

Organised Phonology Data

Kewa Language Mendi – Southern Highlands Province

Trans New Guinea Phylum; *East New Guinea Highlands Stock;* West-Central (Engan) Family; Angal-Kewa Subfamily

Population census: 67,000 (1980)

Major villages: Towns: Ialibu, Kagua, Erave, Mendi, Poroma

Linguistic work done by: SIL

Data checked by: K. Franklin (April 1992)

Phonemic and Orthographic Inventory

a ə ^mb ⁿd e g i k l m n ŋ o p r s t tʰ u w j
 aa a b d e g i k l m n ny o p r s t ty u w y
 Aa a B D E G I K L M N Ny O P R S T Ty U W Y

Consonants

	Bilab	LabDen	Dental	Alveo	Postalv	Retro	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyn	Glottal
Plosive	p		t					k g			
Nasal	m		n								
Trill			r								
Tap/Flap											
Fricative				s							
Lateral Fricative											
Approx							j				
Lateral Approx			l								
Ejective Stop											
Implos											

/w / voiced labial-velar approximant

/^mb/ voiced prenasalised bilabial plosive

/ⁿd/ voiced prenasalised alveolar plosive

(West Kewa)

p polo 'house front'
papa 'second wife'

^mb bolo 'mole cricket'
paba 'put inside'

m musa 'to squeeze'
lumu 'large sore'

w wasa 'to look for'
auwa 'kinship term'

t tapa 'we are saying'
kati 'grey'

tʰ tapa 'we are hitting'(East Kewa only)

ⁿ d	dia padi	'no' 'pitpit'	l	lapo rolo	'two' 'below'
n	nini mena	'grate teeth' 'pig'	k	kalu akena	'head' 'eel'
r	rata rara	'to pick' 'medicine leaf'	g	galu agena	'hard clay' 'row'
s	seagu papasi	'stone axe' 'kinship term'	j	yapi rayo	'daytime' 'all'

Vowels

i		u			
e		o			
	ə				
		ɑ			
(East Kewa)			ɑ	aapa kaana kamaa	'father' 'stone' 'outside'
i	ipa riripu piki	'water' 'hot' 'center post'	ie	kewie	'red'
e	ele kebo keke	'pay' 'star' 'tongue'	ia	wia	'have'
ə	ame kakua utja	'brother' 'grandfather' 'bird sp.'	ei	egei	'little'
u	utja muma riripu	'bird type' 'type of bird' 'hot'	ea	pea	'make'
o	o kope popo	'scab' 'vine' 'steam'	ua	mapua	'young'
			oa	oabane	'5 days before'
			ai	aipa	'native salt'
			au	auwa	'kinship term'
	/ie/	/ia/			
	/ei/	/ea/			
	/ai/		/au/		
		/oa/			
		/ua/			

Suprasegmentals (tone, stress, length)

Stress is non-phonemic and occurs usually on the first syllable of words.

There are two contrastive tonemes: high tone and low tone. With some words the tone of the first syllable adapts to the last tone of the preceding word. In other word-classes also other adaptations take place, and with some words the tone always stays the same. The tone is not written.

Syllable Patterns

V	u 'sleep'	a.ka 'teeth'		a.do.a 'to wait'
VV		ai.pa 'native salt'		
CV	pu 'go'	pi.ki 'center post'	a.ku.mu.di 'type of tree'	e.le 'pay'
CVV	pea 'to make'	bau.ta 'to slam shut'		ka.mea 'to smell'

Conventions: Phonological

/p/ and /k/ tend to be weakened to [β] and [x] word medially

/t/ and /k/ tend to be lengthened in word medial position to [tt] and [kx]

/r/ sounds [tr] utterance initially and [d] between vowels [i] and [i] [a]

/tʰ/ occurs only before [a]

/j/ occurs only before [a] and [u] in word medial position

Conventions: Orthographic

/j/ and /c/ occur only in East Kewa. /j/, which occurs only word medially, is written <ny>, /tʰ/ is written <ty> The tone is phonemic, but is not written.

The central vowel /ə/ is written <a>, and /a/ is written <aa>.

Sample text

Matt 12:1-4

1. Kitu pirape oro medare Yesu nipu konaape maapu pamisa. Goa puare nipuna pora kurini aanu nimu reame omesimipulu mo konaape ini keroa sana mea nisimi.
 2. Gore mo Perisirepaa aanumi go adoa Yesu nipu gupa lakesimi: Adaina. Kitu pirape madaare rekena agaame kogono dia ta pare nena aanumi agaa rasua peme.
 3. Yesumi nimu gupa lakesa: Gore nimimi Depitipara nipuna aanu page reame omoa pisa yade remaare nadipitimi pae?
 4. Gore nipu Gotena ada runane pua odabawa mo Gotena sape berete mea nisimi. Go beretere Gotena miru irae aanumi agu nisimi pare mo aanumi rekena rasasimi.
1. At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them.
 2. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath."
 3. He answered, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry?"
 4. He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread - which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests.

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