

PHONEMES AND ORTHOGRAPHIC SYMBOLS

EXAMPLES

/b/	b	/m/	m	/s/	s
/t/	t	/n/	n	/r/	r
/tʃ/	ch	/ɲ/	ny	/l/	l
/k/	k	/ŋ/	ng'	/w/	w
				/j/	y

-ATR vowels

/a/	a
/e/	e
/i/	i
/o/	o
/u/	u

+ ATR vowels

/ā/	ā
/ē/	ē
/ī/	ī
/ō/	ō
/ū/	ū

The difference between the + ATR vowels *ī* and *ū* and their -ATR counterparts *i* and *u* does not carry a heavy functional load. For a number of reasons, the practical Sabaot alphabet uses the letters *i* and *u* to stand for these sounds regardless of their ATR quality. In scientific writings, however, the difference is shown consistently.

/V:/ VV

Tone:

Tone markers before the word shows grammatical tone distinctions:

: marks subject tone on the noun in contrast to non-subject.

/ marks indefinite subject on the verb in contrast to *we* as subject (which is usually translated into English passive).

' marks 2nd person as opposed to 3rd person as subject.

+/- + marks the future form while - marks the negative non-past form in cases where tone is the only distinction.

! marks the emphatic form as opposed to normal form.

a	tarkeet	gourd
ā	tāsōök	baskets
b	beentereet	flag
ch	chookēēt	granary
e	ng'echereet	chair
ē	kērēbēēt	basket
i	binikeet	tea-pot
k	kiyaang'ta	bow
l	lōōng'iit	trousers
m	moonkeesyeeet	monkey
n	nasumnyaanik	maize
ng'	ng'ōōkit	dog
ny	nyuuntuut	hammer
o	sokonyyeet	branch
ō	nkōkōōk	chicken
r	rōōtwēēt	knife
s	sikiryēēt	donkey
t	teeta	cow
u	mutal'uk	ripe bananas
w	waareek	sheep
y	yeyiik	oxen

kikas	baaba	
	he saw my father	
kikas	:baaba	
	my father saw him	
/	kikiibat mbareet	
	we plowed the field	
/kikiibat	mbareet	
	the field was plowed	
'	kiimut koorkeēt	
	he married a wife	
'kiimut	koorkeēt	
	you married a wife	
!:	kaakas	
	I saw it	
!kaakas		
	I really did see it	
+	+māāmwoowook	
	I shall tell you	
-	-māāmwoowook	
	I shall not tell you	

ALPHABET

a ā b ch e ē i ī k l m n ng' ny o ō r s t u ū w y

number of graphemes 23