

Organised Phonology Data

Alekano (Gahuku) Language [GAH] Goroka – Eastern Highlands Province

Trans New Guinea Phylum; *East New Guinea Highlands Stock*; East-Central (Gorokan) Family ; Gahuku Subfamily

Population census: 16,000 (1981)

Major villages: Wanima, Gehumó, Gama, Izopega, Masilakázuha, Uhetó

Linguistic work done by: SIL (started in 1959)

Data checked by: checked by Ellis Deibler (September 1992)

Phonemic and Orthographic Inventory

ɑ e ɣ h i k l m n ɾ p s z t ʋ β
a e g h i k l m n o p s z t u v
A E G H I K L M N O P S Z T U V

Consonants

| | Bilab | LabDen | Dental | Alveo | Postalv | Retro | Palatal | Velar | Uvular | Pharyn | Glottal |
|-------------------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|--------|--------|---------|
| Plosive | p | | t | | | | | k | | | |
| Nasal | m | | n | | | | | | | | |
| Trill | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tap/Flap | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fricative | β | | | s z | | | | ɣ | | | h |
| Lateral Fricative | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Approx | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lateral Approx | | | l | | | | | | | | |
| Ejective Stop | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Implos | | | | | | | | | | | |

/w/ voiced labial-velar approximant

(found only in the village name Wanima or its derivations)

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|-----------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| p | piliopilio napa | 'bird type' 'big' | w | Wanima | 'a village' |
| m | minave koma | 'they stay' 'small' | t | tinikisi gotani | 'tree type' 'bamboo shoots' |
| β | vilizo lava | 'you two go!' 'mushroom' | n | ninave gona | 'they are eating' 'apportion' |

| | | | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------------|---|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| s | soza isa | 'lie' 'bridge' | k | koma ikani | 'small' 'moon' |
| z | zuha iza | 'seed' 'pig' | y | gepa agepa | 'hard pitpit' 'type of green' |
| l | liliha volane | 'weed' 'over there' | h | hanuva ihani | 'nothing' 'type of bird' |

Vowels

| | |
|---|---|
| i | u |
| e | ɣ |

ɑ

Vowels with glottal closure:

/ɑʔ/ /eʔ/ /iʔ/ /ɣʔ/ /uʔ/

| | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|----|---------------|-------------------------|
| i | iza gipa husi | 'pig' 'boy' 'boil' | ɑʔ | ánesí gahá | 'enough' 'rebuke' |
| e | eza gepa gahe | 'he' 'hard pitpit' 'door' | ɣʔ | ómasi gamó | 'God' 'cucumber' |
| ɑ | agepa gaha mula | 'his mouth' 'rat' 'egg' | uʔ | únaká asú | 'afternoon' 'finish' |
| o | omane goha vozo | 'down there' 'again' 'go!' | ei | meini | 'cliff' |
| u | uve gizupa numu | 'I was' 'rat type' 'my desire' | eu | heuma | 'bottom' |
| iʔ | íí usí | 'not so!' 'tobacco' | ai | gaina | 'bark skirt' |
| eʔ | éaho kilé | 'who?' 'coin' | au | auma | 'tender' |
| | | | oi | loisi | 'pandanus' |
| | | | ou | gouna | 'close kin' |
| | | | ui | guiha | 'type of pig' |

/ei/ /eu/

/ai/ /au/

/oi/ /ou/

/ui/

Suprasegmentals (tone, stress, length)

There are several degrees of stress conditioned by tone. Greatest stress is on a high tone syllable followed by a low tone in the same word. Lesser stress is on a final high tone preceded by a low tone syllable. In a word containing two syllables with the same tone, the first has light stress.

Alekanó has two phonemic tones. They are not written in the practical orthography because they have an extremely low functional load.

Syllable Patterns

| | | | | |
|------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| V | | a.ge 'salt' | pi.li.o.pi.li.o 'bird sp.' | |
| VV | | au.ma 'tender' | me.ku.ai.si 'mushroom type' | |
| CV | za 'tree' | ra.pe 'fish' | a.ge.pa 'his mouth' | e.za 'he' |
| CVV | | hai.to 'different' | | i.rai 'poinsettia' |
| V? | | á.ne.si 'enough' | ó.e 'no' | |
| VV? | ai 'his' | | | |
| CV? | gó 'string bag' | | | a.sú 'finish' |
| CVV? | vai 'full' | | | |

Conventions: Phonological

Alekanó has a glottal vowel closure that was previously described as the glottal consonant [ʔ]. In the present orthography, it is written as an acute accent over the vowel.

/l/ has an retroflexed vibrant allophone [ɭ] word medially.

Conventions: Orthographic

/w/ is very rare in the language, but the letter < w > is needed for Pidgin loanwords.

Tone is not written in the practical orthography, because it has an extremely low functional load.

The acute accent marker < ' > over the vowel is used to mark glottal vowel closure.

Transcription of a recorded passage

< 14. Izesú nene Pitani numukú iteake, Pitani venalámini izolahini agupegú ló lokago, akonoigo ángoake,

15. agizakú alimó. Agizakú naligo, ló la netá nene asú omikago, oteake nasahilí otamó.

16. Lá okago, únaká ho lemekago nene, kigikagú holosi mina vegená nene Izesutoka kilímiki amó. Ikago nene, kivisi vegená kelémo zokoká kigika gopa i vegená gakó noloketake holosi kepeleko kimiseleká imó.

17. Lá okago nene, Ómasímini agepagutí gakó loaká ve Isaiá gakó láa loko luhuva gizamó nene alévolé imó:

Netá livisekago keé lamuni netá ezáa agohí gimole. >

14. When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever.

15. He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him.

16. When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick.

17. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: "He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases."

Bibliography

Young, Rosemary. 1962. 'The Phonemes of Kanite, Kamano, Benabena and Gahuku.' *Oceania Linguistic Monographs* 6.

Deibler, Ellis. 1964. 'The Application of Matrix to the Gahuku Verbs.' *Linguistic Circle of Canberra Publications A*.

_____. 1971. 'Uses of the Verb "to say" in Gahuku.' *Kivung* 4.

_____. 1973. 'Gahuku Verb Structure.' Ph.D. Thesis.

_____. 1976. *Semantic Relationships of Gahuku Verbs*. SIL Publications in Linguistics and Related Fields, no. 48.

_____. 1961-1970. Manuscripts. SIL, Ukarumpa.