The Difference Between Bisaya, Binisaya, Visayan and Cebuano

These four terms have been used widely, yet some learners have not truly understood how one differs from the others. Many have asked me whether or not Cebuano is similar to Binisaya or Bisaya spoken in Cagayan de Oro and the rest of Mindanao. In addition, some of my clients in the translation industry ask me from time to time whether Cebuano and Bisaya are one and the same language.

Bisaya refers to the people of the Visayas and the non-Muslim population of Mindanao. We have the Lumads of Mindanao, of course, with their own languages like the Manobos, Bagobos, Bukidnons, among others but majority of them speak Bisaya. Yes, Bisaya may also refer to the language spoken. Just like Filipino, the people; and Filipino, the language.

On the other hand, Binisaya is literally "in Bisaya" just like "Tinagalog" ("in Tagalog") or "Iningles" ("in English"). This can also refer to the language. For example, "Unsay binisaya niana" (What's [the term for] that in Bisaya). When we affix a verbal affix to it like "magbinisaya kita" then we have "let's speak Bisaya." Thus, my Magbinisaya Kita series.

Cebuano is the language of the people of Cebu. It's also known as Sugbuhanon or Sinugbuhanon. It's Bisaya. As a matter of fact, that is how Bisaya is known the world over and even in the academe which encodes it as Sebwano. However, people from Mindanao shy away from calling their language Cebuano which they consider the language of the people of Cebu. They call it Bisaya or Binisaya instead. So I often use both terms interchangeably.

Bisaya, however, should not be confused with Visaya, which is a subgroup of Philippine languages that includes Cebuano/Bisaya, Hiligaynon, Waray, Aklanon, Kinaray-a, etc.

Dr. Jessie Grace U. Rubrico is an expert consultant in Philippine Languages. Considered the foremost authority on modern Cebuano she has developed and managed numerous linguistic projects all over the world.

The Magbinisaya Kita Primer 1, the result of over a decade of scholarship is Dr. Rubrico's latest work. She also publishes papers and articles and FREE Cebuano Lessons at her website www.languagelinks.org

(c) Copyright - Jessie Grace U. Rubrico, Ph.D. Linguistics

Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Jessie_Grace_Rubrico