

THE PHONOLOGY OF AGUSAN MANOBO (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO æ)

by Daniel and Marilou Weaver
Summer Institute of Linguistics
University of North Dakota

1. The æ Phoneme
2. The Syllable
3. Inventory
4. Consonants
5. Vowels

1. In Agusan Manobo¹ there is a vowel sound similar in both length and quality to that found in the English word "cat." That the sound, which we shall write æ , is phonemic is shown by the following contrasts: $\text{æ}:\text{a}$ $\text{kædu}^?$ 'fire', $\text{kadu}^?$ 'wood'; $\text{bugæ}^?$ 'female pig', $\text{buga}^?$ 'shell'; $\text{æ}:\text{e}$ ædew 'day', etew 'person'; tambæ 'medicine', tamped 'cut in pieces'; $\text{æ}:\text{i}$ $\text{sæ}^?$ 'fault, sin', $\text{si}^?$ (noun marker); bætik 'pig trap', bitu 'hole'; $\text{æ}:\text{u}$ $\text{sæ}^?$ 'fault, sin', $\text{su}^?$ 'because'; $\text{bæka}^?$ 'never mind', $\text{buga}^?$ 'shell'.

Since this sound is rare in Philippine languages, it has proven profitable to compare its occurrence with its reflexes in cognate words of nearby dialects.²

¹ The data presented in this paper were recorded during a residence of eight months in the barrio of Sagunto, municipality of La Paz, Agusan, under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. The inhabitants of this barrio and of the surrounding barrios are primarily Manobo speakers, although some Visayan and English are spoken. Mr. Ricarido Martinez, a forty-year old resident of Sagunto, was the informant from whom these data were collected.

Special appreciation is due to R.S. Pittman for his suggestions and guidance in the writing of this paper. The authors are also grateful to several fellow-members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics for help and advice.

² The addition to this paper of information from other languages is in no way to be interpreted as a departure from standard principles for the identification of phonemes. æ is identified by reference to Agusan Manobo alone; the information from the other languages is added only because of its special interest.

1.1 Agusan Manobo and the dialect spoken by the Dibabawon Mandayans of northwestern Davao province are mutually intelligible. The following Dibabawon words are cognate with Agusan Manobo words containing æ:

English	Agusan Manobo	Dibabawon
'pig trap'	bætik	baatik
'rattan'	bægen	baagen
'wind'	kæmag	kaamag
'twenty'	kæwaʔan	kaawaʔan
'south'	bæbagan	baabagan
'pity'	kæʔat	kaaʔat
'sin, fault'	sæʔ	saaʔ
'medicine'	tambæ	tambaa
'left side'	kawæ	kawaa
'skin'	kindæ	kindaa
'chest'	dagæha	dagaaʔa
'afraid'	hædek	ʔaadek
'easy'	mahæwey	maʔaawey
'carry'	dæhen	daaʔen

Wherever the æ phoneme occurs in Agusan Manobo, the Dibabawon Mandayan has a lengthened a. This occurs in the first syllable of certain words, in the second syllable of some three-syllable words, and in certain final syllables. Forster and Barnard³ interpret aa as a sequence of geminate vowels occurring across syllable boundaries.

1.2 Binokid is the Manobo dialect spoken in the central and northern parts of Bukidnon province. Western Bukidnon Manobo is spoken in western and southwestern Bukidnon. Among words in Binokid and Western Bukidnon Manobo which are cognate with Agusan Manobo words containing æ are the following:

³ Forster, Jan and Barnard, M. L., *Phonemic Statement and Proposed Orthography for Dibabawon*.

See Forster, Jan and Barnard, M. L., *Dibabawon-Mandayan Vocabulary*, Summer Institute of Linguistics, Manila, 1954, for examples taken from that dialect.

English	Agusan Manobo	Binokid ⁴	W. B. Manobo
'rattan'	bægen	balagen	belagen
'pig trap'	bætik	— —	belatik
'crosspiece'	bæbag	balabagan	belabag
'wind'	kæmag	kalamag	keramag
'medicine'	tambæ	tambal	tambar
'sin, fault'	sæ?	sala?	sala?
'expensive'	mahæ?	mahal	mahal
'trousers'	sawæ?	salu?al	selu?al
'twenty'	kæwa?an	kaluwa?an	keluwa?an
'day'	?ædew	?aldaw	?andew
'afraid'	hædek	haldek	handek

The -ala-, -ela-, -era-, -al, -ar, -alu-, -elu-, and first-syllable -an- sequences in Binokid and Western Bukidnon Manobo become æ in Agusan Manobo. The first l found in salu?al and selu?al 'trousers' is lost without a corresponding occurrence of æ in the word sawæ 'trousers'. There is a change from l to n in the words ?andew and handek of WBM, presumably due to the influence of the following d phoneme.

2. It seems best to describe the remaining phonemes with reference to the syllable. A word may consist of as few as one or as many as six syllables. The syllable patterns are CV⁵ and CVC. The following examples illustrate the syllable patterns: CV te (noun marker), kun.te. ?en 'now'; CVC kan 'the, that', hi. ?u.dun 'agree'.

3. The phoneme inventory consists of sixteen consonants and five vowels. Consonants are: p, t, k, b, d, g, ? (glottal stop), r, s, l, m, n, ng (velar nasal), h, w, and y. Vowels are: æ, i, a, u, and e. e is the pepet vowel, common to a number of Philippine languages. A discussion of stress will not be included in this paper since it has not been completely analyzed.

4. Consonant phonemes are divided into two groups: stops and continuants.

⁴ Atherton, W., Unpublished vocabulary lists of Binokid. Elkins, R. E., Unpublished vocabulary lists of Western Bukidnon Manobo.

⁵ C stands for consonant; V for vowel.

4.1 The stops are p, t, k, b, d, g, and ʔ. p, t, and k are voiceless stops produced in the bilabial, alveolar, and velar points of articulation respectively. b, d, and g are the voiced counterparts. These stops have unreleased variants occurring before another consonant or silence and in syllable-final position.

The following examples illustrate the unreleased variants: p tap.liʔ⁶ 'fasten', ʔu.sip 'to ask'; b ma.geb.yey 'tired', ʔu.sab 'again'; t ket.ket. 'noise of insect', bag.net 'weed'; d sad.sad 'to feel for', hu.bad 'untie'; k ma.tak.siʔ 'fast, speedy', ma.bag.sak 'muddy'; g hag.dan 'stairs', hi.pag 'other side'. Released variants occur elsewhere.

The glottal stop, ʔ, occurs in all consonant positions in the syllable: word initially, between vowels, as the first of a CC cluster, as the second of a CC cluster, and word finally. Compare the following words: ʔamu 'monkey', bagʔang 'molar', baʔbaʔ 'mouth', buʔuk 'piece', bakaʔ 'jaw', ʔiduʔ 'dog'.

The following pairs of words show minimal contrast between stops p:b pituʔ 'seven', bituʔ 'hole', tapaʔ 'salted meat', tabaʔ 'fat'; t:d bataʔ 'child', badaʔ 'pass', buyat 'awake', beyad 'hand'; k:g bakaʔ 'jaw', багаʔ 'lung', ʔabaka 'hemp', ʔabaga 'shoulder'; ʔ:x (indicating absence) yawaʔ 'evil spirit', yawa 'body', багаʔ 'lung', бага 'ember'.

The following are contrasts between ʔ and k, and between ʔ and h: ʔ:k baʔuʔuʔ 'turtle', bakaʔ 'jaw', bagʔew 'new', bagket 'to tie'; ʔ:h ʔipag 'sister-in-law', hipag 'other side', ʔabaga 'shoulder', habagat 'strong wind and rain'.

The phoneme d alternates freely in intervocalic position with j in certain words. j is the norm for the nearby Umayam River area; d is the norm for the Adgawan River area in which these data have been collected. The two dialects have been mixed to the extent that some speakers in the dialect presented in this paper will use d and j interchangeably, while others use only d: budag, bujag 'old woman'; maradew, marajew 'good'.

⁶ Throughout this paper, a period (.) on the line within a word will represent syllable division.

4.2 The continuants are r, l, s, m, n, ng, h, w, and y. r is a voiced alveolar flap. l is a voiced alveolar lateral. s is a voiceless alveolar grooved fricative. m, n, and ng are voiced nasals at the bilabial, alveolar, and velar points of articulation respectively. h is a voiceless glottal fricative. w and y are nonsyllabic vocoids. They are given full phonemic status because of syllable pattern pressure: yawa 'body', wada? 'none', huyas 'perspire'. The following pairs of words show minimal contrast between the continuants: l:r pali? 'wound', pari? 'priest'; m:n ?uma 'farm', ?una 'first', manda 'again', nanda 'only'; n:ng kandin 'he, him', kanding 'goat' ?aned 'float', ?anged 'like (comparison)'.

4.3 Within the syllable patterns there appears to be very little limitation of consonant distribution. All consonants occur in syllable-initial position. All except h occur finally.

There are no consonant clusters within the syllable. Consonant clusters may occur across syllable boundaries but are limited to two consonants. Almost any two of the consonants may occur as a CC cluster across syllable boundaries in C_1C_2 sequences. No C_1C_1 sequences have been observed within a word base.

5. The vowel phonemes, other than æ are i, a, u and e. i is a voiced high front unrounded vocoid. This sound varies from close to open position in a nonfinal syllable preceding a velar stop. i is to be read this way in each of the following examples: tig.bas 'stab', pig- (past tense marker), hi.kem 'mat', mig- (past tense marker).

In three recorded examples, i has a high front rounded allophone ü in word-final position following u in a preceding syllable: bubü /bubi/ 'hair', tungü /tungi/ 'entrails', kusü /kusi/ 'herb'. a is a voiced open central low unrounded vocoid. e is a voiced high close central unrounded vocoid. u is a voiced high close back rounded vocoid. This sound varies from high to mid-position in word-final syllables.

5.1 The following pairs of words show minimal contrast between the vowel phonemes: a:i pali? 'wound', pili? 'select',

batad 'corn', bitad 'pull'; a:e sanga? 'branch', senge? 'one', bahi? 'variety of wood', behi? 'girl'; a:u bahi? 'a wood', buhi? 'alive', tu?ad 'to fall, as in a faint', tu?ud 'purpose'; i:u ?isa? 'one', ?usa? 'deer', gamit 'use', gamut 'write'; e:u bayed 'wave (n)', bayud 'dove', behi? 'girl', buhi? 'alive'; e:i ?enem 'six', ?inem 'drink'.

5.2 Each of the five vowel phonemes may be distributed as V in the syllable patterns CV and CVC. e has not been observed to occur contiguous to r. e has not been observed to occur as the first V in a CV?VC pattern of diverse vowels. With the exception of the sequence æ?a in kæ?at 'pity', the phoneme æ has not been observed in a sequence of æ?V. With the exception of æ, all other vowel phonemes may occur in sequences of identical vowels separated by a glottal stop: a?a ga?ad 'building material', i?i biti?is 'leg', e?e kunte?en 'now', u?u bu?uk 'hair'.

The following examples illustrate sequences of two different vowels: a?i ba?id 'to ask permission', kali?ag 'want, like'; a?u ka?uyug 'to fall', bu?ang 'foolish'; a?e ka?etawan 'world'; æ?a kæ?at 'pity'; u:i tu?ig 'year', hi?udun 'agree'; u?e du?en 'there'; i?e li?eg 'neck'.