

BINOKID PHONEMES

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1. Introduction

The Binokid dialect is spoken in the northern and central areas of Bukidnon, a central province of Mindanao Island (Philippines). It consists of 19 segmental phonemes¹ and 1 suprasegmental phoneme. The syllable is the basic unit of word structure, and each syllable consists of one vowel and one or two consonants only, arranged in the following two patterns: CV and CVC.² A word consists of one or more of these syllables.

2. Consonants

2.1: Description: There are 15 consonants in Binokid. These include nonvocoids and vocoids of a nonsyllabic character (semivowels [*w*] and [*y*]).

Stops: Voiceless and voiced unaspirated, bilabial, alveolar, and velar:

p t k: *pákpak* 'wings', *taw* 'our', *bákbak* 'frog'

b d g: *bákbak* 'frog', *daw* 'and', *bágbag* 'corn tassel'

d: This phoneme has an alternant [*r*] (voiced alveolar flap or trill), which is used in intervocalic position by some speakers: e.g. [*kalád*] 'slice', but [*tagkalarén ku*] 'I am slicing it'. There are some speakers who prefer to use [*d*] exclusively, rather than [*r*] medially between vowels; this is especially true of older persons and those in the mountain areas. The flapped or trilled [*r*] seems to be more popular with those who also speak Visayan. Therefore, one may hear [*madágway*] or [*marágway*] 'beautiful', [*hudá*] or [*hurá*] 'none, not', and so forth. Contrast seems to have been introduced in initial and final position by Spanish loans, but it appears that this has not yet rearranged the basic pattern of the original phonemes. Examples:

(1) There is a voiceless affricated alveopalatal stop [*č*] which appears in Spanish loans, but is not included here. The data in this paper were gathered during five months of field work under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, whose Mindanao headquarters are at the Mindanao Agricultural College, Musuan, Bukidnon.

(2) There is a CCV pattern found in Spanish loans: [*trabábu*] 'work'. Two instances have been found in fast speech where the CCV pattern occurs in pure Binokid: [*dya*] 'go, there (far)' and [*ʔa.tyúʔay*] (· represents syllable break) 'small'. Further analysis, however, seems to indicate that the CV, CVC pattern holds true: the slower [*díyá*] 'go!' is used for chasing a dog away. Also note [*díyán*] 'there' (near). [*ʔatáyú*] and [*ʔatáyúʔay*] serve for 'smaller'.

[*ripúliyu*] ‘cabbage’, [*dábum*] ‘leaf’, [*lúgar*] ‘room’, [*kalád*] ‘slice’.

Note that the voiced alveolar lateral [*l*] appears in contrast with [*d*] and consequently must be treated as a separate phoneme; example: [*buríng*] (or [*budíng*]) ‘cat’ and [*bulíng*] ‘medicine’.

Glottal: [*ʔ*] [*bága*] ‘flame’, [*bágaʔ*] ‘lungs’.

Fricatives: Voiceless alveolar grooved,³ and glottal:

[*s*] [*sápu*] ‘flesh’

[*h*] [*hápu*] ‘fire’.

Nasals: Voiced bilabial, alveolar, and velar: [*m*] [*n*] [*ng*]

[*ʔalíma*] ‘hand’, [*ʔalína*] ‘smooth water’, [*talínga*] ‘ear’.

Lateral: Voiced alveolar: [*l*] [*búlbul*] ‘feather’, [*pálu*] ‘tip’.

Semi-vowels: Voiced high close front unrounded:

[*y*]⁴ [*yánda*] ‘only’, [*sulíy*] ‘net’.

Voiced high close back rounded:

[*w*]⁴ [*wásay*] ‘axe’, [*genáw*] ‘fever’.

2.2: Distribution: All consonants except [*h*] are found in initial and final position in the syllable. [*h*] is found only syllable initial. Illustrations of distribution follow:

Stops: [*mapúti*] ‘white’, [*ʔátep*] ‘roof’; [*títu*] ‘puppy’, [*sulát*] ‘letter’; [*ki*] ‘we’, [*maháldek*] ‘afraid’; [*báta*] ‘child’; [*ʔisáb*] ‘again’; [*dábum*] ‘leaf’, [*kalád*] ‘slice’; [*ʔadagi*] ‘big’, [*ʔikug*] ‘tail’; [*ma’áma*] ‘man’, [*bali*] ‘lame’.

Fricatives: [*ságing*] ‘banana’, [*bégas*] ‘rice’; [*wábig*] ‘water’.

Nasals: [*mánnuk*] ‘chicken’, [*madálem*] ‘deep’; [*nu*] ‘your’, [*bílan*] ‘moon’; [*ngádan*] ‘name’, [*ʔidung*] ‘nose’.

Lateral: [*límbay*] ‘song’, [*madákel*] ‘many’.

Semi-vowels: [*ʔínyu*] ‘you (pl.)’, [*ʔúbay*] ‘near’; [*kawánan*] ‘right’, [*ʔáldaw*] ‘sun’.

3. Vowels

3.1: Description: There are four vowel phonemes in Binokid, which may be represented by the symbols [*i*], [*a*], [*u*], and [*e*].

There is a voiced high front unrounded vocoid [*i*]. This vocoid varies from a close [*i*]⁵ to an open [*i*]⁶ position.

Example: [*ʔimpis*] or [*ʔimpis*] ‘egg’.

(3) Retroflexed by some speakers.

(4) These are used rather than [*i*] or [*u*] because of pattern pressure. There are no instances anywhere in the language of CVV or VVC syllable patterns, except those involving syllable margin *iy* and *uw*. Since these syllable patterns may also be interpreted as CVC, and since this is an overwhelmingly predominant pattern, the questioned segments are interpreted as consonants *y* and *w* instead of vowels *i* and *u*.

(5) The more predominant of these variations.

(6) Infrequently lowered to [ɛ] or even [e] in a few Spanish loans.

There is a voiced open central unrounded vocoid /a/. This vocoid varies from a low [a]⁵ to a mid [ʌ] position.

Example: [baláring] or [bʌláring] ‘carring’.

There is a voiced close back rounded vocoid /u/. This vocoid varies from a high [u]⁵ to a mid [o] position.

Examples: [bulúmg] or [bulóng] ‘medicine’, [úlud] or [ólud] ‘pile of stones in the river’.

There is a voiced high mid to back unrounded vocoid /e/. This vocoid varies from an open [ɛ]⁵ to a close [ɨ] position.

Examples: [bɛlmg] or [bɨlmg] ‘drunk’, [úlíd] or [úlid] ‘caterpillar’.

Literate bi-linguals use /u/ in writing /e/, but that is probably the result of their familiarity with Visayan, in which the pepet vowel has fallen together with u/o phoneme.

4. Suprasegmental Phoneme

There is a suprasegmental phoneme of stress /'/. Contrast is shown when stress falls on the penult or ultima, e.g. /bémg/ ‘surprise’ and /belémg/ ‘drunk’. Long words may have more than one stress: /balámgkawítan/ ‘rooster’. Stress tends to lengthen a vowel, but not always.⁷ Stress shifts on word bases in a few instances, as follows:

(a) When certain suffixes are added: /iyán túmgkay badátu sa balatúmg/ ‘The beans are cheapest’; /kabadatúben dan sa balatúmg/ ‘They will make the beans cheaper’. The shift is one syllable to the right.

(b) When the speaker wishes to indicate emphasis or agreement: /madámgway/ ‘beautiful’, /madámgwáy/ ‘beautiful’.

A Brief Illustrative Text

1. *diyá' ta bukidnun amín tágbis ha agngadánan day hu tungkágu*
there Bukidnon there is bird name we Tungkago
2. *adagí ha tágbis ha agka'abá' ta da du'ún ta kalásan*
big bird see only there forest
3. *ma'item sa pákpak daw sa láwa dín*
black the wings and the body his
4. *sa íkug dín ma'item dá'an ba na'amúlan hu mapúti daw malíga'*
the tail his black also but mixed white and red
5. *sa lí'eg dín manmán amín malíga' daw mapúti*
the neck his also there is red and white
6. *sa pá'a dín agkabímu íg'íbit da káyu ku agdágpu daw hari' mabúlug*
the feet his capable hold tree if perch and not will fall

(7) More analysis necessary for ascertaining the relationship between stress and length.
Note /gabi'/ ‘yesterday’.

7. *sa tungkagu há'i da'an tagdágpu du'ín hu baliti ta pagká'en din*
 the tungkago this also roosting there baliti tree because food his
sa búnga ta káyú há'en
 the fruit tree that

Free Translation

1. In Bukidnon there is a bird that we call *tungkago*. 2. It is a big bird that we see only in the forest. 3. His wings and his body are black. 4. His tail is also black, but mixed with red and white. 5. His neck is also red and white. 6. His feet are capable of clinging to the tree so he won't fall when he perches. 7. This *tungkago* also roosts in the *baliti* tree, for its fruit is his food.