

# THE PHONEMES OF SOUTHERN BUKIDNON MANOBO

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0. The Manobos of Southern Bukidnon are a nomadic, *kaingin*-farming people, living in isolated farmsites scattered throughout the southern end of the province. Several slightly differing dialects are spoken among these people, but the differences do not appear to present any major problems of analysis or description.<sup>1</sup>

The dialect represented by this paper is difficult to classify. The informant, Mr. Lumundao Dalas, speaks a mixture of two dialects, Dongoanen and Kulamanen, with influence from a third, Ilianen. He also speaks English, Binokid, Magindanao, and Visayan.

Because of insufficient evidence, this paper deals only with segmental phonemes and does not include suprasegmental features such as intonation or stress.

1. Manobo of Southern Bukidnon has sixteen consonant phonemes: *b, d, g, h, k, l, m, n, ng, p, r, s, t, w, y, '* , and four vowel phonemes: *i, a, e, and u*.

2. Consonant phonemes are divided into two groups: Stops and continuants.

2.1. The stops are *p, t, k, ' , b, d, g*. *p, t, k*, are voiceless stops with unreleased variants occurring in word final position or before non-vocoids.<sup>2</sup> Unaspirated variants occur elsewhere. *t* is pronounced with the tongue tip between the teeth; the unreleased variant of *k* tends to be backed: *pakpak*

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(1) The data on which this paper is based have been recorded during a residence of six months in Damulog, municipality of Kibawi, Bukidnon, under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, with Mindanao headquarters at the Mindanao Agricultural College, Musuan, Bukidnon.

(2) We are using the term non-vocoid to include all consonants except the semivowels.

[pak''pak'']<sup>3</sup> 'feather', 'atap [ʼatap''] 'roof', tala' 'close', kaliyawa 'horned bill', putput [put''put''] 'dirt'.

The distribution of glottal stop is analogous to that of other stops. bata' 'child', 'apu' 'grandfather', 'egka'an'e 'I eat'.

b, d, and g are voiced stops. b has a labiodental fricative variant which is pronounced with the lips almost touching. It occurs between vowels or between a preceding l and a following vowel within an utterance. kalibang-bang [kalivangbang] 'butterfly', bakbak 'frog', bulbul [bulvul] 'feather' or 'hair', dalan 'path', galawka 'you play'.

2.2. The continuants are r, h, m, n, ng, l, s, w, and y.

r is the alveolar flap with a trilled variant occurring after nasals. 'adrengr-eng [ʼadrengr-eng] 'rainy season', rasay 'sacrifice', deraru 'sick', kemer 'finger'.

h is the voiceless glottal fricative. hengkay 'what', raba 'young woman'.

m, n, and ng are voiced nasals. me'apun 'afternoon', kemkem 'hold', ngaran 'name', narapit 'to go to the side', sanlay 'corn', lilyungan 'on top'.

l is an alveolar lateral with relatively high front tongue position. langun 'all', malibat 'tight', bulbul 'hair' or 'feather'. The distribution of l is similar to that of other non-vocoids, but its influence on following voiced stops is the same as that of a vocoid. See section 2.1.

s is an alveolar grooved fricative. se demonstrative particle, kas subject indicator, kasila' 'camote'.

The semi-vowels y and w are non-syllabic vocoids.<sup>2</sup> way 'and', kaykaw 'you', yapyap 'winnow'.

3. Vowel phonemes are i, u, a, and e.

i is the high front close or open unrounded vocoid. u is a back unrounded vocoid varying from a high open position to a mid close position. 'ini 'this', tutu'u 'exceedingly'.

a is the central low close unrounded vocoid. e is the central mid open and unrounded vocoid.<sup>4</sup> These vocoids are thus very similar in their production and often difficult to distinguish. The following examples demonstrate their phonemic status: 'alad 'fence', 'elad 'piece'; 'ebelevahan 'south', 'ebelevahan 'to redeem by paying a price'.

4. Combinations of phonemes.

4.1. Phonemes are combined in the following syllable patterns: CVC bulbul 'feather', way 'and'; and CV kayu 'tree', tutu'u 'exceeding'. VC occurs rarely. The only examples observed are weig 'water' and mibpe-menaik 'he climbed'.

(3) The symbol [ʼ] indicates that the stop is unreleased.

(4) This vocoid is lower than the pepet vowel heard in Dibabaon, Manobo, Binokid, or Magindanao.

Within the syllable patterns, all consonants occur initially. All except *b* occur finally. *dutum* 'there', *bengkay* 'what', 'alad' 'fence', *meselem* 'morning'.

4.2. There are no consonant clusters within the syllable. Between syllables consonant clusters occur which are limited to two consonants. No widespread system of limitation of syllable-final consonants plus syllable-initial consonants has been observed. However, certain restrictions do appear. *b* clusters only with *l* and the semi-vowels, *w* and *y*. Syllable-final *l* and *r* do not occur in clusters with voiced alveolars, *l*, *r*, *n*, *d*, or with voiced stops, *b*, *d*, *g*.

Actual combinations noted are: *pt, pk, pd, pr, ps, py, p', tp, tt, tk, tb, td, tg, tr, tm, tl, ts, tw, t', kp, kt, kk, kb, kd, kg, kr, km, kn, kng, kl, ks, kw, ky, k', bp, bt, bk, bb, bd, br, bm, bn, bl, bs, by, b', dp, dt, dk, db, dd, dg, dr, dm, dl, ds, dw, dy, d', gp, gt, gk, gb, gd, gg, gr, gm, gn, gl, gs, gw, g', 'p, 't, 'k, 'b, 'd, 'g, 'r, 'n, 'l, 's, 'y, rp, rt, rk, rm, rs, rw, hw, mp, mt, mk, mb, md, mg, mr, ml, ms, my, m', np, nt, nk, nb, nd, nr, nm, nl, ns, nw, n', ngp, ngt, ngk, ngb, ngd, nng, ngr, ngm, ngl, ngs, ngw, ng', lp, lt, lk, lb, lm, lng, ls, lw, sp, st, sk, sb, sd, sg, sr, sm, sng, sl, sw, s', wp, wt, wr, wb, wn, wng, wl, ws, wg, w', yp, yt, yk, yr, ym, yn, yng, yl, ys, yw, y'.*

4.3. There are no vowel clusters within the syllable. The only vowel clusters observed between syllables are noted in 4.1. Vowels occur medially and finally within a syllable. Examples of syllable medial and final vowels in CVC and CV are: *bengkay* 'what', *mibpalahuyran'en* 'they ran', *kayu* 'tree', 'ini' 'this', 'uya' 'yes'.

#### 5. Alternation of phonemes

5.1. The voiced stops *d* and *g* frequently alternate with the continuants *r* and *b* respectively. When, within an utterance, syllable-initial *d* or *g* occur between two vocoids or between *l* and a following vocoid, they are replaced by *r* or *b* respectively. *galaw* 'play', *galawhalaw* 'happy'; *gakit* 'raft', *te hakit* 'the raft'; *da'isak* 'little', *te ra'isak* 'a little'; *kayu* 'tree' plus *-din* 'his' is *kayurin* 'his tree'; *bulbul* 'feather' plus *-din* 'his' is *bulbulrin* 'his feather'.

Notice the phonemic status of these sounds in the following examples: *keker* 'finger', 'egkemkem'ed 'I hold now'; *bengkay* 'what', *genatke* 'you go'; *dengan* 'before', *langun* 'all'. Phonemic contrast between *l* and *r* also appears in *libedkera* 'come again', 'elad' 'piece', *langun* 'all', *raba* 'young woman'.

It is of interest here that the alternation between [b] and [v] is identically conditioned, yet these sounds never occur in contrast and are therefore alternants of a single phoneme. *bulbul* bulvul 'feather', *belay* 'house', *te belay* te velay 'the house'.