ROMBLOMANON PHONOLOGY STATEMENT

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0   INTRODUCTION

This a mastery check of the Phonology Description written by Len Newell dated May 15, 1995. A description of the Syllable and Stress patterns has been added as his report does not include these. This brief outline of Romblomanon Phonology is done as a preliminary requirement for the Translation Orientation Workshop of SIL, Philippines.

Romblomanon is spoken by more than 100,000 people who reside in the Province of Romblon. This province is made up of the main island of Romblon (the provincial capital), Sibuyan Island, Tablas Island and seventeen other minor islands. Romblomanon is identified as part of the Visayan language group of the Philippines. Aside from its own indigenous forms, it has many borrowings from Spanish, Tagalog, English, Malay, Chinese and Indian.

1.   Consonants

Romblomanon consonants consist of Voiceless stops **p, t, k, '**; Voiced stops **b, d, g**; Fricatives **s, h**; Nasals **m, n, ng**; Lateral **l**; Flap **r**; and Semi-vowels **w, y**. Note that glottal stop is marked by an apostrophe **'**.

1.1   Stops.

The following are examples of voiceless stops which occur word initially, medially and finally. Voiceless stops are un-aspirated.

p, t, k, ' contrast in word-initial position:-

/**p**atay/	"die"	/**t**atay/	"father"
/**p**ãnaw/	"walk"	/**t**anan/	"all"
/**k**atuy/	"itchy"	/**'**atay/	"liver"

p,t,k,' contrast in word-medial position:-

/lu**p**ad/	"fly"	/lu**t**aw/	"to rock"
/ka**p**ãya/	"papaya"	/pa**t**ãwad/	"discount"
/ha**k**ug/	"greedy"	/bu**'**ak/	"half"

p,t,k,' contrast in word-final position:-

/huyu**p**/	"to blow"	/higu**t**/	"tie"
/hatu**d**/	"give a lift"	/laku**t**/	"include"
/haku**g**/	"possessive"	/tagu**'**/	"hide"

The following are examples of voiced stops b,d,g.

b contrasts with **p** word initial, medial and final positions:

/**b**ãsi'/	"why"	/**p**asi'/	"unhusked riceˆ
/pã**b**u/	"duck"	/tĩ**p**un/	"save"
/kinta**b**/	"shine"	/sapsa**p**/	"graze"

t contrasts with **d** in word initial, medial and final positions. **d** tends to occur in consonant clusters in medial positions, e.g. /kadtu/ "go" or /didtu/ "there".

/**t**ũgut/	"permit"	/**d**ugu'/	"blood"
/ũ**t**ud/	"chop"	/ug**d**uk/	"build"
/saba**t**/	"answer"	/buya**d**/	"dry"

k contrasts with **g** in word initial, medial and final positions:

/**k**agud/	"greedy"	/**g**ãgu/	"stupid"
/sã**k**a'/	"climb"	/dã**g**at/	"sea"
/ũpa**k**/	"peal"	/huba**g**/	"swell"

1.2   Fricatives

There are only two fricatives that contrast, s and h.

/**s**ãkup/	"inside"	/**h**akug/	"greedy"
/da**s**ay/	"pray"	/hay**h**ay/	"to hang"
/hĩpu**s**/	"quiet"	/muhmu**h**/	"leftovers"

The fricative **h** is noted to only occur in reduplicated syllables.

1.3   Nasals

The nasals **m, n, ng** contrast in initial, medial and final positions:

/**m**ãna/	"inheritance"	/**n**ãna'/	"pus"	/**ng**ãyu'/	"request"
/u**m**ãgad/	"daughter-in-law"	/u**n**a/	"first"	/la**ng**a'/	"loving"
/duyu**m**/	"dark"	/dãyu**n**/	"continue"	/tayu**ng**/	"eggplant"

1.4   Lateral l

Lateral **l** often appear as clusters in medial positions. They also occur alone in initial, medial and final positions. However, there are no **lr** or **hl** clusters.

/**l**umbay/	"type-vegetable"	/tud**l**u'/	"teach"
/asu**l**/	"blue"	/ad**l**aw/	"day"
/pitrũ**l**yu/	"kerosene"	/ka**l**dĩru/	"kettle"
/ti**l**aw/	"try/test"	/**l**i'**l**i'/	"peep"

1.5   Flap r

The phoneme r frequently occurs in borrowed words. It also occurs in Romblomanon, in initial, medial and final positions. r clusters occur in word initial and final positions in borrowed English words e.g /wayr/ "wire"; /grupu/ "group". r clusters also occur in word-medial position in Romblomanon e.g. /barkada/ "clique".

The following are examples of contrast between **l** and **r.**

/**lĩ**gad/	"pass"	/**r**iluh/	"watch"
/amu**l**it/	"amulet"	/arĩtus/	"ring"
/ilĩga**l**/	"illegal"	/asũka**r**/	"sugar"

1.6 Semi-Vowels

There is a wide distribution of the two semi-vowels w and y in initial, medial and final positions. They occur frequently in clusters except for **'w** and **hy**.

The following of examples of contrast betwen **w** and **y** in initial, medial and final positions as well as clusters.

/**w**aya'/	"no"	/**y**ãya/	"nanny"
/saba**w**/	"taste"	/suba**y**/	"ants"
/tã**w**u/	"person"	/ha**y**u/	"iguanu"
/d**y**agan/	"run"	/k**w**arta/	"money"
/p**w**irtãhan/	"door"	/p**y**ista/	"festival"
/imp**y**irnu/	"hell"	/isk**w**ĩla/	"school"

1.7 Word-Initial Clusters of Two Consonants

Most word-initial clusters are found in words borrowed from other languages e.g. Spanish and English. However there are a few Romblomanon words that have consonant clusters e.g. /dyagan/ "run" and /pwirtahan/ "door". The phonemes **h, ng, r, w, y**, have not been found to occur as the first consonant in word-initial clusters.

The following are examples of word initial clusters of two consonants.

/**gw**ãpa/	"pretty"	/**dy**ã'ag/	"yard"
/**kw**arinta/	"forty"	/**sw**itik/	"cunning"
/**pw**ĩra/	"exclude"	/**sy**urt/	"shorts"
/**sw**i'am/	"oily food"	/**pr**ublĩma/	"problem"

1.8 Word-Medial Clusters of Two Consonants

These clusters, which are very common are found both in Romblomanon as well as borrowed words. The following are examples of these clusters.

/bali**gy**a'/	"sell"	/pitru**ly**u/	"kerosene"
/ka**tr**i/	"bed"	/ti**nd**ug/	"stand"
/su**nd**ang/	"bolo"	/pu**ngk**u'/	"sit"/
/ma**ngg**arãnun/	"rich"	/a**gt**ang/	"forehead
/mi**rk**ãdu/	"market"	/du**gh**an/	"breast"
/hi**gk**u'/	"dirt"	/la**ngk**ag/	"unhappy"

1.9 Word-Final Clusters of Two Consonants

Word final clusters are not found in Romblomanon but only in borrowed words. The phonemes **g,h,ng,w,y,'** have not been observed as being second consonants of word-final clusters. The following are examples of words with final clusters of two consonants.

/bla**ws**/	"blouse"	/inrulmi**nt**/	"enrollment"
/ikanãmi**ks**/	"economics	/lungdista**ns**/	"long distance"
/insiktisa**yd**/	"insecticide"	/ikspu**rt**/	"export"

1.10   Clusters of three consonants

These clusters are uncommon, and in rare cases are found in word-final positions and none in word-initial positions. They are found mostly in borrowed words except for a rare Romblomanon example /li**mpy**u/ "clean".

The following are examples of these clusters in word-medial positions:

/li**pst**ik/	"lipstick"	/i**skw**ala/	"square"
/i**nggr**ib/	"engrave"	/kimi**str**i/	"chemistry"
/i**nty**ards/	"in charge"	/i**str**ikta/	"strict"
/pa**skw**a/	"Christmas"	/i**nty**indi/	"understand"

The following are examples of these clusters in word-final positions:

/ba**ybs**/	"vibes"	/dri**ngks**/	"drinks"
/intya**rds**/	"in charge"	/risi**rts**/	"research"
/rita**yrd**/	"retired"		

2.   Vowels

Romblomanon has three phonemic vowels. Borrowed words are also pronounced in the same way as Romblomanon. The three vowels are the high front **i**, the low central **a** and the high back **u.** Within these three vowel systems are variants in pronunciation. Each vowel also has its lengthened counterpart. Length in vowels are contrastive.

2.1   **Front Vowel i** has three ways of pronouncing it.

The first type is the lengthened **i**. This ĩ is pronounced like the English **beat** but unlike English it is not glided. This vowel frequently occurs in the penultimate of a word in an open syllable e.g.,

[kaldĩru]	/kaldiru/	"kettle"
[arĩna]	/arina/	"flour"
[lĩpay]	/lipay/	"happy"
[sĩhi']	/sihi'/	"shell"
[lĩgus]	/ligus/	"bathe
[manĩ'id]	/mani'id/	"to observe"

The second type sounds like the English **bit** and is found in open unstressed syllables as well as in closed syllables. The following are examples:

[lĭgis]	/ligis/	"run over"
[tahĭ']	/tahi'/	"to sew"
[patĭ]	/pati/	"believe"

[pǐlaw]	/pilaw/	"sleepy"
[babayǐ]	/babayi/	"female"
[gab'ǐ]	/gab'i/	"night"

The third variant sounds like the English **get** (pronounced slightly higher) and is found in closed syllables before the voiceless stops **p, t, k** and the nasal **n**. The following are examples:

[sěp'un]	/sip'un/	"cold"
[isěp]	/isip/	"think"
[ěput]	/iput/	"animal manure"
[sěpět]	/sipit/	"grip"
[ětlug]	/itlug/	"egg"
[sakět]	/sakit/	"sick
[ěnět]	/init/	"hot"
[bětbět]	/bitbit/	"carry in hand"
[ěntsěk]	/intsik/	"Chinese"
[lětěk]	/litik/	"temperamental"
[pěněitěk]	/pinitik/	"hit with fingers"
[bětěk]	/bitik/	"fleas"
[ampěn]	/ampin/	"be on good terms"
[intěndi']	/intindi'/	"understand"
[hapěn]	/hapin/	"cushion cover"
[asěn]	/asin/	"salt"

2.2   Central Vowel

The central vowel **a** is pronounced in two ways. The first type is lengthened **ä** and is pronounced like the English **part**. It usually occurs in the penultimate of a word and in open syllables. The following are examples of this vowel:

[säka']	/saka'/	"to climb"
[mamäti']	/mamati'/	"to hear"
[lamänu]	/lamanu/	"to shake hands"
[lawä']	/lawa'/	"spider"

The other variant **a** sounds like the English **but** and occurs in open unstressed syllables as well as closed syllables. The following are examples:

[bug'ǔt]	/bug'at/	"heavy"
[mǔnghud]	/manghud/	"younger sibling"
[bunǔng]	/bunang/	"thread"
[kamǔda]	/kamada/	"arrange"
[huyǔm]	/huyam/	"borrow"
[gatǔs]	/gatas/	"milk"
[kǔri]	/kari/	"come"
[pugǔ']	/puga'/	"extract"

2.3   Back Vowel

The back vowel **u,** like **i** is pronounced in three ways. The first type of **u** is a lengthened **ō**. This sounds like the English **mood** with no glide. It usually occurs in the penultimate of a word and only in open syllables. Examples are as follow:

[sugō']	/sugu'/	"to command"
[gōna]	/guna/	"to weed"
[asōkar]	/asukar/	"sugar"
[magōyang]	/maguyang/	"old"
[uyōnan]	/uyunan/	"pillow"
[matu'ōd]	/matu'ud/	"true"

The second type is **ŏ,** and sounds like the English **foot**. It is found in open, unstressed syllables and closed syllables. Examples are as follow:

[uyahŏn]	/uyahun/	"face"
[bukŏn]	/bukun/	"not"
[himŏ']	/himu'/	"make"
[sin'ŏ]	/sin'u/	"who"
[sa'ŏyu]	/sa'uyu/	"memorize"
[nusnŏs]	/nusnus/	"to rub"

The third type **ô** sounds like the English **float** but without the glide. It sounds higher than the English **oa** and occurs in closed syllables before the voiceless stops **p,t** and **k.** It does not occur before **n**. Examples are as follow:

[kôpkôp]	/kupkup/	"to hug"
[sãkôp]	/sakup/	"inside"
[dakôp]	/dakup/	"to catch"
[kôpya]	/kupya/	"to copy"
[bu 'ôt]	/bu'ut/	"good"
[sã'ôt]	/sa'ut/	"to dance"
[kãyôt]	/kayut/	"to scratch"
[hu'ôt]	/hu'ut/	"narrow space"
[sãyôk]	/sayuk/	"to carry water"
[ayôk]	/ayuk/	"to bark"
[lîhôk]	/lihuk/	"to greet"
[ugdôk]	/ugduk/	"to build"

2.4   Lengthened Vowels

Length is a phonemic feature in Romblomanon. It usually occurs in the penultimate open syllable of a two or multiple syllable word. When a two-syllabled word is suffixed, length shifts to the next syllable to maintain the rule of length on the penultimate.

Examples of contrast in length are as follow:

/pũnu'/	"tree"	/punu'/	"full"
/kalãyu'/	"fire"	/kalayu'/	"far"
/ãbut/	"catch"	/abut/	"arrive"
/magũyang/	"old"	/maguyang/	"older siblings"
/ũyu/	"head"	/uyu/	"coconut pod"

Length also contrasts between verbs and nouns in inflected words e.g.

/bahũgan/	"utensils"	/bahugan/	"to feed the animals"

The study of lengthened vowels is not conclusive. Some words that appear to have penultimate length do not contrast and it is possible that it is stress rather than length that occurs in these cases. The report by Len Newell only recognizes that the presence or absence of length on the penult is a phonemic feature but does not show how they contrast. Also he mentioned that length occurs together with stress on the penultimate and that other words do not appear to have length. It is difficult to distinguish length from stress except through contrast of meanings.

3.   Stress

Stress in Romblomanon is predictable. Primary stress occurs on the penultimate of a word. Secondary stress occurs on the prepenultimate syllable of a word with more than two syllables. Primary stress shifts to the ultima in a word that occurs at the end of a sentence. This is probably due to the rise in intonation that occurs at the end of a sentence. When a stem is inflected by the addition of a suffix, stress shifts to accommodate the rule of "primary stress on the penultimate and secondary stress on the prepenultimate". This shift does not occur if the inflection is only a prefix. Examples of this shift is shown below:

STEM	SUFFIXED WORD	PREFIXED WORD
tũnud	tunũrun	itunud
sũgu'	sulugũ'un	pagsugu'
higũgma'	higugmã'un	paghigugma'
bũlig	bulĩgi	magbũlig

4.   Syllable Pattern

Indigenous Romblomanon has six basic syllable patterns **CV, CVC, V, VC, CCVC** and **CCV**. The first two **CV** and **CVC** are the most common. The fifth pattern **CCVC** usually occurs as **CC VC** with the second consonant appearing as a semi-vowel. The sixth pattern **CCV** is less common and may include a semi-vowel in the second consonant. Since glottal is contrastive at the end of a word but not in other positions, the word-final glottal is tentativiely considered a consonant and follows the **CVC** pattern with the final **C** representing a glottal stop. The other alternative would be to consider the glottal stop as phonemic in initial, medial and final positions. In this instance the syllable patterns **V** and **VC** would not be valid. The following are examples of the five syllable patterns:

1. CV	/lana/	"oil"
2. CVC	/langkag/	"sad"
3. V	/uyu/	"head"
4. VC	/bug'at/	"heavy"
5. CCVC	/tyad/	"like"
6. CCV	/dyagan/	"run"

Words borrowed from other languages such as English have syllable patterns that differ from the Romblomanon. Examples of these syllable patterns are as follow:

CVCC	/dibilupmint/	"development"
CCVCCC	/dringks/	"drinks"
VCC	/ikspurt/	"export"