

THE DANAOS LANGUAGES:  
MAGINDANAON, IRANUN, MARANAO, AND ILLANUN

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O. INTRODUCTION

The three Danao<sup>1</sup> languages of Mindanao – Magindanaon,<sup>2</sup> Iranun, and Maranao – together with the Illanun of Sabah have long been recognized as possessing a close genetic relationship<sup>3</sup> (Conklin 1955; Thomas and Healey 1962; Llamzon 1974:18-9; Leber 1975:35; Allison 1979; Walton 1979). Recent studies (Llamzon and Martin 1976; Walton 1979), moreover, have shown that the Danao languages are most closely related genetically with the Subanun group of languages and that, together with the Manobo languages, they combine to form the Meso-Mindanaoan subgroup of the Southern Philippine languages (Walton 1979:78).<sup>4</sup>

To date, however, there has been no study, with the exception of Allison's (1979) historical reconstruction of Proto-Danao,<sup>5</sup> which has been directly concerned with the

<sup>1</sup>The term 'Danao' was first used by Richard E. Elkins of the Summer Institute of Linguistics – Philippines and was subsequently used in print as 'Danaw' by E. Joe Allison (1979) and as 'Danaoan' by Charles Walton (1979). The spelling 'Danao' has been chosen by this paper in order to conform more closely to the common spelling of Maranao and Magindanaon – after which the term 'Danao' was coined.

<sup>2</sup>In previous papers Magindanaon has been referred to as Magindanao (Jerry Eck 1974), Maguindanao (Juan Marti 1892; Lee 1962, 1964a, 1964b), and Magindanao (Llamzon 1978; Allison 1979). Magindanaons themselves, however, usually refer to both themselves and their language as /magindana<sup>W</sup>n/ and their land as /magindana<sup>W</sup>/. A survey conducted by the author in January 1980 of seventy native Magindanaon speakers in the Cotabato City area showed that the vast majority of them preferred their language spelled as 'Magindanaon'. This, then, is what has been adopted in this paper.

<sup>3</sup>The number of Danao family speakers is uncertain. Probable figures are that there are 674,000 Magindanaon speakers, 429,000 Iranun speakers, and 241,000 Maranao (Gowing (1979:2). The exact number of speakers of Illanun has not yet been established but estimates range from as few as 1,500 by Carolyn Miller (personal communication) of the Summer Institute of Linguistics – Sabah to 4000 by Lebar (1975) to 15,000 by Mamitua Saber (personal communication).

<sup>4</sup>This relationship is supported by Manobo folk etymologies which claim that before the coming of the Arabian missionaries (15th Century AD), the Manobo and the Magindanaon were 'one people speaking the same language' (Hazel Wrigglesworth, personal communication). I have been unable, however, to find a similar folk etymology from the Danao perspective. The closest I have come is the widespread Magindanaon belief that at the coming of Sharif Kabunsuman the Magindanaon and Tiruray were as one people and when the Tiruray refused to accept Islam and fled to the mountains, the two distinct groups were born. Linguistically, however, this latter belief is almost certainly false with the great divergence between Tiruray and Magindanaon being unattainable in so short a time under normal circumstances.

<sup>5</sup>Joe Allison (1979) has established that the phoneme inventory of Proto-Danao is: *p, t, k, b, d, g, m, n, ng, s, l, r, w, y*, the glottal stop /ʔ/, *a, i, u* and the pepet vowel /ɨ/. These phonemes correspond exactly to Maranao whose Roman orthography differs from the above in that the glottal stop is not generally written, the /u/ is written as *o*, and the pepet vowel is written as *e*. The orthography of Magindanaon has not yet been officially established for the Roman alphabet, but the current preference is to write the /u/ as *u* (unlike Maranao) and the /ɨ/ as *e* (as in Maranao). There is no glottal stop in Magindanaon. Iranun's phonemic inventory corresponds with Magindanaon and Illanun's with Maranao. However, no orthography for either Iranun or Illanun has yet been established in the Roman alphabet. In this paper the pepet vowel will be written as *e*, the glottal stop as *ʔ*, and the /u/ as *u* – even for Maranao.

interrelationships of the Danao languages or of the dialects which form these languages. The purpose of this study is to describe the Danao languages by examining the dialects which comprise each of these languages and by delineating the interrelationships between these languages in an effort to answer some of the much asked questions concerning the relationship of Iranun vis-à-vis Magindanaon and Maranao and of the relationship of Illanun of the Danao languages of Mindanao.<sup>6</sup>

## 1. DIALECTS OF THE DANAO LANGUAGES

Danao speakers are generally very aware of their language and its relationship to other Danao languages and dialects. This is reflected not only by their ability to tell where a person is from by his speech (accent) but also by their numerous, fine distinctions between dialects. As a result, not only are a number of dialect groupings made by Danao speakers for each of the Danao languages, but these dialects, in turn, are composed of specific, recognized subdialects. While subdialects generally differ principally in intonation, distinctions between dialects usually involve phonological and lexical differences while languages differ phonologically, lexically and grammatically.

The map (figure 1) shows the locations of the major Danao languages and dialects. It should be noted that Ilud, Laya, Biwangan, Kawanen and Sibuguey which are listed on the map are the major dialects of Magindanaon while Isebanganen and Iranun are the major dialects of Iranun. No dialects of Maranao are listed on the map and Illanun, which is found in Sabah, is not shown at all.

(Figure 1)

### 1.1. MAGINDANAON DIALECTS

The names of the five Magindanaon dialects are principally place names which reflect the world view of the Magindanaon living along the Pulangi River (*Ilud* means 'downriver'; *laya* means 'upriver'; *biwangan* means 'left' and *kawanen* means 'right'). Thus, as one moves up or down the Pulangi River, for example, what is *ilud* (downstream) or *laya* (upstream) changes. Referring to dialects, however, the boundaries are more or less set as shown on the map. As a whole, the lexicons of the dialects are remarkably uniform as seen by the following chart of cognate percentages:

<sup>6</sup>Research for this study has been conducted under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics - Philippines from September 1979 until February 1981. The author lived one month in Maganoy, Maguindanao; two months in Cotabato City; one month in Marawi City; and fourteen months in Dinaig, Maguindanao. In addition, two months were spent travelling throughout Mindanao doing intelligibility tests and conducting interviews.

Special thanks are offered to the following people who contributed their time and knowledge to make this paper possible: in Marawi City, the staff of the University Research Center of Mindanao State University, particularly to Ishmael Pumbaya and Dr. Mamitua Saber; in Zamboanga del Sur Province, Datu Ukol Bunga of Dimataling, Datu Idu Malako of Payag, Dimataling, Aida Lendagan of Dinas, Datu Idad Akola of Kumaladang, Musu Datu Kali of Malangas, and Pingas Datu Mamundas of Palaliyan, Malangas; in North Cotabato Province, Makalampot Lading of Alamada, Unutan Tumas of Alamada, Datu Garcia of Cuyapan, Kabacan; in South Cotabato Province, Datu Sinsuat Manegkin of Kling, Hadji Akmad Bunaw of Kling, and Imam Balang of Palimbang; in Cotabato City, Attorney Corocooy Moson, Datu Nino Gandu Ali, Nasrullah Glang; in Maguindanao Province, Muhammad Taher of Parang, Makakepa Solaiman of Dinaig, Naguib Solaiman of Dinaig, Pilais Daud of Dinaig, Kaling Luminog of Sultan Kudarat; and in Sabah, Carolyn Miller and John and Betty Banker of the Summer Institute of Linguistics - Sabah. In addition I would like to thank the sixty people who willingly took the intelligibility tests. However, they will remain unnamed in accordance with the promise made to them. Also, I am greatly indebted to Attorney Michael Mastura of Cotabato City, Nasrullah Glang of Cotabato City, Jan Forster and Larry Allen of the Summer Institute of Linguistics - Philippines who read and critiqued this manuscript offering many valuable suggestions for improvement.

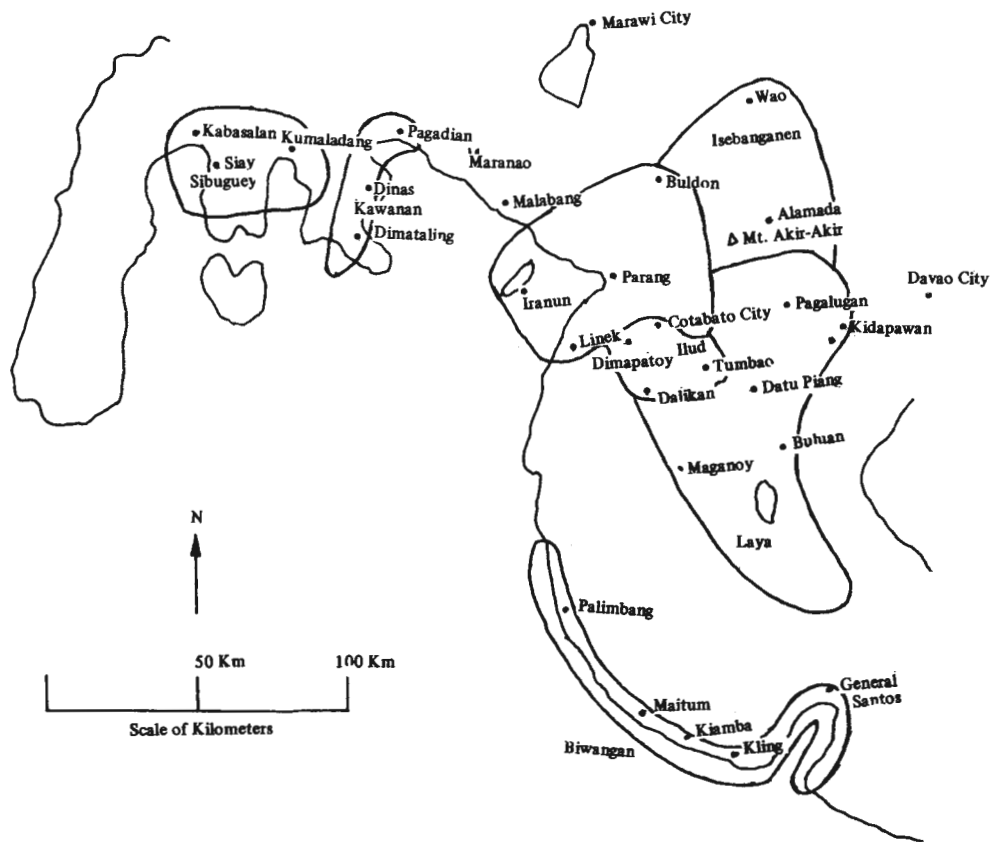


Figure 1: Map of the dialects of Danao found in Mindanao

	Ilud	Laya	Biwang	Sibuguey
Ilud	X	97	94	97
Laya	97	X	90	93
Biwang	94	90	X	95
Sibuguey	97	93	95	X

Figure 2: Chart of the cognate percentages of Magindanaon

(figure 2)

Of the dialects, Biwangan has the lowest degree of cognate percentages with the other Magindanaon dialects. This divergence, however, is misleading for it, in fact, preserves lexical items held in common with the other Danao languages from which the other Magindanaon dialects have diverged (see figure 15).

#### 1.1.1. TAW SA ILUD

Taw sa Ilud (Ilud) in this study includes the Nagatanganan dialect of Kabuntalan and the 'Magindanawn' dialect of three barrios of Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, which are located across the Pulangi River from Cotabato City: the barrios of Katuli, Bonobo and Kalsada. This 'Magindanawn' dialect is universally acknowledged (except by the Sibuguey) as the 'purest' dialect of Magindanao. Many of the speakers of this dialect are in the royal line of the Sultanate of Magindanao. Nagatanganan is the major dialect around Kabuntalan (Tumbao) and is the dialect used in the Kabuntalan Sultanate. Speakers of Nagatanganan claim that their dialect is the most widely understood dialect of Magindanao, a claim which has not yet been verified.

#### 1.1.2. TAW SA LAYA

Taw sa Laya (Laya) consists of the dialects spoken in the former Sultanate of Buwayan. It is characterized phonologically by strong retroflexion of the /l/ and other alveolar consonants (Eck 1974 and Lee 1962, 1964b) and a prevalent use of [r] as an allophone for the /d/ phoneme (e.g. /madakel/ 'many' is often pronounced as [marakel] and /kandadu/ 'lock' as [kandaru]). It is also one of the most divergent (i.e. innovative) lexically of the various Magindanaon dialects (see figure 15) and is, more often than not, listed by speakers of other dialects as the most difficult Magindanaon dialect to understand. Some dialects, especially those far upstream around Pagalugan and Kabacan, are characterized by a sing-song intonation which further reduces their intelligibility to outsiders. The following chart displays some of the lexical divergence of Taw sa Laya from Taw sa Ilud:

English	Taw sa Laya	Taw sa Ilud
near	masupeg	masiken
cat	puting	bedung, sika
cousin	wata na magali	tenged minsan
sibling	suled	lusud sa tiyan
joking	pendadamanyas	pedsasabelaw, pendadawla
carry with pole	pembalanting	pembantiyal
cut grass with long bolo	pedsidsid	pedtayabpas
bad	mawag	malat
what	ngayn	ngin
tell a lie	pendalebut	pembudtud
tomorrow	namag	amag
have a cold	pedsepu	pelumasa
go	pebpawang	mangay
if	amayngka	amayka

Figure 3: Lexical divergence between Ilud and Laya

### 1.1.3. TAGA-BIWANGAN

The place name of Taga-Biwangan ‘from the left’ refers to those Magindanaon now living in South Cotabato Province and their dialects. Actually, as is the case of all these larger dialectal groupings, there is no one dialect of Taga-Biwangan (Biwangan) though the dialects around Palimbang seem to be the most influential in the area. Taga-Biwangan is perhaps best known (around the Pulangi River at least) for the sing-song quality of some of its dialects. Basically, however, it resembles Taw sa Ilud except for the number of Proto-Danao lexical features which have been preserved in it but which have been altered in Ilud and Laya (see figure 15). This similarity to Taw sa Ilud doubtlessly reflects the history of these people who are descendants of settlers who came from the Magindanao Sultanate (Ilud) and who for hundreds of years have been administered by a representative of this Sultan (Mastura 1979:78-9).

### 1.1.4. TAGA-KAWANAN

Taga-Kawanan (Kawanan) is the term used for the Magindanaon who have settled in the Dinas-Pagadian area of Zamboanga del Sur Province. Basically, these people consist of two waves of immigrants, the first being Iranuns (their dialect seems to be the same as

the Iranun spoken in Linek, Dinaig, Maguindanao) who arrived there around the middle of the 19th Century and displaced the native Subanon populations. Then, between 1900 and 1920 a second wave arrived of Taw sa Layans from the Dulawan (Datu Piang) area. Because these groups are of recent arrival in the area, they still retain basically the same dialect as their point of origin.

### 1.1.5. SIBUGUEY

The traditional centers of culture for the Sibugueys are the town of Kabasalan and Siay. Interestingly enough, while the other dialects of Magindanaon trace their point of origin back to the Pulangi River basin, the Sibuguey do not. Those interviewed stated either that they 'had always been there from earliest times' or else that they had come from Arabia with Sharif Kabunsuwan. In either case, they seemed largely unaware of the Magindanaons of the Cotabato area. In actual fact, however, they have long been recognized as subjects of the Magindanao Sultan (Mastura 1979:78-9) from before the time of Forrest who mentioned them in 1775 (Forrest 1969:196) until the present time. Also, because settlers were still leaving the Pulangi River area to settle in Sibuguey as recently as the 19th Century during the administration of Datu Utu of Sepakan (Nasrullah Glang, personal communication) it seems likely that these statements are not to be viewed so much as a denial of their Magindanaon heritage as an affirmation of their Kalibugan roots. That is, since the Magindanaon settlers to Sibuguey intermarried with the native Kalibugan (Mastura 1979: 79), their descendants could truthfully say both that they 'had been there since earliest times' (reflecting their Kalibugan roots) and that they are descendants of Sharif Kabunsuwan (reflecting their Magindanaon roots). Yet in spite of their mixed heritage, their language is unmistakably Magindanaon. In fact, those interviewed stated that their language was almost identical to Taga-Biwangan. This is likely because, barring some notable lexical divergences which are perhaps due to Kalibugan borrowings, their dialect does have a great similarity to Taga-Biwangan.

### 1.2. IRANUN DIALECTS

There seem to be two basic dialects of Iranun. The Iranun proper live along the coast of Iliana Bay and the Isebanganen (or Idalemen) live inland from them in the hill country north and east from Mt. Akir-Akir (also known as Mt. Agkir-Agkir). Iranun proper varies from being more like Maranao in the north. Yet in all cases it is distinct linguistically from both Magindanaon and Maranao. Isebanganen, on the other hand, appears to be midway between Iranun proper and Maranao. This has led many Maranaos to claim that Isebanganen is a dialect of Maranao, a claim which was not substantiated when a group of Maranao identified a tape of Isebanganen as Iranun. Furthermore, because both the Iranun proper and the Isebanganen themselves consider Isebanganen to be a dialect of Iranun, this identification has been used in this paper. Generally speaking, the Isebanganen tend to be viewed as 'country cousins' of the Iranun proper because of their comparative isolation, their retention of archaic words, their 'unique' pronunciation of some words and their perceived lower status.

### 1.3. MARANAO DIALECTS

Two distinct dialects of Maranao historically existed with the speech of the Maranao communities on the Iligan Bay differing lexically and intonationally from the Maranao spoken around Lake Lanao (Mamitua Saber, personal communication). However, with the advent of the peace and order difficulties of this century, the Iligan bay communities have dispersed into the larger Maranao community. Thus, Maranao will be treated as a unified dialect in this paper, largely because no speakers of the former Iligan Bay

communities have been interviewed.

#### 1.4. ILLANUN DIALECTS

The Illanun are a relatively unstudied group. Preliminary evidence<sup>7</sup> (Carolyn Miller, personal communication), however, shows that there are primarily two dialects of Illanun, one centered around Kota Belud on the coast of Western Sabah north of Kota Kinabalu and the other located around Lahad Datu on Darvel Bay in Eastern Sabah.

The Kota Baled group historically dates from the 17th Century. Forrest (1969:192-3) wrote in 1775 that sometime before 1667 'the Illanun districts [on the Moro Gulf] suffered so much [from a volcanic eruption] that many colonists went to Sooloo [-Sulu] even to Tampassook and Tawarran, on the West coast of Borneo in search of a better country, where many of them live to this day'. This same group of Illanuns was reinforced during the 18th and 19th centuries by other Danao groups which combined with these original settlers to construct a base of operations in order to conduct far-flung raids throughout South East Asia (Reber 1966:189; Sopher 1965:173; Asni 1973:12-3; Warren 1975:259; Tarling 1978:10, 14; Mastura 1979:173; Fleischman, In press).

No Illanuns are mentioned in Lahud Datu, on the other hand, until after 1848 (Sopher 1965:138; Warren 1975:259), at which time it also became the base of operations for far-flung raiding.

One would suspect that unless contact has been maintained with other Danao speakers over the years that Kota Belud would be more divergent from the other Danao languages than Lahad Datu because of the longer period of isolation which has increased the likelihood of extensive borrowings from neighboring languages and the potential for new innovations. This, in fact, has not been the case as seen by the following lexicostatistical chart of cognate percentages (based, as are all such charts in this paper, on Reid's 372 meaning list (Reid 1971)). This chart (figure 4) displays the fact that there has doubtlessly been extensive contact between the Kota Belud and their 'motherland' after their departure due to the above mentioned reinforcements and through trade. Also, as this chart shows, although there has been considerable variation from the mother languages, there has nevertheless been no significantly greater divergence of one dialect from the

	Iranun	Isebanganen	Maranao
Lahad Datu	82	80	79
Kota Belud	78	80	80

Figure 4: Cognate percentages of Illanun with Iranun and Maranao

parent language than the other. However, because the two dialects are only 88% cognate with each other, one can see that lexical drift and borrowings have occurred in both languages simultaneously making them the most divergent of all of the Danao languages (see figure 7). This undoubtedly is due to their isolation once the raiding era ended in the late 19th Century.

<sup>7</sup>Field workers of the Summer Institute of Linguistics-Sabah are presently conducting dialect surveys among all of the language groups in Sabah. The word lists and intelligibility tests provided by SIL - Sabah are the source for the language data about Illanun used in this study.

However, intelligibility tests done by John and Betty Banker of the Summer Institute of Linguistics showed that there is no difficulty for speakers of Lahad Datu in understanding Kota Belud Illanun (Carolyn Miller, personal communication). Thus, in spite of the rather low mutual cognate percentages, there is no doubt that both dialects of Illanun are closely related and are dialects of the same language.

## 2. PREVIOUS STUDIES

Lexicostatistical studies of Maranao and Magindanaon have been done by Harold Conklin (1955) and of Maranao, Iranun and Magindanaon by Joe Allison (1979:66-7). Conklin found that Maranao and Magindanaon are 87% cognate. However, because his Magindanaon word list was taken from R.S. Porter (1903) who, in turn, gathered it from the 'vicinity of Cotabato, Paranag, Malabang, and Baras and variations around the Lake of Lanao' (page 3) – strongly Iranun and Maranao areas – his figures in reality display the relationship of Maranao and Iranun rather than that of Maranao and Magindanaon.

Allison, on the other hand, found the following cognate percentages:

Maranao		Maranao	
65.6	Iranun	78.3	Iranun
60.2	71.3	66.8	77.1
	Magindanaon		Magindanaon
Reid 372 word list		Swadesh 100 word list	

Figure 5: Allison's (1979:66) lexicostatistical comparisons

The divergence between the two lists is due to the fact that the Swadesh list had been compiled on the basis of high retention values while the Reid list is more representative of the languages as a whole. Allison found the above as evidence that Iranun is either midway between Maranao and Magindanaon (according to the Swadesh list) or else closer to Magindanaon (Reid list). He then, however, did a functor analysis (functors are basically grammatical items such as case and focus markers) in which he 'compared a set of 100 qualitative items, consisting primarily of functors, plus a few forms that are either functor-like or may have some value in subgrouping' and concluded that, based on this evidence, Iranun was more closely related to Maranao as shown by the following charts (Allison 1979:67-8):

Maranao		Maranao	
74.5	Iranun	69.4	Iranun
56.5	67.2	54.4	65.6
	Magindanaon		Magindanaon
100 item functor list		80 item functor list	

Figure 6a: Allison's functor and qualitative list

Allison himself suggested that this data has probably been prejudiced by incomplete functor data and hypothesized that Iranun was actually right in the middle between Magindanaon and Maranao as his eighty-item list indicates. This, in fact, is the case when



this aspect of his study is corrected with more complete data as seen by figure 6b:<sup>8</sup>

**Maranao**

89     Iranun  
 79     89     Magindanaon

Figure 6b: The corrected Allison's 100 item functor list

Thus, the corrected figures above show that Iranun is indeed midway between Magindanaon and Maranao, the conclusion Allison ultimately reached in his paper.

To date, no studies have been made on any aspect of the Illanun language and, because of this, there is no literature on the subject.

**3. COGNATE PERCENTAGES AND INTELLIGIBILITY TESTS OF DANA O**

The following chart displays the cognate percentages of the various dialects of the Danao languages based on Reid's 372 word list (Reid 1971):

	Kota Belud	Lahad Datu	Maranao	Isebanganen	Iranun	Ilud	Laya	Biwang	Sibuguey
Kota Belud	X	88	80	80	78	71	67	72	73
Lahad Datu	88	X	79	80	82	76	69	73	73
Maranao	80	79	X	92	85	76	74	75	76
Isebanganen	80	80	92	X	92	82	81	80	84
Iranun	78	82	85	92	X	92	89	87	91
Ilud	71	76	76	82	92	X	97	94	97
Laya	67	69	74	81	89	87	X	90	93
Biwangan	72	73	75	80	87	94	90	X	95
Sibuguey	73	73	76	84	91	97	93	95	X

Figure 7: Cognate percentages of the various Danao dialects

<sup>8</sup>Allison's original chart was based on strict morphological identity and not on cognates. I have also counted the percentages on this basis except that I have allowed for predictable variations from Proto-Danao. Thus, if Maranao or Iranun has an /r/ but Magindanaon an /l/, this is treated as identical because of the merger of the \*/r/ and \*/l/ in Magindanaon. Similarly, glottal stops in Maranao are not treated as different when they do not occur in Iranun or Magindanaon – languages in which there are no glottal stops.

The cognate percentages listed here vary slightly from those cited by Allison because, while he compared languages as a whole, the above are comparisons of specific dialects of each of the various Danao languages.<sup>9</sup>

In addition, intelligibility tests were conducted according to the methodology described in Casad (1974).<sup>10</sup> These tests were conducted in Lahad Datu, Sabah (Lahad Datu Illanun); Kota Belud, Sabah (Kota Belud Illanun); Marawi City (Maranao); Parang, Maguindanao (Iranun); Dimapatoy, Dinaig, Maguindanao (Taw sa Ilud) and Cuyapan, Kabacan, North Cotabato (Taw sa Laya).<sup>11</sup> The following are the scores and the interpretation index of these scores:

<sup>9</sup>A further reason for the difference in cognate percentages is the fact that his data was incomplete. For example, in Magindanao *lima*, *bulungwan*, and *ngelay* all may be translated as 'hand'. Allison (1979:84), however, elicited *lima* for 'hand' in both Maranao and Iranun but for Magindanao he elicited only *ngelay*, thereby counting Magindanao to be a deviant from Danao in that word. Since this happened a number of times in his study, it is natural to expect his cognate percentages to vary from figure 7. The incomplete data also caused his summary of shared features in Danao (page 78) to be misleading. This chart, corrected, would read as follows:

Features shared:	Maranao	Iranun	Magindanao
*giV-pronominal			
formative	X	X	
*sa-locative			
formative	X	X	X
*becomes null		X	X
*dC becomes C	X		
*r becomes l			X

Figure 16: Allison's (corrected) Danao shared features chart

Discrepant features are: 1) \**r* becoming /*a*/ in Maranao and Iranun. This conclusion was due to mishearing Maranao and Iranun whose /*a*/ is higher than the Magindanao /*a*/. Also, the Magindanao \*(*t*) was frequently heard as /*u*/; 2) there is no *pig/pag* alternation in Magindanao or Iranun. These forms are predictable with the former used with verb stems beginning with a /*k*/ and the latter with vowel initial stems; 3) the data for the Magindanao deictics was incorrect, resulting in inaccurate conclusions for the \**sa*-locative formation, *bay* pronominal suffixes and *n*-deictic formatives. /*ba*/ or /*bay*/ is the Magindanao affirmative particle, parallel to the *nga* in Tagalog, rather than a locative suffix. 'this' in Magindanao is *niya*, 'that' is *nan*, 'that (remote)' is *entu* or *ntu*; 'here' is *siya*, 'there' is *san* and 'there (remote)' is *lu*.

<sup>10</sup>Ten people are tested individually at each location in which tests are conducted. The test consists of taped stories gathered from the various language groups to be tested. Questions are then spliced into the story in the local dialect of the testee with the question content based on the story. At a minimum ten questions are asked for each story, with a maximum of fourteen for some stories. The answers of the testees are then judged for their correctness. If the answers are correct it is assumed that the testee understood the story. A practice tape in the local dialect is always played so that the testee will be familiar with the procedures before the tests begin. The scores are based on the percentages of right answers for the tapes. A fuller description of the methodology is found in Casad (1974). The figures cited in figure 8 are scores which have been adjusted upwards in reference to the ability of any given respondent to answer the 'home town' tapes. Thus, the relative ability of the testee to do the tests has already been compensated for in the final scores given here.

<sup>11</sup>All tests in Mindanao, Philippines, were conducted by Art Lightbody and Eric Fleischman during September and October, 1980. The tests in Sabah were conducted in 1980 by John and Betty Banker of the Summer Institute of Linguistics - Sabah. The Illanun word lists used in the lexicostatistical comparisons were gathered by Julie Blum, and the word lists for Magindanao, Iranun, and Maranao were gathered by Eric Fleischman.

LANGUAGES TESTED	Kota Belud	Lahad Datu	Maranao	Isebanganen	Iranun	Ilud	Laya	Biwangan	Tagalog
Kota Belud	X	97			74				
PEOPLE TESTED									
Lahad Datu	97	X							
Maranao			X	94	87	52			
Iranun	97	96	95		X	98	98		
Taw sa Ilud			60		84	X	96		34
Taw sa Laya			43		92	97	X	99	47

Interpretation Index of the scores: 95-100 = excellent intelligibility  
80-94 = adequate intelligibility  
below 80 = poor/low intelligibility

Figure 8: Dialect intelligibility tests of the Danao languages

Tagalog data has been provided to serve as a means of comparison of learned intelligibility for a language which is not closely related to Danao. Tagalog (also known as Pilipino) is the major trade language where Taw sa Ilud was tested and is second only to Ilocano as a trade language where Taw sa Laya was tested.

With the above index in mind, one can see that the various dialects of Magindanaon, Iranun, and Illanun are extremely similar to one another and that no real communication problems exist among them – as the native speakers themselves claim. However, communication problems do exist between languages as will be further described in sections 4, 5, and 6.

#### 4. RELATIONSHIP OF MAGINDANAON AND MARANAO

As the intelligibility tests clearly show, the average Magindanaon and Maranao have extremely limited understanding of each other's speech – so limited that normally a trade language is used by them when communicating. Because of the similar genetic relationship of the two languages, however, it is common for those in frequent contact with the other group to learn enough of the other language to either passively understand it or else to speak it. This, however, is the exception rather than the rule. Difficulties in communication stem not only from lexical drift (i.e. only 76% of the words in Taw sa Ilud and Maranao are cognates) but are also due to shifts in the meanings of words and to sound changes which render certain cognates almost unrecognizable. For example, the following chart shows how many words which are pronounced the same way have different meanings between the two languages:

word	meaning in Maranao	meaning in Magindanaon
mogat/mawgat	pregnant	heavy
mapasang	smart	difficult
lantay	bridge, cement floor	floor
dumpaw	guinea pig	rat
dempas	mat	to spread (cloth, mat)
beteng	unripe coconut	'milk' in the coconut
pendadalemet	gambling	playing
untul	sit	surface on top
tapilak	cast aside	scar
mapita	tomorrow	morning
kagabi	afternoon	night
malubay	thin	weak
begas	cooked rice	uncooked rice

Figure 9: Magindanaon-Maranao semantic divergence examples

Also, in spite of their very similar phonemic systems, the retention by Maranao of the historically phonemic glottal stop, the juncture in Magindanaon of \*/r/ with \*/l/, the loss in Maranao of /d/ in consonant clusters, and the difference in the height of their respective /a/, add differences which compound grammatical and lexical differences and make communication difficult between the two languages.

## 5. THE POSITION OF IRANUN VIS-À-VIS MAGINDANAON AND MARANAO

Native Danao speakers have differing ideas of the relationship of Iranun to Magindanaon and Maranao. Generally speaking, however, most Magindanaon and Maranao surveyed believe Iranun to be closer to Maranao than to Magindanaon. The most frequently given reason for this classification by Magindanaon is the common retention in both languages of the Proto-Danao \*/r/. Maranao reasons, on the other hand, generally involved the fact that Iranun is understandable while Magindanaon is not. Iranuns surveyed, however, believe their language to be not only dead center between Magindanaon and Maranao but to also be the original language from which the other two languages diverged. This centrality of Iranun was also the conclusion of Allison's (1979) study.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Allison concludes that Iranun is located centrally between Maranao and Magindanaon (1979: 77). However, because virtually without exception his Proto-Danao forms are identical to Iranun, one may safely state that he concludes – or at least implies – that Iranun is basically identical lexically and phonologically (except for the glottal stop) to the protolanguage – even though he never explicitly states such a conclusion.

Evidence gathered in this study also points to the conclusion that Iranun is centrally located between Magindanaon and Maranao as the following chart of cognate percentages illustrates:

Maranao			
92	Isebanganen		
85	92	Iranun	
76	82	92	Magindanaon (Ilud)

Fig. 10: Chart of cognate percentages

Phonologically it is centrally located between the two languages in that, while it preserves the \*/ɾ/ of Proto-Danao like Maranao, it has preserved like Magindanaon the /d/ in consonant clusters and has eliminated the \*/ʃ/. It is significant, however, that Isebanganen has preserved the \*/ʃ/ of Proto-Danao and therefore has not participated in the phonological innovations of either Maranao or Magindanaon and thus it corresponds exactly with the phonology of Proto-Danao as reconstructed by Allison (1979).

Even though grammatical comparisons of the languages have not yet been conducted, it appears, based on the corrected study of Allison's functor and qualitative list, that it is also grammatically central between them. However, as figure 10 shows, Iranun proper is actually closer lexically to Maranao than to Magindanaon. This same relationship is also seen semantically in that Iranun proper usually patterns with Magindanaon in comparisons such as figure 9, while Isebanganen usually patterns with Maranao. Thus, Iranun is centrally located between Maranao and Magindanaon with the dialect of Iranun proper probably being slightly closer to Magindanaon than to Maranao and the dialect of Isebanganen being closer to Maranao than to Magindanaon.

The intelligibility tests (figure 8), however, pointed out the interesting observation that the speakers of Iranun understand Maranao and Magindanaon much better than either understands Iranun. Also, both Maranao and Magindanaon apparently understand Iranun equally well – adequate intelligibility – while Iranun understands every linguistic group well. This nonreciprocal intelligibility is common for many languages of the world (Casad 1974:46-51) in situations where intelligibility is heightened due to cultural dominance of one language group making it advantageous for the less dominant group to learn the dominant group's language.<sup>13</sup> Thus, the relative cultural dominance of

<sup>13</sup>The nonreciprocal scores of Iranun and Kota Belud Illanun, however, also demonstrate another interesting facet of Danao intelligibility patterns. Since it is unlikely that the Illanun culturally influence the Iranun – though it is quite possible that the Iranun do have a limited cultural influence on the Illanun – another explanation must be found for the findings. A very probable hypothesis is that because the Iranuns are centrally located geographically between the other Danao groups, they have greater relative contact with Danao speakers with a differing speech than their own than have the other Danao groups. This is not generally the case for the comparatively isolated Illanun, who have infrequent contact with other Danao speakers. Thus, one would expect the Iranun to be more practiced at understanding people whose speech is related yet different from their own than the Illanun (or for that matter the Magindanaon or Maranao). Thus, in addition to the influence Iranun receives from its culturally dominant neighbors, it has doubtlessly been influenced by its geographical centrality among its Danao neighbors.

both Maranao and Magindanaon<sup>14</sup> has undoubtedly raised Iranun intelligibility levels for its neighboring languages from only an adequate level to excellent intelligibility. The following figure exemplifies the probable socio-linguistic factors which have given rise to this situation:

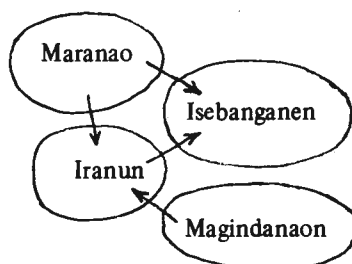


Figure 11: Direction of cultural flow and source of cultural dominance.

In figure 11 the arrows represent the direction of cultural pressure (influence) emanating from the centers of cultural prestige.

As a result of this cultural dominance, conflicting pressure including differing linguistic innovations has been exerted upon Iranun from both of its neighbors. Iranun has accommodated itself to both groups as evidenced by its high intelligibility of both languages and its preservation of the older forms of the language (i.e. the conflicting pressures have probably influenced Iranun to more or less preserve the status quo). The Isebanganen, however, are basically not influenced by the Magindanaon (except in the area around Carmen, North Cotabato (Michael Mastura, personal communication)), but rather have been influenced primarily by other Iranuns and Maranao. Thus, they have not had the counterbalancing pressure from Magindanaon and hence have more freely borrowed from Maranao than did Iranun proper.

This centrality of Iranun to Maranao and Magindanaon adds support to the Iranun claim of being the language from which the other two languages diverged. Certainly Allison's findings support this idea for, except for the loss in Iranun of \*//, Iranun corresponds exactly with the protolanguage as reconstructed by Allison.<sup>15</sup>

## 6. THE POSITION OF ILLANUN IN DANAO

Scholarly opinion has generally been that the Illanuns were Iranuns who left Iliana Bay (Mastura 1979:173; Warren 1975:254-5, 259-62; Lebar 1975:2.35). Maranaos, however, have long had a tradition that they themselves were the raiders referred to as Illanuns (Saber 1980:20-1). A glance at the cognate percentages shows that neither

<sup>14</sup>Another way to examine influence is to see where the refugees fled during the recent peace and order problems. During that time the Isebanganen fled to other Isebanganen, to Iranun and to Maranao, but not to the neighboring Magindanaon (Taw sa Laya). Iranun fled to Maranao, Magindanaon and to other Iranun. I am not aware of Maranao movements but I have heard that during some of the worst problems in the Danao area some fled to Wao, which is Isebanganen area. Another way such dominance can be traced is for an outsider to ask an Iranun what is his cultural group. In the Cotabato area they frequently answer 'Magindanaon' and only more questioning can determine that they are really Iranuns. Peter Gowing (personal communication) reports a similar experience in which Iranuns claimed to be Maranao near the Maranao border. This is also reflected by the Philippine government's national census in which the Iranun are frequently classified as Magindanaon or, even more frequently, as Maranao. Michael Mastura (1979:32, 45-6, 145) also reports that historically the Iranun were vassals of sorts to the Magindanaon Sultan at that they had a well defined place in Magindanaon society. Indeed, in so many ways, the Iranun are 'torn' between influences from their more dominant neighbors.

<sup>15</sup>In the places where Iranun was not identical with Allison's reconstructed protolanguage, either his Iranun data was incorrect or else a \*// (which is not found in Iranun) was involved.

Maranao nor Iranun has significantly higher shared cognates with Illanun than the other.

	Maranao	Iranun
Lahad Datu	79	82
Kota Belud	80	78

Figure 12: Cognate percentages of Illanun with Iranun and Maranao

However, because these cognate percentages are doubtlessly lowered due to foreign borrowings in Illanun, this is probably not the most transparent measurement for determining the source language for Illanun.<sup>16</sup> A better measuring device would be to determine the relative percentage of noncognates between Iranun and Maranao which are cognate with Illanun to see which language Illanun patterns with (i.e. whether it is cognate with either Maranao or Iranun in cases in which Maranao and Iranun are not cognate). The results of such a cognate count are shown by the following chart:

	Maranao	Iranun
Lahad Datu	48%	52%
Kota Belud	48%	52%

Figure 13: Percentage of instances in which Illanun is cognate with either Maranao or Iranun but not with both

Thus, as this chart displays, both dialects of Illanun are slightly more like Iranun than like Maranao.

Assuming the validity of the hypothesis that Iranun has preserved an older form of the language and that the forms unique in either of its neighbors are innovations from the protolanguage, then it is very unlikely that either Illanun dialect would have a 48% commonality with Maranao if Maranaos did not have a significant place in the history of the Illanun. That is, one would expect that if Maranaos left to become Illanun raiders hundreds of years ago that they spoke an older form of Maranao — a form which was probably more similar to Iranun than the Maranao spoken today. As a result, even if the Illanun were entirely peopled by Maranao, one would still expect a certain percentage of the older Iranun terms which have dropped out of modern Maranao to be retained. Conversely, if the Illanun were entirely peopled by Iranun one would not expect any commonality with Maranao on words which are noncognate with Iranun unless, of course, Allison's historical reconstruction of Proto-Danao is notably inaccurate — a possibility which the data does not seem to support. Thus, it appears evident that Maranaos did have a significant place in the formation of the Illanuns. However, because of the distinct Iranun stamp on Illanun, one would be led to suspect that the Illanuns are actual-

<sup>16</sup>It should be mentioned that this discussion concerning the source of Illanun does not take into account the remote possibility that either Magindanaon or Isebanganen participated in the raiding parties which later became the Illanun. This is because while there is historical evidence that the Magindanao Sultan sponsored the first known 'Illanun' raids and that they were led by Magindanaon officers (Warren 1975; Reber 1966; Fleischman, In press), there is no linguistic evidence that Magindanaon had any noticeable influence on Illanun. Furthermore, Isebanganen has not been considered because of the Isebanganens remoteness, their lack of sailing experience, and because there is no known evidence to support their ever having participated in such ventures.

by a combination of both Iranuns and Maranaos and that this combination of peoples is preserved in their speech. Furthermore, the possibility that Illanuns are descended from a combination of both Maranao and Iranun is strengthened by modern day Maranao and Iranun who are presently living in small numbers among the Illanun (John and Betty Banker, personal communication; Mamitua Saber, personal communication).

That Illanun actually does preserve elements of earlier Danao speech is evident phonologically in that it preserves the Proto-Danao glottal stop (unlike Iranun but like Maranao) as well as the consonant clusters involving /d/ (like Iranun but unlike Maranao) as seen by the following chart:

English	Proto-Danao	Lahad Datu	Kota Belud	Maranao	Iranun	Isebanganen
rainbow	*buludtu	baludtu	baludtu	bulutu	buludtu	buludtu
sand	*pedtad	pedtad	pedtad	petad	pedtad	pedtad
straight	*matidtu	matidtu	matidtu	matitu	matidtu	matidtu
turtle	*bau'u	ba'u	ba'aw	bau'u	baw	baw
star	*bitu'un	bitu'un	bitun	bitu'un	bitun	bitu'un
yesterday	*kaga'i	kaga'i	kaga'ay	kaga'i	kagay	kaga'i
areca nut	*mama'an	mama'an	mama'an	mama'an	maman	mama'an
sew	*pamana'i	pemana'i	pamanai	pemanai	pamanay	pamanay

Figure 14: Examples of Illanun's preservation of Proto-Danao phonology.

As a result of retaining these and other phonological features, Illanun together with Isebanganen have preserved the postulated phonological features of Proto-Danao.<sup>17</sup> However, it is false to thereby conclude that Illanun in its entirety has preserved an older form of the language. It has made numerous lexical borrowings which have resulted in its comparatively low cognate percentages with the other Danao languages, and Kota Baled Illanun speakers score significantly less in the intelligibility of Iranun than do the other Danao speakers. Also, because no grammatical comparisons have been made with Illanun, the possibility exists that there are grammatical innovations as well in Illanun.

## 7. CONCLUSION

Of the three Danao languages located on Mindanao, Maranao and Magindanaon are

<sup>17</sup>That is, the following chart displays the principal phonological variants in Danao:

Features	Maranao	Illanun	Iranun	Isebanganen	Magindanaon
preserves */r/	X	X	X	X	
preserves */'/	X	X		X	
preserves consonant clusters involving /d/		X	X	X	X



the most dissimilar while Iranun occupies a middle position between them. Because of the relative cultural dominance of Maranao and Magindanaon and the central position of Iranun both geographically and linguistically, Iranun has no apparent difficulty in understanding either of its neighbors even though its neighbors have moderate difficulty understanding it. Magindanaon and Maranao, however, are not mutually intelligible even though many speakers have achieved a learned intelligibility with the other language based on their very similar linguistic structures. Due to its central position, Iranun remains virtually identical with the hypothesized original Danao language of Proto-Danao, varying from it only by the absence of the phonemic glottal stop. Illanun is the only Danao language not spoken principally on Mindanao. While a difference of opinion exists as to the exact origins of the Illanun, their language gives evidence of a mixed Maranao and Iranun heritage.

A partial list demonstrating some of the common lexical relationships between the various Danao dialects follows (figure 15). As this list suggests, Magindanaon and Maranao tend to be the most diverse with Iranun occupying the middle ground between them.

[Note: figure 15 is given on the following few pages]

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English	Maranao	Lahad Datu	Kota Belud	Isebanganen	Iranun	Ihud	Laya	Biwang	Sibuguey
answer	sembag	jawag	sembag	sumpat	sumpat	sawal, sumpat	sawal	sawal, sumpat	sumpat
ashes	umbi	umbi	umbi	umbi, aw	umbi, aw	aw	aw	aw	aw
big	mala	mala	mala	mala	masla	masla, masela	masela	masela	masla
bite	kekeb	pengekeb	kekeb	kekeb, pengkeb	kegkeb pangebut	bangebut	bangebut	bangebut	bangebut
crow	kakuwak	gekuwak	kaluku	kakwak	kakwak	uwak	wak	uwak	kakwak
difficult	maregen	masusa	susah	maregan, mapasang	mapasang	mapasang	mapasang	malegen	mapasang
egg	urak	urak	urak	urak	urak, leman	leman	leman	leman	leman
fast	maga'an	maga'an	maga'an	mangan	mangan malangkas	mangan	malangkas	mangan	mangan
flower	bulak barubar	bunga	bunga	barubar	urak	ulak	ulak	ulak	ulak
give	begay	begay	beгаinge	enggay	enggay	enggay	enggay	inggay	inggay
heavy	mapened	mapened	mapened	mapened	mapened, mawgat	mawgat	mawgat	mawgat	mawgat
live	baling	talbagat	begak	pendelpa, baling	kareben penderpa, baling	kaleben	kaleben	pendelpa	pendelpa
mat	dempas	dempas	dempas	dempas, ikam	ikam	ikam	ikam	ikam	ikam
mosquito	rengit	rengit	rengit	rengit	tagenek	tagenek	tagenek	tagenek	tagenek
mud	laput	laput	rebur	budta	budta	budta	budta	budta	budta

English	Maranao	Lahad Datu	Kota Belud	Isebanganen	Iranun	Ihud	Laya	Biwangan	Sibuguey
near	marani	marani	marani	marani	marani	masiken	masupeg	masiken	masiken
old thing	miyati	miyadtay	niadtay	runut	rabing	lebing	lebing	lebing	lebing
play	gita-gita	endaremet	ngita	gita-gita	endaremet	endalemet	endalemet	endalemet	endalemet
go home	baling	maling	baling	baling	baling	mulu	mulu	mulu	mulu
left	diwang	diwang	diwang	diwang	biwang	biwang	biwang	biwang	biwang
rice	ilaw	ilaw	ilaw	ilaw	ilaw	palay	palay	palay	palay
unhusked									
rice	maragas	begas	begas	margas	begas	begas	begas	begas	begas
husked									
rice	begas	begas	begas	begas	emay	emay	may	emay	emay
cooked		mialutu		emay					
shadow	alung	alungalung	alungalung	masilung, alung	alungalung	alungalung	silung	alungzhung	masilung
sibling	pagari	pagari	pagari	pagari	lusud sa tiyan	lusud sa tiyan	suled	pagali, lusud sa tiyan	pagali, lusud sa tiyan
sit	untud	muntud	untud	untud	untud	pagagayan	pagagayan	pagagayan	pagagayan
skin	kubal	upis	upis	kubal	lanitan	lanitan	lanitan	upis	upis
stone	atur	watu	watu	watu	watu	watu	watu	watu	watu
thunder	dalendeg	dalindig	daledeg	dalendeg	dalendeg	dalendeg	lugung	dalendeg	lugung
today	imantu	imantu	gawimantu	imantu	imantu	saguna	saguna	saguna	saguna
what?	antuna	antuna	antuna	antuna	antuna	ngin	ngayn	ngayn	nginan
when?	anda	kanu	kanu	enda	kanu	kanu	kanu	kanu	kanu
where?	anda	anda	anda	enda	enda	endaw	endaw	endaw	endaw

English	Maranao	Lahad Datu	Kota Belud	Isebanganen	Iranun	Ilud	Laya	Biwangen	Sibuguey
who?	antawa'a	santawa	antawa	enta'a	entayn	entayn	entayn	entayn	ngin
wind	endu	ndu	endu	endu, samber	samber	sambel	sambel	sambel, endu	endu
forest	kalasan	damakayu	kamakayu	kalasan	damakayu, kalasan	damakayu	damakayu	damakayu	damakayu
dust	bayaneK, lupapek	abuk, lakep	abuk	libubuk kulpung	libubuk	libubuk	libubuk	bubuk, apung	libubuk
eggplant	tagutung	tagudtung	tagudtung	tagudtung	tagudtung	sagutung	sagutung	agutung	tagutung

Figure 15: Examples of a few lexical items in the various Danao dialects.