

Glottal Stop Symbolized by C

Some dialects of Bine have both glottal stop and K phonemes. Other dialects have only K and one dialect has only glottal stop. Kunini dialect has both glottal stop and K. In Kunini dialect the glottal stop contrasts with its absence word initially as in the following examples.

<u>ime</u>	'hand'	<u>ama</u>	'here'
<u>Cime</u>	'our'	<u>Cama</u>	'with'

Therefore we wanted a way of symbolizing glottal stop that would not cause confusion when it occurred initially after single or double quotation marks, as in the following sentence.

"Cine sini otni-me."
 l.pl.s want go-to
"We want to go."

Also since glottal stop is the second most frequent consonant, we wanted a symbol that was easily reached on the typewriter. We chose C since many children were learning to read in English, and in English C and K are frequently associated with the same sound. So those dialects with only a K phoneme could pronounce both C and K with a K sound, and the dialect with a glottal stop, but no K phoneme, could pronounce both C and K with a glottal stop sound.

Ten years later we are happy with our choice of C as the glottal stop phoneme, and the C-K relationship has proven helpful, but not in the way we had expected. It has proven unwise to encourage people from other dialects to re-pronounce the words into their dialect when reading Kunini dialect. They are unable to read and re-pronounce the verbs which are long and complicated, and when they re-pronounce only the

easier words, then they are mixing dialects. Then the vowel in the verb tense ending, which varies from dialect to dialect, signals a wrong tense that does not belong with the other words being read. The result is confusion. It is better to read Bine in the dialect in which it is written.

However, the knowledge that some other dialects have a K sound where their dialect has a glottal stop sound, has been very useful in convincing people that there is something missing if they write the word with the C. We now teach the C phoneme with the following paradigm, do you mean "without" ???

When Irupi people say:	<u>ime</u>	<u>kime</u>	<u>ama</u>	<u>kama</u>	<u>kibu</u>
Then we say:	<u>ime</u>	<u>cime</u>	<u>ama</u>	<u>cama</u>	<u>cibu</u>

Also, pairs of words have been found with and without glottal stop occurring in word medial and in consonant cluster positions.

<u>aina</u>	<u>c_</u>	<u>acina</u>
<u>cule</u>	<u>cl_</u>	<u>cucle</u>
<u>uurana</u>	<u>cr_</u>	<u>uucrana</u>
<u>awaba</u>	<u>cw_</u>	<u>acwaba</u>
<u>aye</u>	<u>cy_</u>	<u>cäcye</u>
<u>ani</u>	<u>cn_</u>	<u>acni</u>
<u>awena</u>	<u>cn_</u>	<u>awecna</u>
<u>meme</u>	<u>cm_</u>	<u>cmecme</u>
<u>nänu</u>	<u>cñ_</u>	<u>cñänu</u>

A page of conversation between someone from a dialect with mainly K and a dialect with mainly C has also been helpful. The conversation is worded so that the same phrases occur in each.

When people have seen Bine written with a C, their initial reaction is to tell us that Bine has no C. However, once they learn that C symbolizes the glottal stop when the glottis in their throat opens and closes quickly, then almost everyone who has tried to read it several times, finds it no problem in reading Bine. Most school children and some adults also learn to write the C, but those adults who learned to write in Kiwai or Motu, and who have become accustomed to writing Bine with the same alphabet, they still tend to write Bine as they would Kiwai. We have told them to write the way that they find comfortable. When writing a letter, the content is not as unfamiliar to the reader as the words of Scripture can be, so they can usually deduce the meaning from the context on re-reading the sentence. Kunini people are quick to agree that such re-reading is a hindrance when reading Scripture, and they are happy to read the new orthography, apologizing that they don't always write it correctly. They want their school children to be taught to write well in Bine so that they can read their letters.

The people of one dialect tell us that they cannot read words the way we have written them in Kunini dialect. They have not in the past been willing to "try it out", so now we have made a reading primer in their dialect and hope that through it they will learn to read well in Bine. We suspect that while some were saying, "I can't read that", they maybe should have said, "I can't read." Time will tell whether they will be willing to learn to read in their dialect and whether they will later be able to transfer that skill to read the New Testament printed in another dialect.