

PRONUNCIATION OF YAWA

The following brief description of Yawa sounds and symbols is intended to orient the reader to major features of pronunciation. It must be emphasized, however, that these and other details of Yawa speech production will only be accomplished with the assistance of Yawa speakers and a lot of practice. Linguists seeking a more technical discussion of Yawa phonology are referred to Linda K. Jones, 1986, "Yawa Phonology," in *Papers in New Guinea Linguistics* 25 (Pacific Linguistics A-74), for the phonology of one of the south coast dialects; and Linda K. Jones, 1986, "Notes on the Phonology of the Rosbori Dialect of Yawa" (manuscript), for the phonology of the dialect represented in this book.

The Yawa alphabet includes the following symbols: *a, b, d, e, g, i, j, k, m, n, ng, ny, o, p, r, s, sy, t, u, v, w,* and *y*. This alphabet has been adapted to the Indonesian writing system with which Yawa speakers are familiar.

I. Consonants.

1. The following consonants are pronounced in roughly the same manner as in Indonesian and English: *b, d, j, k, m, n, p, s, t, w,* and *y*.
2. The digraph *ng* is the same as in Indonesian and as in English *sing*.
3. The letter *r* is flapped with the tongue as in Indonesian.
4. The digraphs *ny* and *sy* represent palatalized sounds. The pronunciation of *ny* is the same as in Indonesian and somewhat similar to the *nu* sound in English *manual*. The pronunciation of *sy* is somewhat similar to English *sh* as in *sheet*.

nyoe 'tree/wood'

syangker 'grasshopper'

5. The letter *g* generally either precedes or follows a letter *u* in Yawa and is pronounced with rounding of the lips that produces a *w* glide following the *g*, viz. *gw*.

uge 'pig'

raugay 'carry'

6. The letter *v* is pronounced like in English except with both lips close together. After the letter *u* it is rounded the same as Yawa *g*.

vatan 'person'

uve

'intestinal worms'

II. Vowels.

1. *a* is pronounced as in Indonesian or as the English vowel *a* in *father*.

awa

'mouth'

2. *e* is pronounced as in Indonesian or as the English vowel *e* in *lame*.

eve

'rainbow'

3. *i* is pronounced as in Indonesian or as the English vowel *e* in *be*.

niki

'sleep/lie down'

4. *o* is pronounced as in Indonesian or as the English vowel *oa* in *boat*.

bovov

'fragrant'

5. *u* is pronounced as in Indonesian or as the English vowel *o* in *do*.

usuk

'wall'

6. Glides.

1) *ai* is pronounced as the English word *I*.

jai

'swim'

2) *ei* is pronounced as English *ey* in *hey*.

teije

'tea'

3) *oi* is pronounced as English *oy* in *boy*.

doije

'money'

4) *ui* is pronounced as English *uey* in *chop suey* or as the English word *we*.

nandui

'when'

sivuin

'to fight'

5) All other glides are pronounced as a combination of two or three vowels as described above.

AYAO YAWA

MO MONA NANENTABO RANUGAN

Perbendaharaan Kata Bahasa Yawa

Yawa Vocabulary

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