5. A Guide to Spelling Mapun Words

5.1. The glottal stop

The "glottal stop" is the sound made in the throat when stopping the flow of air coming up from the lungs, as in the final sound in the word for 'elder sibling': *kaka'*. In contrast, the word *kaka*, meaning 'to strike someone or something with an instrument', lacks the glottal stop at the end.

Since the /h/ sound does not occur in word-final position in Mapun, it could possibly be used to symbolize the glottal stop, a practice which is already in use, but we have chosen instead the apostrophe (') in keeping with the symbolization used in other dictionaries of related languages. Furthermore, **h** has its own sound that conflicts with the glottal stop, as seen in the words for 'sea urchin' and 'reserve', which many spell *teheh-teheh*, and *hallih*, respectively. We would like to encourage people to spell these words instead, *tehe'-tehe'*, and *halli'* so there will be no confusion as to what sound is represented by *h*.

In some instances, one letter may be used for two different sounds if the word has other characteristics that make it predictable as to which sound to expect at a certain place (Section 5.6).

In the interest of facilitating the adjustment of Mapun students as they enter the halls of higher education where Filipino is a medium of instruction, we have implemented the Filipino spelling rule which states that *any two vowels side by side are automatically to be read as having a glottal stop between them and no symbol is to be written*. So rather than write the Mapun word for 'thigh', as *pa-a* (with a hyphen), or as *pa'a*, it is spelled simply *paa*. Symbolizing the glottal stop is not necessary anywhere *except word-final*. Regarding this rule, any hyphenated word ending in a glottal stop before the hyphen (such as occurs in reduplicated and compound words) is regarded as *two* words, not one word with a word-medial glottal stop.) In view of this, it is only a few Arabic loan words and names of Arabic origin that ever require a symbol for glottal stop word-medial.

Examples:

siob 'blanket'	→ (one glottal stop, not symbolized)
tehe'-tehe' 'sea urchin'	→ (two glottal stops, both symbolized)
dainsi' 'one inch'	→ (two glottal stops, only one symbolized)

This rule also serves to reduce the number of symbols that are required to write a sentence in Mapun, and thus, it requires less space. Compare the following identical sentences:

Masi lu-u ningka-u ulih lo-oy ma pa-it? 'Do you still have that bitter medicine?'
Masi luu ningkau uli' looy ma pait?

The final sentence requires less space as well as fewer strokes of a pen, and is thus preferred.

5.2. Glides vs glottal stops across syllable borders

Since two vowels found together automatically are understood to contain a glottal stop between them, (e.g. *tau* 'know', *lai* ' tense-aspect marker'), how should words with *smooth* glides between two vowels be written? In this dictionary the choice has been made to insert y or w to indicate the transition (e.g. *tawu* 'afraid', *lawom* 'deep'). As *glide indicators* rather

than representors of sound in such situations, **y** and **w** are *silent*. The rule in spelling Mapun words having vowel combinations that include **i** or **e**, namely [ai], [ia], [iu], [ea], and [io] is that **y** will be inserted between the two vowels in order to effect a smooth transition. For words having vowel combinations with **o** or **u**, namely [ao], [au], [ui], [ua], and [oa], a **w** will be inserted between the two vowels.

ayil [not ail] 'ceremonial water'	*iya* [not ia] 'he/she/it	*sakayi* [not sakai] 'once'
awo [not ao] 'lagoon area'	*uwot* [not uot] 'worm'	*uwan* [not uan] 'rain'

Compare these pairs. Note the use of /y/ and /w/ as *smooth transition indicators* rather than sounding symbols.

tawun 'forest'	*tawu* 'afraid'	*payit* 'spread on thinly'
taun 'year'	*tau* 'know'	*pait* 'bitter'

Everywhere else that the semivowels **y** or **w** are written, such as syllable-final, (*baw* 'particle') or between like-vowels, (*saya* 'skirt'), or word-initial, (*yana* 'namely'), they will sound.

w/y as sounded semivowel	**w/y** as silent transition indicator
tilaw 'question'	*suwa* 'baggy pants'
subay 'should'	*bawu* 'smell'
maylu 'deny'	*tayi'* 'dung'
yana 'namely'	*tawom* 'sharp'

5.3. Rules concerning the passive affix -in-

When verbs are passive, they are affixed with **n-**, **ni-**, **-in-**, or **in-**, depending on the initial sound of the base word. Base words beginning with **d, j, r, w** and **l** are prefixed with **n-** :

ndagangan 'sell s.t.'	*njangit* 'lance s.t.'	*nliput* 'surround s.t.'

People may occasionally use **ni-** with the above consonants, but it is less common:

nidāg 'climb s.t.'	*nilansang* 'nail s.t.'

With words beginning with **l**, the *preferred* prefix is 'l-' : *llansang, llayu, llabbong, lliput*
For words beginning with **b, p, t, s, k, g, h** and **m**, the prefix becomes an infix, **-in-**:

binuwatan (*buwat*) 'do/make s.t'	*kinoot* (*koot*) 'scoop out'

For words beginning with *vowels* (which actually begin with a glottal stop), the prefix is **in-** :

> *inaku* (*aku*) 'to be claimed as'   *inudju'* (*udju'*) 'to be mocked'

5.4. Changes that occur when adding the suffixes -an or -un

5.4.1. Base words ending in consonants

Most base words ending in consonants have no changes when suffixed with **-an** or **-un**.

> *buwat* 'make/do' + **-an** → *buwatan* 'work/things'

However, in the case of a base word ending in a glottal stop, (which counts as a consonant), writers must remember that the glottal stop symbol (ʼ), or *balis*, as some call it, is dropped, since affixing the word with **-an** or **-un** puts two vowels together where they will automatically be read as having a glottal stop.

> *buwa'* + **-an** → *buwaan*   *sipa'* + **-un** → *sipaun*
> 'fruit'   'having fruit'   'kick'   'kick it'

When base words with consonant endings that have *glides* in the preceding syllable become affixed with **-an** or **-un,** the vowel following the smooth transition indicators **w** or **y** in the base word drops off. Thus, instead of *awonan*, as might be expected for *awon* 'name' + **-an** , it should be *awnan* 'called'. The /o/ is dropped. To keep the final vowel of the base word here would cause readers to mispronounce the word. They would be obliged to stress a syllable in reading that has been completely dropped out in speech.

> *dilawut* 'sea' + **pa-** + **-an** = *padilawtan* 'seashell'   (the **u** is dropped)
> *sayin* 'change clothes' + **-an** = *saynan* 'change'   (the **i** is dropped)

5.4.2. Base words ending in vowels

Affixing the suffix **-an** or **-un** to any word *ending with a vowel* necessitates the insertion of the symbol **y**, **w**, or **h** before affixation to indicate smooth transition.

Examples with transition indicator **y**:

> *pahati* + *-an* → *pahatiyan*   *malasahi* + *ka-* + *-an* → *kamalasahiyan*
> 'explanation'   'explain'   'suffering' (stative verb) 'suffering' (noun)

Example with transition indicator **w**:

udju + *ka-* + *-an* → *kaudjuwan*
'mourn'   'a mourning'

Examples using **h**:

saki + *-an* → *sakihan*   *duga* + *-an* → *dugahan*
'sick'   'having a sickness'   ' vexation'   'having vexation'
lasu + ***-an*** → *lasuhan*
'angry'   'angry at'

There does not appear to be any criteria for the choice of **y**, **w**, or **h**; it appears to be purely memorized.

Examples devoid of transitional consonants **y** or **w**, or the regular consonant **h**:

baba + *-an* → *babān*[2] 'having a witch (*baba*) spirit'
hatu + *-un* → *hatūn* 'set them up nicely'

5.5. Lengthening of vowels

All vowels may be lengthened, depicted as ā, ē, ī, ō, ū. Since context is the primary indicator of word meaning, vowel length indicators may eventually be dropped altogether as unnecessary. There are very few cases where there is likely to be confusion.

Compare: *ta* 'we' vs. *tā* 'far'   *sa* 'particle' vs. *sā* 'valid'

All vowels may occur with lengthening and be followed by a glottal stop. Compare the following:

ma 'that which'   *bo'* 'and / but'
mā' 'tell'   *bō'* 'bamboo'

When a suffix is added to a word with a long vowel so that the long vowel lies in the stressed syllable (the next-to-last syllable of the word), the line over the vowel need not be written, since the stress gives the vowel its equivalent of length in pronunciation.

hāp 'good'   *ka-* + *hāp* + *-an* = *kahapan* 'goodness'

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[2] Some have been heard to pronounce these words, *babahan* and *hatuhun* , so it appears that between like-vowels, /h/ tends to weaken in force, occasioning a long-sounding vowel, which in turn makes the word sound like it has word-final stress, instead of penultimate stress.

5.6. Variation of sound with the letter /a/:

The letter **a** in the Mapun alphabet actually represents two different sounds, [**a**] and [**ǝ**]. English pronunciation lists call [**ǝ**] a *schwa*. It is the vowel sound heard in the first syllable of *balla* 'to boil'. Contrast this with the vowel sound heard in the first syllable of *bala'* 'calamity'. Though both first syllables are written using the symbol **a** for the vowel, they are actually two different sounds, if you listen closely. The Dictionary Committee has chosen to write both sounds as **a** since the **ǝ** sound has a limited occurrence and is not likely to be confused with other words even if out of context. Any time there is a seemingly *exact* contrast between words having /**a**/ and /**ǝ**/ sounds, there is almost always a doubled consonant following the *schwa* sound, enabling the two to be differentiated.

Note the following examples:

pasi [pa.si] 'reef'	*masi* [ma.si] 'still/yet'
passi [pǝs.si] 'massage'	*massi* [mǝs.si] 'massage' (*passi* with N- prefix)

Other examples with the symbol **a** for the *schwa* sound: *lamma, sakkat, malli, labba, lakka, sannang.* (Note the doubled consonants following the **a**, in each case.)

Words are rare in which the non-*schwa*, or /**a**/ sound is found preceding a doubled consonant. Usually only the *schwa* sound is found in that environment. However, the /**a**/ sound *does* occur in a very few words with double consonants like *kabbun* [kab.bun] 'plantation'. Both the *schwa* sound and /**a**/ sound occur preceding /**nt**/, /**nd**/, /**mb**/ and /**st**/, which are consonants occurring together that originate from the same position in the mouth. However, as the words are never of exact same spelling or likely to cause serious error, the Committee sees no reason to propose a separate symbol for the *schwa* sound.

danda [dǝn.da] 'female'	*handa* [hǝn.da] 'take a wife'	*gastus* [gǝs.tus] 'expense'
danta' [dan.ta'] 'bright'	*handuk* [han.duk] 'nod'	*pastul* [pas.tul] 'to boss'

5.7. Changes occurring with /d/ and /r/

The sound /**d**/ is heavily affected by the sounds on either side of it. When it occurs between two vowels due to affixation, or between a semi-vowel and a vowel, it takes on a flapped /**r**/ sound, and is therefore written in this dictionary as **r**.

doman → *karomanan*	*dari* → *karari*
danta' → *karantaan*	*dangki'* → *karangki'*

Word-final /**d**/:

ka- + *awod* + *-an* → *kaawran*	*jūd* + *-an* → *juran*

Speakers differ as to the pronunciation of some words with /d/ between vowels. Some speakers pronounce the word for 'dog' as *iro'*; others pronounce it *ido'*. For 'almost', some say *arak* while others say *adak*. As opinion is strong on both sides, the editors of this dictionary have chosen to write the few entry words under question with variant spellings. However, for the sake of consistency throughout this dictionary, when the words in question are used in sample sentences, they will generally follow the rule that calls for the symbol **r** any time this sound occurs between vowels. Of course, anyone who writes will write what he's accustomed to *hearing*. However readers should first understand that this sound is *not* a true **r**, but rather a *flapped* **r**, which is very close in sound to /d/. It is permissible to write **d** in those instances if that is one's preference.

5.8. The hyphen (-)

The *hyphen* is used 1) anywhere there is reduplication of a two-syllable unit, whether they have additional affixation or not 2) to link compound words together, and 3) to prevent mispronunciation of certain words.

For reduplicated words, if the basic reduplicated unit is one syllable, a hyphen will not be written. However, if the basic unit ends in a glottal stop or if the word is likely to be mispronounced, a hyphen will be inserted. (The word, *gan-gan,* for example, if written without a hyphen is likely to be mispronounced [*ga.ngan*] because of the high frequency of the **ng** sound in Mapun.)

taun-taun 'yearly'	*kiyum-kiyum* 'smile'	*ari-arihan* 'decoration'
dā'-dā' 'upset'	*binoo-boo* 'carried around'	*tuktuk* 'every time' (no hyphen)

The hyphen is used in compound words:

kawul-piil 'character'	*tangge-tingkō'* 'behavior'	*hulas-sangsā'* 'effort'

The hyphen is used when a prefix that ends in a consonant (**mag-** or **pinag-**) is affixed to a base word which begins with a vowel (e.g. **a** in *arat* 'behavior'). It must be inserted to indicate that a glottal stop exists there; otherwise the word will be mispronounced:

mag- + *arat* 'show courtesy'	→ *mag-arat*, not *magarat*
mag- + *ulawi* 'wail'	→ *mag-ulawi*, not *magulawi*

(Actually, both *arat* and *ulawi* begin with a glottal stop *after* which comes the vowel, as is the case for all Mapun words which *appear* to begin with a vowel. However, for practical reasons the glottal stop is not written before word initial vowels.)

MAPUN-ENGLISH
DICTIONARY

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