

III. Phonological Survey

The following symbols have been used for Hiligaynon sounds, and are given here in the traditional Filipino order: a, b, k, d, e, f, h, i, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, t, u, w, y, ' . Most of the consonants are pronounced with their usual phonetic value as they occur in English. However, stops p, t, k, are unaspirated; r is flapped and t, d, n, and s have a front dental quality. The symbol ʔ has been chosen to represent the glottal stop, and /ng/ the velar nasal sound as in English sing. F has been included in this volume with the thought that the user will interact with educated Hiligaynon speakers who will prestigiously have f in their dialect of the language. F, however, is not a Hiligaynon phone and does not make for a difference in meaning. Famílya and pamílya are both acceptable, except that the first one is preferred by the elite group.

Hiligaynon vowel sounds are not to be equated with English vowels. Basically, Hiligaynon has only three vowels native to the language: a, i, and u. The two other vowel sounds, e and o are adopted from Spanish and English. The two borrowed vowels are not phonemic but occur as allophones of i and u. i is pronounced like the vowel sound in 'see, three, seat'. It occurs in all positions: initial, medial, and final. Whenever it is found in the initial position, it is always preceded by a glottal stop. Sometimes a glottal stop may follow it in the final position.

The e is a variant sound of i. Lamésa and lamísa are both acceptable pronunciations of 'table'. When not pronounced like ee of 'see', it is like the e of 'met' or the a of 'late'.

The a is enunciated as in English 'ah, father', and 'cot'. It is found in all three positions and undergoes the least amount of quality change among the vowels.

The u is like the vowel sound in 'boot, suit, and food'. It can, however, vary in quality from the high rounded oo in 'boot', to the oa sound in 'boat'. The

o is an allophone of u in Hiligaynon, and therefore not phonemically significant. Akú, 'I, me', may be akú or akó.

Stress is phonemic in Hiligaynon, i.e., it makes a difference in meaning. In Hiligaynon, words containing more than one vowel comprise a two or more syllable utterance. One syllable is pronounced louder or stronger than the other. This prominence is called stress. For example, punu' means 'tree, trunk, leader, etc.'; punú' means 'full to capacity'.