

# Organised Phonology Data

## Yongkom (Yonggom, Yongom) Language [YON] Kiunga – Western Province

**Trans New Guinea Phylum;** *Central and South New Guinea Stock*; Ok Family; Lowland Ok Subfamily

Population census: 4,000, approximately 15,00 in West Papua.

Major villages: Ambaga, Atkamba, Buseki, Dome, Erehta, Karengu, Kawok, Komokpin, Kungim, Membok, Moian, Nago, Yeran, Yogi, Yulawas

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### Phonemic and Orthographic Inventory

a b d e g i k k<sup>w</sup> m n ŋ o p r s t u w j  
 a b d e g i k kw m n ng o p r s t u w y  
 A B D E G I K Kw M N - O P R S T U W Y

### Consonants

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

/w/ voiced labial-velar approximate

/k<sup>w</sup>/ labialized voiceless velar plosive

p	pating	'fishing'	m	mom	'uncle (frat)'
	topi	'hat'		nima	'women'
	*			akmeen	'he sees'
	baptais **	'baptism'		annom	'night'
b	bati	'wallaby'	w	wood	'moon'
	doboop	'tall'		arewa	'bad'
	yongbon	'garden'		inware	'wear'
	iibdem	'belch'			

t	tut keta *	'blind' 'mat'	g	gudi aged amguni ragbi	'look!' 'ashes' 'thunder' 'rugby'
	anotkan	'bowstring'			
d	dudbi keda daumdo awodki	'island' 'here' 'come up' 'father'	ŋ	mong ♦♦ bunge bongme	'bee'  'cut' 'remove'
n	niin kanning bopnoon binmo	'snake' 'four' 'he died' 'black'	j	yawi eyoka mimyob	'there' 'OK' 'heart'
r	rop korok ♦♦♦	'rope' 'head'	k <sup>v</sup>	kwane nekwe ♦	'so then' 'get ready'
s	sero burusaroon slingsut disko	'woven wall' 'he missed' 'slingshot' 'dancing'			
k	kane meneki aamkono yikbot	'who' 'plate' 'old man' 'ashes'			

\* there is a loss of distinction of voicing after a nasal, with ,b. & <d> the preferred spellings.

\*\* the spelling convention for /p/ is only in syllable coda in foreign words

♦ <kw> does not occur in the syllable coda or in consonant clusters.

♦♦ <ng> does not occur syllable initial.

♦♦♦ <r> does not occur in consonant clusters.

## Vowels

i		u			
		o			
ε					
		ɑ			
i	iwari did bit yaw biandaan	'quitely' 'stretcher' 'ground' 'there' 'I took off'	ɑ	ana angko barang nima diap	'arrow' 'five' 'something' 'women' 'cassowary'
ε	ena benme kerek benme	'mother' '6' 'letter' 'six'	o	obnon amkono kono redio	'dusk' 'old' 'bone' 'radio'

u	ub	'you (sg)'	yumu	'ripe'
	yuruk	'cold'	tuan	'white man'
	kubuk	'sand'		

### Diphthongs

Of the possible 20 vowel-vowel combinations where the two vowels are different, there are 15 combinations that are attested to with at least one instance. Since there is also phonetic vowel length, this suggests that Yongkom allows two vowels to be adjacent to each other. This also suggests that the "long" vowels are geminate, yet are contained in one syllable, as will be discussed a bit later. The table below lists the number of instances for each vowel-vowel combination in the Yongkom lexicon.

		2 <sup>nd</sup> vowel				
		i	ε	ɑ	o	u
1 <sup>st</sup> vowel	i	35	-	14	4	1
	ε	3	69	1	1	-
	ɑ	28	3	110	14	6
	o	1	-	1	63	-
	u	3	-	4	1	40

### Vowel – Vowel Combinations

iV	arian	'relatives'
	kiom	'big'
	kiunga	'Kuinga'
εV	kei	'this'
	beabi	'duck'
	beo	'getting'
ɑV	aimbon	'log bridge'
	baeb	'smell'
	aom	'in'
	aub	'tobacco'
oV	oi	'an exclamation'
	stoa	'store'
uV	yakui	'over there'
	kuak	'Kuak'
	uod	'bromeliad'

ii	iip	'with'	ɑ	angko	'5'
	biid	'leaf'	ɑɑ	aangko	'mountain'
	gudii	'look'	o	kono	'bone'
εε	eepkono	'palm species'	oo	konoo	'canoe'
	kereek	'grass'	u	kubuk	'sand'
	dee	'question word'	uu	kubuuk	'bamboo'
ɑɑ	aangko	'mountain'	<b>Diphthongs:</b>		
	baananon	'he called out'	ei	kei	'this' (only instance of 'ei')
	mamaa	'another'			-
oo	oon	'fish'	ai	aimbon	'log bridge'
	doboop	'tall'		digai	'a warning'
	konoo	'canoe'	ɑε	baeb	'smell'
uu	uunon	'he strings (a bow)'		spaed	'spade'
	kubuuk	'bamboo'	ɑo	aom	'in'
	kuu	'is'		kaokne	'go behind'
<b>Contrast of short and long vowels:</b>				maonde	'give'
i	bid	'ground'	ɑu	aub	'tobacco'
ii	biid	'leaf'		auti	'cousin'
ε	kerek	'letter'		dauboon	'he put'
εε	kereek	'grass'			

### Suprasegmentals (tone, stress, length)

This is an intonation language with stress being realized as loudness & pitch. Stress pattern is left-footed & left-headed and therefore always on the first syllable of the word.

*kabak* [ˈka.bak] 'axe'

*unitap* [ˈu.ni.ˌtap] 'bent'

*kiamune* [ˈki.a.ˌmu.nɛ] 'like-that'

*biayka+n+ɛwen* [ˈbi.aŋ.ˌga.nɛ.ˌwɛn]  
'you removed'

### Syllable Patterns

The basic syllable structure is: (C<sub>1</sub>)V<sub>1</sub>(V<sub>2</sub>)(C<sub>2</sub>). This language does not allow strings of vowels or consonants longer than 2.

CV	tu.ti	'false'	CVC	bon.man	'fight leader'
CVV	dau.boon	'he put it'	CVVC	baeb	'smell'
V	e.na	'mother'	VC	an.daan	'I said'
VV	au.ti	'cousin'	VVC	aim.bon	'log bridge'

There is a contrast between /i.a/ & /i.ja/ as well as between /u.a/ & /u.wa/.

di.ab 'cassowary'

i.yab 'downstream'

tu.an 'white man'

ku.ru.wak 'shadow/picture'

There is contrast between /i.o/ and the diphthong /io/, but only in the borrowed word: radio. These combinations are not common in Yongkom.

diom 'old'

redi.o 'radio'

kwaniyo 'name taboo'

In a similar way, there is no noted distinction between /i.a/ and /ia/.

### Conventions: Phonological

The distinction in voicing in the plosives is quite subtle. Voiceless ones are not aspirated, and voiced ones are not as heavily voiced as in English.

/p t/ are voiced intervocalically in fast speech, and /b d/ can become fricatives intervocalically in fast speech.

/k/ can be pronounced [ɣ] in fast speech (<buked> 'green grasshopper'->[buxed]). Usage of /g/ varies a bit from speaker to speaker. Some speakers only write using <k>, some write using <g> in some words intervocalically. In other's usage /g/ is definitely phonemic, that is, it appears in all environments. All can read it either way, but have definite opinions (which do not all match up) as to the proper way to pronounce the word in question. So for these reasons, /g/ will be included in the phonemic inventory (it also keeps symmetry).

There is neutralization of voicing of plosives after nasals (only voiced). There is also a neutralization of voicing in the plosives word final (only voiceless). /t/ and /d/ can be differentiated when a suffix starting with a vowel is added: /t/ goes to a /y/ and /d/ goes to a /r/.

/ŋ/ can only appear in the syllable coda, and therefore does not occur word initially or as the second consonant in a consonant cluster.

/r/ becomes [l] word initially.

/j/ sometimes becomes an affricate [dj] following a plosive.

/w/ and /j/ can only appear in the syllable onset.

/ŋ/ can only appear in syllable coda.

/s/ does not occur in consonant clusters, except in borrowed words (i.e. piksa. 'picture')

/i/ becomes more open [ɪ] when before an /s/. The /i/ also becomes an [ɪ] when before a word final /n/.

/ɛ/ becomes more closed [e] when before a sonorant back consonant.

### Conventions: Orthographic

The velar nasal /ŋ/ is written <ng>. The velar nasal followed by a velar plosive /ŋg/ is written <ngk>.

The labialized voiceless velar stop /k<sup>w</sup>/ is written <kw>.

Geminant consonants (due to morphology) are currently written with two symbols: karub + bed ('man' + 'ERGATIVE') => karubbed.

Orthographic representation of phonemes in Yongkom is consistent with those common with Faiwol and Aekyom. Faiwol does, however, use a <w> to represent the allophones of [p,w,β], whereas in Yongkom, /w/ and /p/ are separate phonemes.

This orthography presented here is consistent with the orthography of the Rule's (APCM) with the exception of adding /p/ & /g/ (both of which are used in their partial New Testament and other published materials, generally in borrowed words). Most Yongkom speakers differentiate between /p/ & /b/ as well as

between /k/ & /g/.

### Transcription of a recorded passage

/aron mama: | nub wene awi ye tarak ogat kubunu:na | nub:ed wene noŋi:p ayi:p benwenuwa | ogat ni tke karekoru:p buruwando:na nongi:p karuwi:p mondaruwen || mondarokoru:p | aŋgon iyakman mene ma ŋgat yiri kowokoru:p | mene motambed kambon ari munuwen || /

<Aron maaa nub wene Awi ye tarak okat kubunuuna, nubed wene nongiip ayiip benwenuwa, okad nitke karekoruub buruwandoona nongiib karuwiib mondaruwen. Mondarokoruub, angkon iyakman mene Mangkat yiri kowokoruub, mene motambed kambong ari munuwen. >

‘One day we went down to get Awi’s truck out of the mud, and took ropes and poles, then first dug up the ground (around the wheels) and got the truck started and pushed. After it was unstuck we came back, came by Mangat Creek, got in the canoe and came home.’

/ayiip/ (1st line) is /at/ suffixed by /iip/. /karuwiip/ (2nd line) is /karub/ suffixed by /iip/. /p,b/ going to /w/ and /t/ going to /y/ are common morphophonemic processes.

### Bibliography

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1999 “Yongkom Orthography Paper” Unpublished Manuscript, Summer Institute of Linguistics.

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