

Pronunciation

While the following brief description of Jeh sounds and symbols is intended to orient the student to major features of pronunciation, it must be emphasized that these and other details of authentic Jeh speech production will only be accomplished with assistance of a Jeh speaker and some practice.

1) Consonants

English speakers should note that voiceless stops p, t, ch, and k are rather tense but unaspirated (no puff of air accompanies their release) in contrast with ph, th, and kh which are aspirated. Voiced stops b, d, m, n, ng have the expected values, but nh represents a palatal sound like Spanish ñ. The letter j is pronounced as in jean and g as in get. The letters l and r have their English value.

Preglottalized and preaspirated varieties of some of the above consonants will perhaps be somewhat novel. Glottal stop action preceding or during the

production of voiced stops, nasals, or laterals is symbolized with an apostrophe before the consonants, e.g. 'b, 'd, 'm, 'ng. Plain initial semivowels are written w and y while the preglottalized ones are written 'w and 'y. Aspiration may precede nasals, l and w and y, for example, hmǎng 'to look through something', hnèp 'happy', hnhǒ 'sad', hlai 'loincloth', hwial 'a dam'. The glottal stop, when occurring word finally, is symbolized with a breve ̣ over the vowel with no other final consonant following. The breve also marks short vowels under all other conditions.

2) Vowels

Jeh vowels are of the following two classes:

Tense Register			Lax Register		
i		u	ĩ		ũ
e	a	o	ẽ	ă	õ

Notice with your Jeh teacher's assistance that the lax set of vowels is more resonant and in some sense 'looser' than the tense set. Further, note that each tense vowel is pronounced with the tongue slightly lower in the mouth than the corresponding lax vowel, e.g. e is lower than ẽ, a is lower than ă, etc. When both shortness and laxness occur the vowel is marked by ̣ over the vowel, e.g. chõl 'pig', māk 'axe'. Also when glottal stop occurs with lax vowel word finally it is symbolized with a ̣ over the vowel with no other final consonant following, e.g. lọ̃ 'to vomit', hmọ̃ 'to dream', jị̃ 'hurt', chụ̃ 'to set in place'. As in Vietnamese, a vowel symbol preceding another (final) i or o is pronounced long, while a vowel preceding a final y or u is short, e.g. ao 'shirt' (long a) contrasts with au 'I' (short a). The separation of two vowels by a hyphen

indicates a syllable division and an intervening glottal

stop, e. g. kɔ-ɔ̌k 'cough'.

Tủ-Sách Ngôn-Ngữ
Dân-Tộc Thiệu-Số Việt-Nam
Cuốn 15
Phần 1

CHÙ CHIH DŌ TŌTAYH JEH
NGŨ-VỤNG JEH
JEH VOCABULARY

Thông and Dwight Gradin
Edited by Patrick Cohen

Viện Chuyên-Khảo Ngữ-Học
Summer Institute of Linguistics
Huntington Beach, California
1979