

Patricia Donegan

University of Hawai'i at Manoa

<donegan@hawaii.edu>

Essentials of Sora Phonology

The basic prosody, phonology, and phonetics of Sora (SRB) are the least areally influenced among the Munda languages. Despite some recent publications, all known Sora dialects share a single phoneme inventory: the vowels *i e ε i ə a u o ɔ* and the consonants *p t k b d ɳ g m n ɲ s l r ʃ y* (?). The presentation will demonstrate Sora vowel and consonant oppositions and allophony and point out some individual traits of Sora: its phonemic retroflex flap, its compressed-lip rather than rounded-lip *u*, its *stød*-like use of glottal stop as a prosodic device, its absence of foreign phonemes, and its restriction of initial *n* largely to demonstratives. Then I will discuss its typically Munda features: the absence of vowel length or lexical diphthongs, the *t/d* asymmetry, the absence of *c* despite *ɳ*, the identification of unreleased coda stops as voiced not voiceless, and initial accent with anacrusis allowed. Finally, I note some of its Austroasiatic features: non-release of coda stops, diphthongization before palatal codas, and a rising rhythm and head-first order in its polysynthetic verb stem, despite a typically Munda (and Indian) falling syntactic rhythm. The rising verb rhythm is a survival of the proto-Austroasiatic head-first verb phrase, which lives on in the eastern Austroasiatic languages.