

There are only 24 survivors of the ten different G.A. groups and they now form one community. They have difficulty in conversing with each other because of linguistic differences between the ten different groups. Among my informants, one belonged to the Kora and another, named Biye, to the Jeru group, and the young couple had no idea of their origin. I decided to record primarily one language and to rely on one person, Pi<sup>h</sup>kar, who belongs to the Kora group of the G.A.

## 1.2 Previous work on phonology

I have already discussed the linguistic work of Man, Portman and Radcliffe-Brown on page 187 of this paper. D.N. Basu's paper (1952) was published when he had worked with the one remaining small group. The latest fieldwork on G.A. was carried out by S. Manoharan around 1977. In an interview with Mr Manoharan in 1980 I learnt that he had submitted a Ph.D. thesis on G.A. at Calcutta University.

The phonological inventories of Basu and Manoharan are as follows:

Basu					Manoharan				
p	t	ṭ	c	k	p	t	ṭ	c	k
ph	th	tḥ	ch	kh	b	d	ḍ	j	
b	d	ḍ	j	g		th			
m	n	ṇ	ñ	ṅ	ϕ	s			x
		l			m	n	ñ	ṅ	
		r				l			
w			y			r			
			f		w			y	

It seems obvious from Basu's inventory that he has adapted the phonemes of G.A. to the framework of his own language, Bengali. Manoharan, as can be seen from the chart above, makes a more serious attempt to analyse the G.A. sound system in its own right. There are, however, several aspects of his analysis which are controversial. His phoneme inventory differs from mine, particularly in regard to /ϕ/, /s/ and /x/ which are my /ph/, /k<sup>h</sup>/ and /kh/. He has also inserted /p/ in his phonemic chart (perhaps to make it look symmetrical). He does not give any example of medial /p/. There are a few examples of final /p/ which I hear as a voiced sound, and regard as an unreleased allophone of /b/. Throughout Manoharan's published and unpublished work I have found only one example of initial /p/, i.e. poruwe (*toad*) which I have recorded as phuruwe. This is in agreement with Radcliffe-Brown: he too heard that /p/ had a 'different' sound which he renders as /p̣/ (see note 11).

## 2. PHONOLOGY

### 2.1 Phonemes

G.A. has 20 consonants and eight vowels. The phoneme system is interesting on account of the lack of symmetry; particularly noteworthy is the absence of /p/. There are no examples in my materials, nor in Manoharan's, of a contrast between /b/ and /p/.

## 2.2 Consonants

	Bilabial	Dental	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	
Plosive	-	t	ṭ	ç	k	Unvoiced
	b	d	ḍ	ç	-	Voiced
	ph	th	-	çh	kh	Aspirated unvoiced
Nasal	m	n	-	ñ	ŋ	Voiced
Lateral				ɽ		Voiced
Flap		r				Voiced
Semivowel	w			y	(w)	Voiced

BILABIALS: b ph

Examples of occurrence:

Initial	Medial	Final
bowa <i>ground</i>	iboya <i>cooked food</i>	kèrèb <i>bitter</i>
bat <i>night</i>	arabèyik <i>dog's tail</i>	tunkenab <i>finger</i>
bôr <i>wind</i>	ṭibirbat <i>evening</i>	ṭeb <i>smoke</i>
phuṭimu <i>fly</i>	iphèt <i>high tide</i>	-
phoṇ <i>cave</i>	kerpho <i>sneeze</i>	
phòtmò <i>paddle</i>	rèphe <i>food</i>	

Contrast ph b

èphowa *old woman*      bowa *ground*

/b/ is a voiced bilabial stop. It is a similar sound to English b as in *brother*. /b/ is always unreleased in final position and therefore at times it may be confused with the /p/ sound, and also when it is followed by palatal /ɽ/ it is heard as /p/, i.e. ṭòntòṭò (alone). /ph/ is an aspirated p as in English word *pat*. In all other published work on G.A. I have seen /p/ as a phoneme while I couldn't find any evidence of it, but I noticed some variation in the pronunciation of /ph/. Since the G.A. are well versed in Hindi they pronounce Hindi /p/ as fricative /ɸ/ and people of the younger generation tend to confuse all these sounds using either /ph/ or /p/ or /ɸ/ indiscriminately in the same word. Although the name of my informant, Piṅar, starts with /p/, in my opinion this name was originally either 'Biṅar' or 'Piṅar'. When Piṅar was working in the Police Department, his Indian co-workers heard the initial sound as /p/ and his name thus became Piṅar.

DENTAL: t d th

Examples of occurrence:

Initial	Medial	Final
tèye <i>blood</i>	ṭòtarbèyik <i>cloud</i>	bat <i>night</i>
tarphido <i>band</i>	ṭatab <i>tongue</i>	mirit <i>pigeon</i>
tede <i>flow</i>	ṭitarino <i>wet place</i>	
digono <i>here</i>	tunṅhudimu <i>thumb</i>	-
di <i>this</i>	akàdikhe <i>to swell</i>	
du <i>that</i>	khider <i>palm tree</i>	

## 2.3 Vowels

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i		u
Half close	e		o
Half open	ɛ		ɔ
Open		a	

/a/

/a/ is an unrounded back vowel, further forward than Hindi long ā, but lower and further back than Hindi short a. It approximates the central position of Hindi short a, when it is followed by /r/ or when used as the possessive prefix /a/, as in the word amimi (*mother*) and other nouns denoting close kinship.

Examples of occurrence:

Initial	Medial	Final
aṭ <i>fire</i>	ṭatab <i>tongue</i>	ra <i>pig</i>
atra <i>bright</i>	iraṅaṅ <i>root</i>	bowa <i>ground</i>

## 2.4 Phonetic notes on consonants and vowels

Phoneme	Allophone	
b	[p]	Before the cluster /bʔ/, /b/ becomes unvoiced /p/. əntóbʔó (əntópʔó) = <i>one</i> .
ph	[ɸ]	/ph/ is pronounced as a bilabial fricative when it precedes the vowel /o/. əphowa (əɸowa) = <i>old man</i> .
ʔ	[tʰ]	When it is used as a possessive prefix /ʔ/ is always aspirated whether or not it is combined with any of the other prefixes which are used to distinguish noun classes, i.e. /ʔ, ʔər, ʔar, ʔara/ ʔmòʔó (ʔhmòʔó) = <i>foot</i> , ʔakər (ʔhakər) = <i>throat</i> .
kʰ	[ʃ]	/kʰ/ is pronounced as sibilant /ʃ/ when it is followed by the vowels /a/ and /u/, i.e. kʰare (ʃare) = <i>sea</i> , ʔekʰuɖu (ʔeʃuɖu) = <i>liver</i> .
kh	[x]	/kh/ is pronounced as a velar fricative /x/ when it is followed by the vowel /o/, i.e. ʔókho (ʔóxo) = <i>tree</i> , <i>wood</i> .
r	[r̥]	Strongly trilled /r̥/ occurs in the cluster r + consonant only when that cluster is followed by a vowel, i.e. ittart̥óy (ittar̥t̥óy) = <i>to throw</i> , ittard̥uke (ittar̥t̥uke) = <i>to break</i> .
a	[ǎ]	/a/ is pronounced as a short vowel /ǎ/ if it is followed by /r/ or when it occurs as the possessive prefix /a/. This prefix is used with nouns designating close kin. ʔarkóthó = <i>nose</i> , amimi = <i>mother</i> .
u	[ʊ]	/u/ is shortened and lowered to /ʊ/ in word-initial position, i.e. uro (ʊro) = <i>point of a spear</i> .

## 2.5 Accent

The accent is very weak and does not appear to be phonemic. Whatever weak accent there is, usually falls on the first syllable. There is, however, an exception: a strong accent marks the final syllable of vocatives and exclamations. Examples:

ʔéʔé	<i>hungry</i>	ʔé'ʔé'	<i>hey! listen!</i>
ʔawo	<i>ghost</i>	ʔa'wo	<i>naughty!</i>
éʔayé	<i>bad</i>	éʔa'yé	<i>wrong!</i>

## 2.6 Phonotactics

(a) Phonemes occur initially and finally. Except for velar /ŋ/ all phonemes occur in word-initial position. Phonemes /ph d th ɖ ɣ kʰ kh n ñ/ do not appear in word-final position. In the text there is one sentence where /ph/ occurs as a word final: di ʔiʔo imutaróph = *this is my flower*. All vowels can occur in the word-initial or word-final position.

(b) Consonant clusters. These are the possible intra-morphemic clusters. For examples see vocabulary and sentences.

	b	ph	t	th	ṭ	ḍ	ḳ	ḳh	k	kh	m	n	ñ	r	ɽ	w
b															bɽ	
ph															phɽ	
t	tb	tph	tt						tkh	tm		tñ	tr	tɽ	tw	
ṭ		ṭph	ṭṭ					ṭk		ṭm			ṭr	ṭɽ		
m	mb	mph									mn			mɽ	mw	
n			nt	nth	ṇṭ	ṇḍ	ṇḳ		nk		nm			nr	nɽ	
ñ		ñph	ñt				ñḳ							ñr	ñɽ	
ŋ	ŋb	ŋph			ŋ̣ṭ	ŋ̣ḍ	ŋ̣ḳ	ŋ̣ḳh	ŋ̣k	ŋ̣kh	ŋm			ŋr		
ḳ		ḳph														
k	kb													kr		kw
r	rb	rph	rt	rth	ṛṭ	ṛḍ	ṛḳ		rk	rkh	rm	rn	rñ		rɽ	rw
ɽ		ɽph	ɽt		ɽ̣ṭ						ɽm	ɽn				ɽw
y			yt												yɽ	

(c) Restrictions appear to operate as to permissible consonant-vowel-consonant sequences. The following sequences do not occur in any of the recorded materials:

Preceding consonants	Vowels	Following consonants
ḍ ḍ ɣ	a	
k	i	d
	e	
ḍ ḍ ɣ kh w	é	d
d	o	th ḍ ḍ ɣ ñ
ḍ ɣ ŋ	ó	ḍ ɣ
ŋ	u	

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(d) A syllable can consist of the sequence CCVCC and CV or VC; the most common sequences are CVCC or CCVC and CVC. Examples:

CCVCC

éntóbTò *one*  
 tunkénkò *we*  
 ittáṛḍuke *to break*

CV/VC

ra *pig*  
 kò *bow*  
 aṭ *fire*  
 iṇ *to spit*

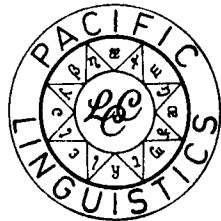
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