

9. Lontara (25 marks)

Buginese is a language of the southern region of Sulawesi, the third largest island of Indonesia. It is written using a script called Lontara. The script's name comes from the Malay word for palm, lontar. The long, thin leaves of the palm were once used to create scroll-like manuscripts.



What you see below is a passage from the epic Indonesian creation myth Sureq Galigo, written in Buginese using the Lontara script.



The same passage: English translation

There is no one to call the gods Lord, or to offer praise to the underworld. Why Lord don't you have one of your children descend, and incarnate him on the earth; do not leave the world empty and the earth uninhabited. You are not a god, Lord, if there are no humans under the heavens, above the underworld, to call the gods Lord.

Buginese with the Latin alphabet, scrambled

The Buginese text of this passage is shown again below, but this time written in the Latin alphabet instead of the Lontara script. Unfortunately, it has also been chopped up into ten pieces and scrambled up.

Notes about spelling:

- e is a vowel (/ə/), pronounced u as in mud.
- é is a vowel (/ɛ/), pronounced e as in bed.
- q is the glottal stop (/ʔ/), the sound in the middle of uh-oh.

- a. ajaq naonro lobbang linoé
- b. lé namasuaq mua na sia
- c. makkatajangeng ri atawareng.
- d. mappaleq wali ri pérétiwi.
- e. mattampa puang lé ri batara,
- f. mattampa puang lé ri batara.
- g. ri awa langiq, lé ri ménéqna pérétiwié,
- h. tabareq-bareq ri atawareng,
- i. tammaga puang muloq séwa rijajiammu,
- j. teddévata iq, puang, rékkua masuaq tau

9.1. Unscramble the pieces: figure out the correct order for the fragments a-j, and write their letter-names in order on the answer sheet, one letter per blank. Note that sentences e and f appear twice in the text, but here have different punctuation.

9.2. Translate the following English words into Buginese. Write your translations with the Latin alphabet only; you do not need to use the Lontara script.

- a. lord
- b. underworld
- c. earth

9.3. Some Buginese words and their meanings are given below, in the Latin alphabet. Write each word using the Lontara script.

- a. Sulawesi (an island of Indonesia)
- b. La Galigo (another name for Sureq Galigo)
- c. Tompoq Tikkaq ("land of the rising sun")
- d. Amparita (a town in Sulawesi)
- e. Tenriabéng (a character in the Sureq Galigo story)

9.1. 1:	2:	3:	4:	5:
6:	7:	8:	9:	10:
9.2.	a.		b.	
	c.			
9.3. a.				
b.				
c.				
d.				
e.				

Lontara (25 marks, 26 points)

Assigning points:

9.1 One point for each correct letter. (10 points subtotal)

9.2 Two points for each correct Buginese word; no partial credit. (6 points subtotal)

9.3: Two points for each correct Buginese script. Allow one point if the student misses one character or is otherwise very close but not perfect. Be generous in comparing competitors' scripts with the model. (10 points subtotal)

9.1. 1: B	2: E	3: D	4: I	5: H
6: A	7: C	8: J	9: G	10: F
9.2.	a. puang	b. pérétiwi [or: pérétiwié]		
	c. atawareng			
9.3. a.				
b.				
c.				
d.				
e.				

Comment

Hints

Hint 1: The phrase mattampa puang lé ri batara is repeated twice in the scrambled Latin-alphabet Buginese text. Can you find a series of characters that is repeated twice in the Lontara-script Buginese text? Use this as a foothold for discovering what some symbols mean, and learning more symbols.

Hint 2: Try thinking of the symbols as syllables instead of letters... [For more, see Appendix](#)