Austronesian elements, specifically traces of Tagalog and Cebuano, can be found in the grammatical properties of Zamboangueño, particularly in its verb-initial word order, plural pronominal system, nominative noun marking *si*, and plural noun marking *mga*.

This discussion is, in no way, exhaustive. This paper suggests further study on the finer influence of the substrates on the grammar of Zamboangueño Chabacano. It suggests using data from the recently completed Chabacano Language Corpus Project, which is available at the Institute of Cultural Studies in Western Mindanao based in Ateneo de Zamboanga University in Zamboanga City. This recommended study will serve to assess the current state of Zamboangueño Chabacano, and possibly, to provide empirical analysis to support the drive for the conservation of the language.

### Abbreviations

DET	determiner
NOM	nominative
GEN	genitive
LIG	ligature
ACC	accusative
OBL	oblique

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LCV	locative
Asp	aspect
Pres	present
Fut	future
Prog	progressive
Adv	adverb
Adj	adjective
Prep	preposition
Neg	negator
Plrl	plural
incl	inclusive
excl	exclusive
1s	first person singular
1p	first person plural
2p	second person plural
3s	third person singular
3p	third person plural

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