

Organised Phonology Data

Nukna Language [KLT]

Morobe Province

Trans New Guinea Phylum; *Finisterre-Huon Stock*; Uruwa Branch

Population census: 930 (2000)

Major villages: Hamelengan, Komutu, Siang

Linguistic work done by: SIL

Data provided by: Matt Taylor, 2006-2016

Phonemic and Orthographic Inventory

/ a ʌ b d e f g h i k l m n ŋ o p r s t u w j /
 < a á b d e f g h i k l m n ng o p r s t u w y >
 < A Á - - E F - H I K L M N - O P R S t U W Y >

Consonants

	bilabial	labio-dental	alveolar	palatal	velar	glottal
voiceless plosive	p		t		k	
voiced plosive	b		d		g	
nasal	m		n		ŋ	
fricative		f	s			h
flap/trill			r/r			
lateral			l			
approximant	w			j		

p	put	‘pig’	[put ^{ɔ̃}]	n	ni	‘who’	[ni]
	kápik	‘knife’	[kʌ.¹pik ^{ɔ̃}]		muná	‘no’	[¹mu.nʌ]
	korap	‘sweet potato’	[¹ko.rap ^{ɔ̃}]		rahán	‘eye’	[¹ra.hʌn]
	hilápmá	‘morning’	[¹hi.¹ʌp.mʌ]		ámna	‘man’	[¹ʌm.na]
	umbeng	‘worm’	[¹u.ᵐbeŋ]		kundin	‘let’s go (dual)’	[¹ku.ᵐdin]
m	mulo	‘banana sp.’	[¹mu.lo]	r	rom	‘hair (top of head)’	[rom]
	umi	‘water’	[¹u.mi]		hurák	‘chicken’	[¹hu.rʌk ^{ɔ̃}]
	háram	‘leg/foot’	[hʌ.¹ram]		-		
	kimbon	‘house fly’	[¹ki.ᵐbon]		reprepmá	‘shame’	[¹rep.rep.mʌ]
	rápmám	‘plate’	[¹rʌp.mʌm]		-		
f	fi	‘expression of surprise’	[fi]	s	san	‘neck.front’	[san]
	tunggafek	‘be born, appear, rise’	[¹tu.ᵑga.feʌk ^{ɔ̃}]		kisum	‘cup’	[¹ki.sum]
	-				-		
	-				sopsopmá	‘slippery’	[sop.¹sop.mʌ]
	-				-		
w	wáum	‘kundu drum’	[wʌum]	l	lung	‘floor beams’	[luŋ]
	kawin	‘cooking pot’	[¹ka.win]		kaláhu	‘three’	[¹ka.lʌ.hu]
	-				-		
	-				lákláhi	‘singe’	[¹ʌk.lʌ.hik]
	-				-		
t	to	‘digging stick’	[to]	k	káráp	‘tree/fire’	[¹kʌ.rʌp]
	máta	‘teeth’	[¹mʌ.ta]		mukam	‘cloud’	[¹mu.kam]
	ot	‘stinging nettle’	[ot ^{ɔ̃}]		kulak	‘younger brother’	[¹ku.lak ^{ɔ̃}]
	itna	‘my house’	[¹it.na]		sukngam	‘cassowary’	[¹suk.ŋam]
	sánde	‘vine sp.’	[¹sʌ.ᵐde]		yonggam	‘plant sp.’	[¹jo.ᵑgam]

ŋ	-			j	yap	‘moon’	[jap ^ɿ]
	sungi	‘food’	[¹ su.ŋi]		káyam	‘enemy’	[¹ kΛ.jam]
	ang	‘dog’	[aŋ]		-		
	lánggusi	‘tree sp.’	[¹ lΛ. ⁹ gu.si]		yángyárunɡ	‘pandanus sp.’	[¹ jΛŋ.jΛ.ruŋ]
	haknga	‘white’	[¹ hak.ŋa]		-		
h	háí	‘garden’	[hΛi]				
	kuhát	‘frog’	[¹ ku.hΛt ^ɿ]				
	-						
	hanghang	‘pimple’	[¹ haŋ.haŋ]				
	-						

Vowels

	front	central	back
high	i		u
mid-high	e		o
mid-low			ʌ
low		a	

i	it	‘house/village’	[it ^ɿ]	o	op	‘tree sp.’	[op ^ɿ]
	sip	‘blood’	[sip ^ɿ]		yot	‘cricket sp.’	[jot ^ɿ]
	sisí	‘grandfather’	[¹ si.si]		songgo	‘animal’	[¹ so. ⁹ ɡo]
e	elák	‘tongue’	[¹ e.lΛk ^ɿ]	u	utni	‘shadow, reflection, ghost’	[¹ ut ^ɿ .ni]
	kuindet	‘I am about to go’	[¹ k ^{wi} . ⁿ det ^ɿ]		yut	‘smile’	[jut ^ɿ]
	tewe	‘bow’	[¹ te.we]		renggu	‘mango’	[¹ re. ⁹ ɡu]
a	am	‘plant sp.’	[am]				
	tat	‘older.sibling’	[tat ^ɿ]				
	pasa	‘bean’	[¹ pa.sa]				
ʌ	ámna	‘man’	[¹ ʌm.na]				
	yák	‘string bag’	[jʌk]				
	yará	‘two’	[¹ ja.rʌ]				

Diphthongs

				/iu/
/ei/				
/ɬi/	/ɬe/			/ɬu/
	/oe/			
/ui/				

ɬu -

sáut ‘spear’ [sɬut˦]

-

ɬe -

sáet ‘I bite’ [sɬet˦]

káe ‘sun’ [kɬe]

ɬi áire ‘bamboo sp.’ [˦ɬi.re]

yáin ‘head’ [yɬin]

háí ‘garden’ [hɬi]

ei -

kein ‘I must bite you’ [kein]

-

iu -

hosiut ‘I chopped it down’ [˦ho.siu˦t˦]

-

oe -

hoet ‘I descend’ [hoet˦]

ároe ‘ascend-DS’ [˦ɬ.roe]

ui -

kuip ‘yesterday’ [k˦wip˦]

-

The diphthongs /ei/ and /oe/ are not found in any monomorphemic words. They are only found in certain verbs at the boundary of the root and inflectional suffix.

Suprasegmentals (tone, stress, length)

Stress in Nukna is bounded, falling into a bisyllabic stress window at the beginning of the word. Within this window, stress is trochaic (left-headed). However, the second syllable in the stress window will attract stress if it is a heavy syllable (CVC) and if the first syllable in the stress window contains the vowel [ɬ]. It is difficult to clearly hear the stress on bisyllabic words that end in a heavy syllable. Stress has not been found to be contrastive. See the *Nukna Grammar Sketch* (Taylor: 2015) for a more detailed description of stress in Nukna.

táwi ‘big’ [˦tɬ.wi] kákáuk ‘spider’ [kɬ.˦kɬuk˦]

párumá ‘yellow’ [pɬ.˦ru.mɬ] sarindet ‘I’m about to cut’ [˦sa.ri.˦dɛt˦]

ángarángá ‘hot’ [˦ɬ.ŋɬ.ɬɬ.ŋɬ]

Syllable Patterns

V	o ‘yes’ [o]	á.má.lum ‘dust’ [ʼʌ.mʌ.lum]
	-	-
VC	op ‘plant sp.’ [opʰ]	ut.ni ‘shadow, reflection, ghost’ [ʼut.ni]
	-	-
CV	má ‘taro’ [mʌ]	ko.ram ‘eel’ [ʼko.ram]
	sá. ki ‘plant sp.’ [ʼsʌ.ki]	reng. gu ‘plant sp.’ [ʼre.ᵝgu]
	i.si. ki.mo ‘small’ [ʼi.si.ʼki.mo]	
CVV	kái ‘sun’ [kʌi]	pái.lák ‘forbidden’ [ʼpʌi.lʌkʰ]
	-	á.roe ‘I ascend – DS’ [ʼʌ.roe]
CVC	kong ‘mosquito sp.’ [koŋ]	kum.bi ‘fence’ [ʼku.mbi]
	i. ruk ‘wind, spirit’ [ʼi.rʌkʰ]	láng. gop ‘flame’ [ʼlʌ.ᵝgopʰ]
	kim. bát.ná ‘green’ [ʼki.mʌt.nʌ]	
CVVC	náun ‘husband’ [nʌun]	kuip.mán ‘day before yesterday’ [ʼkʷip.mʌn]
	ká. káuk ‘spider’ [kʌ.ʼkʌukʰ]	-
	sá. sáut.na ‘my spleen’ [sʌ.ʼsʌut.na]	

There is no evidence of VV or VVC syllables, except for one word:

áire ‘bamboo sp.’ [ʼʌi.re].

Conventions: Phonological

/p/ is voiced and prenasalised intervocally, unreleased word final, and voiceless elsewhere.

/k/ is voiced and prenasalised intervocally, unreleased word final, and voiceless elsewhere.

/t/ is voiced and prenasalised intervocally, unreleased word final, and voiceless elsewhere.

The trill [r] is in free variation with the flap [ɾ], though speakers use the flap more frequently.

/e/ has the allophone [ɛ] in closed syllables ending in /t/, as in the words *towet* [to.wetʰ] ‘smoke’, and *áwindet* [ʌ.wi.ⁿdətʰ] ‘I am about to come’. It also has the allophonic off-glide [e^ʌ] when followed by the phoneme /k/, as in the words *alek* [a.le^ʌkʰ] ‘sky’, and *ruhek* [ru.he^ʌkʰ] ‘she sleeps’.

When the high back rounded vowel /u/ is preceded by the velar stop /k/ or the glottal fricative /h/, and is followed by a vowel (other than itself), it forms a labialised on-glide, as in the words *kuip* [k^wipʰ] ‘yesterday’, *kueráng* [k^we.ɾʌŋ] ‘they go’, and *huinemálák* [h^wi.ne.mʌ.lʌk] ‘they two go down’.

/f/ has been found in only three words: the interjection *fi* [fi] ‘exclamation of surprise’; *fong* [foŋ] ‘mortar and pestle’; and the verb root *tunggafe* [tu.^ŋga.fe] ‘appear, be born’.

Conventions: Orthographic

A trial orthography for the Nukna language was established in November 2005 at an Alphabet Development Workshop held in the language area. The decisions presented in this section were decided upon by Nukna leaders from four of the Nukna villages. The trial orthography is being tested in the language area to see if it needs further refinement.

The velar nasal /ŋ/ is written <ng>. This is the same as two neighbouring languages, Yau and Mato, as well as Tok Pisin and English. Another adjacent language, Timbe, as well as the traditional church language, Káte, use <ŋ>.

The mid-central unrounded vowel /ʌ/ is written <á>. This is not the same as any neighbouring language. **mention ADW decision**

The plosives /p/, /t/ and /k/ are written <p>, <t> and <k>, except when they become voiced in the intervocalic position, in which case they are written , <d> and <g>.

Transcription of a recorded passage

/ rΛm kΛman, kΛnaŋ kut nΛjΛ kuŋ silΛk hirataŋ, jΛk montaŋ ihΛ^ŋga ΛwΛ^ŋga Λtaŋ, Λle jΛ tan tum rutaŋ usΛ^ŋga Λwut, ΛwΛ^ŋga ΛwΛ^ŋga ΛwΛ^ŋga keɾΛme kurat kΛin ΛwΛ^ŋga, sopsopmΛ hΛra haŋ nutaŋ silΛk kΛtiŋ mΛkmaɾΛk tΛi^ŋgom iŋ me^ŋga, sopsopmΛ wata jΛreŋ kaŋkaŋ ΛwΛ^ŋga Λtaŋ rahΛnna petnΛ kΛlu kΛut tu, kunap tΛi nΛtΛ ΛwΛn ku^ŋga ΛɾΛn ka^ŋga ikik hΛɾΛmutaŋ, kunap puk me i^ŋga kΛut ta pΛli kunap hΛlen son jΛk ihΛŋ ΛwΛŋ umi numkΛlu ti^ŋga sa^ŋga, tewena jot ra^ŋguk kot ihΛ^ŋga urin iŋ me^ŋga /

<Rám káman, kánang kut náyá kung silák hiratang, yák montang ihángga áwángga átang, ále yá tan tum rutang usángga áwut, áwángga áwángga áwángga Keráme kurat káin áwángga, sopsopmá hára hang nutang silák káting mákmárák táinggom ing mengga, sopsopmá wata yáreng kangkang áwángga átang rahánna petná kálu káut tu, kunap táí náta áwán kungga árán kangga ikik hárámutang, kunap puk me ingga káut ta páli kunap hálén son yák iháng áwáng umi numkálu tingga sangga, tewena yot rangguk kot ihángga urin ing mengga...>

One day I went to the jungle and went along clearing away wild fowl nests and filling up my string bag with eggs and coming along, and the rain began to fall and I cut off a banana leaf covering and covered myself with it and came along, and I was coming and coming and coming and I came to the Kerame riverbed and I said "I better not fall at a slippery spot and break the wild fowl eggs!" and because of the slippery area I was carefully watching my step and coming along and out of the corner of my eye I saw this big snake coming along. I saw it and was really startled! And I looked to see if it really was a snake, and I saw that it really was, and I grabbed my string bags and put them on the other side of the river and left them there and I got my bow and arrows and my machete, and I said, "I must kill it!" and...