

PART I.

SYSTEM FOR SPELLING AND WRITING KÄCHIN.

POWERS OF VOWELS.

Examples.

1	<i>ä</i>	Represents an almost suppressed vowel sound.	Kälaw = to do.
2	<i>a</i>	The sound of <i>a</i> as in father	La = to take.
NOTE.—A final <i>a</i> retains its full sound; between consonants it is sounded slightly shorter.			
3	<i>e</i>	Short sound of <i>e</i> as in ten, met	Rem = to keep, tend.
4	<i>è</i>	Sound of <i>ai</i> in fair	Shàrè = brave.
5	<i>ē</i>	Sound of <i>ay</i> in pray	Bēbē = in vain.
6	<i>i</i>	(i) Sound of <i>i</i> as in machine or <i>ee</i> in meet, when standing alone or at the end of a word or syllable. (ii) As initial or in the middle of a syllable it takes the short sound of <i>i</i> as in tin; but to this rule there are a few exceptions.	Kälaw nga i? = Are you doing? Läsi = thin. Ing = to overflow. Käning = how.
7	<i>o</i>	Nearly the long sound of <i>o</i> as in old	Wora = that, there.
8	<i>ö</i>	Its nearest equivalent is the German <i>ö</i> in schön. It is used only in words derived from alien languages.	Möng = country.
9	<i>u</i>	(i) About the same sound as <i>oo</i> in wool or <i>u</i> in bull when in the middle of a syllable. (ii) As initial, by itself, or at the end of a word or syllable like <i>oo</i> in moon.	Numsha = woman. Uri = a pheasant; u = bird : lu = to have (or can).
10	<i>ü</i>	U as in tub, plum	Güwut = to blow.
11	<i>ai</i>	Long sound of <i>i</i> as in ice	Mai = good; rai = thing.
12	<i>au</i>	Sound of <i>ow</i> as in cow	Kau = to throw away.
13	<i>aw</i>	Sound of <i>aw</i> as in law	Baw = the head.

NOTE.—There is a long *aw* and a short *aw*, but the distinction between them is so slight that it does not seem worth while to distinguish them by symbols. Practice alone will decide when one or the other should be used. As a rule *aw* is long when at the end of a syllable or word and short elsewhere, having then sometimes much the sound of *o* in "long."

14	<i>oi</i>	Sound of <i>oi</i> as in oil	Roi = to deride.
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POWERS OF CONSONANTS.

Examples.

1	<i>b</i>	As in English	Ba = to be tired.
2	<i>chy</i>	No equivalent in English	Chya = to paint.
3	<i>ch</i>	As in child ...	...	Chè = to save.
4	<i>d</i>	As in English ...	...	Du = the neck.
5	<i>g</i>	Always hard, as in give, go	...	Ga = the earth.
6	<i>gy</i>	A combination of the <i>g</i> and <i>y</i> sounds	...	Gyt = to tie.
7	<i>h</i>	As in English ...	...	Haw = to preach.
8	<i>j</i>	As in English ...	...	Jum = salt.
9	<i>k</i>	As initial almost like <i>gk</i> ; when final it is like <i>k</i> in English.	...	Ka = to write.
10	<i>ky</i>	A combination of the <i>k</i> and <i>y</i> sounds	...	Kyem = to put aside.
11	<i>kh</i>	Aspirated <i>k</i> ...	...	Hka = a river.
12	<i>kh</i>	A harsh guttural sound, stronger than the German <i>ch</i> in <i>machen</i>.	...	Măkhawn = a maiden.
13	<i>hky</i>	A combination of <i>h</i> , <i>k</i> and <i>y</i>	...	Hkyet = a valley.
14	<i>l</i>	As in English ...	...	Lam = road.
15	<i>m</i>	(i) Sound of <i>m</i> as in English (ii) Before consonants it is sounded as a sonant as <i>m</i> in prism.	...	Ma = child. Mba = a cover, blanket.
16	<i>n</i>	(i) Sound of <i>n</i> as in English when preceding a vowel. (ii) When standing alone or immediately preceding another consonant it is sounded as a sonant.	...	Nam = a jungle. N kălaw = not to do ; Nta = house.
NOTE.—When <i>n</i> precedes <i>g</i> in the same word a hyphen will be inserted when the <i>n</i> and the <i>g</i> are meant to be sounded separately and distinctly, as <i>n-gam</i> = precipice ; otherwise they will have the sound of final <i>ng</i> as in English (see No. 17).				
17	<i>ng</i>	As <i>ng</i> in king or tongue ...	...	Ngai = I ; nga = fish.
18	<i>ny</i>	No equivalent in English : like the <i>n</i> in the Spanish Señor.	...	Nyet = to deny.
19	<i>p</i>	Almost a <i>bp</i> sound	...	Pat = to obstruct.
20	<i>hp</i>	Aspirated <i>p</i> ...	...	Hpai = to carry.
21	<i>pf</i>	A blending of <i>p</i> and <i>f</i> ...	...	Pfun = wood (also pronounced hpun).
22	<i>r</i>	As in English ...	...	Ri = rattan.
23	<i>s</i>	As in English ...	...	Sa = to go.
24	<i>sh</i>	As in English ...	...	Sha = to eat.
25	<i>t</i>	Almost a <i>dt</i> sound	...	Tai = to become.
26	<i>ts</i>	A blending of <i>t</i> and <i>s</i>	...	Tsi = Medicine.
27	<i>ht</i>	Aspirated <i>t</i> ...	...	Htu = to dig.
28	<i>v</i>	As in English ...	...	Vi = a paddy-field (generally pronounced yi).
29	<i>w</i>	As in English ...	...	Wa = to return.
30	<i>y</i>	As in English ...	...	Ya = now.
31	<i>z</i>	As in English ...	...	Zup (or) sup = to join.

General Remarks.

- (a) *N* standing alone is always the sign of the negative : Ngai n sa na=I will not go.
 (b) All particles are written separately : Ngai gaw sa na=I will go. Ngai hpe jaw rit=Give to me.

ACCENT.

The accent as a rule rests on the last syllable in dissyllabic words—as *kāba'*, *kāja'*, *lāla'*, *shāla'*, *marí*, *shājul'*, *lāgú*, *chākrit'*, *ntá*, *m̄pawt'*, *kāshá*, etc.

The exceptions to this rule are few and occur chiefly in compound nouns formed by uniting two nouns as, *shan'*, *hpi. wan'*, *li*, *lup'*, *wa*, *hting'*, *ra*, etc.

The exceptions also occur in some adverbs as *phawt' ni*, *hpra' ni*, *hlo' ra*, *wo' ra* and in those adverbs formed by the duplication of monosyllabic adjectives as *moi moi*, *tsawm' tsawm*, *mai' mai*, etc., which are, however, often pronounced in a monotone.

The accent in words of three syllables is on the last syllable with a slight accent on the first as *akājawng' aisheraw'*, etc., excepting words ending in *sha* when the accent is placed on the penultimate syllable as *ālwe' sha*, *āhsin' sha*, *ātsawm' sha*, etc.