

PHONEMES AND ORTHOGRAPHIC SYMBOLS

EXAMPLES

/p/	p	/m/	m	/f/	f
/b/	b	/n/	n	/v/	v
/t/	t	/ŋ/	ŋ, ny	/s/	s
/d/	d	/w/	nw	/z/	z
/k/	k			/l/	l
/g/	g			/r/	r
/kp/	kp			/h/	h
/gb/	gb			/w/	w
/ʔ/	ʔ			/y/	y
/i/	i			/u/	u
/ɨ/	ɨ			/o/	o
/e/	e			/ɔ/	o
/ɛ/	e	/a/	a		

The tense/lax distinction is not marked, but it is taught in the primer on request from government agencies.

/N:/	VV
/N/	Vn (tense vowels only; nn when in contrast to Vn)

Tones:

Tone is not marked. By marking long vowels, glottal and nasalization, almost all homographs are avoided.

a	amaa	but
b	ba	they
d	daam	corn beer
e	bedego	many, much
f	faar	inheritance
g	gag	to choose
gb	gbigim	lion
h	hale	greatly
i	isig	rise early
k	kaas	to cry out
kp	kpi	to die
l	lo	to tie
m	maal	to make
n	na'as	to show respect
ny	nyalimɔ	wonderful
ŋ	yu'ug	night
nw	nwiig	rope
o	yo	to shut
r	yu'ur	name
s	saam	father
t	tans	to shout
u	ugus	to nurture
v	vol	to swallow
w	wan	calabash
y	ya'as	again
z	ziim	blood
ʔ	ba'a	responsibility

Keywords selected in minimal sets to indicate functional load.

ba	they	(short V)
baa	dog	(long V)
ba'	father	(glottal)
ba'a	concern	(glottal)
ba'as	hanging peg	(glottal)
ban'	to ride	(nasalisation and glottal)
baans	chain	(nasalisation and V:)

ALPHABET

a b d e f g gb h i k kp l m n ny ŋ nw o p r s t u v
w y z ' ,

number of graphemes 28

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