

1. PHONEMICS

1.1. Consonants.

1.1.1. The consonants system of Dalabon is set out in the following Table, which is self-explanatory. The glottal stop /ʔ/ needs to be added.

	Bilabial	Interdental	Alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar
Plosives	b	<u>d</u>	d	ḍ	dj	g
Nasals	m	<u>n</u>	n	ṇ	nj	ŋ
Rolled			r	ṛ		
Laterals			l	ḷ		
Continuants			ʈ		j	w

## 1.2. Vowels.

1.2.1. As in other Australian languages, the vowels are remarkably variable and unstable. There is no phonemic distinction between i-I-e nor between u-U-o. The one speaker will use either, and carry over the variability into his English also. The actual phonemes of the language are represented in the Table following:

	Front	Central	Back
High	i	ɨ	u
Mid	e		o
Low		a	

#### 1.4 Stress.

The following rules for Stress have been found:

- i. In words of two syllables, stress falls on the first: /jɛlɛg/, 'slowly'; /'bədə/, 'sign of question'; /'gaʔgɛ/, 'no'; /'marɛ/, 'where?'; /'mimal/, 'firewood'. This rule still holds even if the first syllable is a prefix, i.e. such a prefix is clitic, drawing the stress back on itself: /'daʔgan/, 'bring it', from /-ga-/, 'to bring'. No change in stress takes place, however, if a suffix is added to a monosyllabic root morpheme: /lad/, 'firestick', but /'ladŋɔ/, 'your firestick'.
- ii. In words of three syllables, stress is normally on the first: /'gɛdɛgɛd/, 'woman' (really reduplication of /gɛd/), /'gɔrɔdjɔl/, 'bloodwood tree'.
- iii. In three syllable words a final glottalised consonant tends to attract the stress: /bigɔ'niŋʔ/, 'who?'.
- iv. In words of more than three syllables, a secondary stress may occur in the third syllable (in these examples, primary stress is marked " and secondary stress '), thus: /"mona'ŋa:gɛn/, 'for the white man'.
- v. Final stress occurs on the future suffix -jan, as in /ŋaʔboni'jan/, 'I shall go'; /mag ŋaŋu'jan/, 'I can't eat it'. Dr. West however states that in six months at Beswick he did not hear this type of stress; it may be purely eastern.

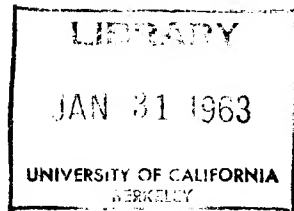
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SOME LINGUISTIC TYPES IN AUSTRALIA

[Handbook of Australian Languages, Part 2]



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