

Organised Phonology Data

Bola (Bola-Bakovi) Language [BNP] East New Britain & West New Britain Province

Oceanic; *Austronesian, Melayo-Polynesian, central-eastern, eastern Melayo-Polynesian, Oceanic, Kimbe, Willaumez.*

Population census: 13,000 (1990) not published

Major villages: Bamba, Bagum, Bola, Buluwara, Dami, Dire, Ganemboku, Harile, Garu, Kandoka, Kilu, Kulungi, Komavavo, Pagalu, Patanga, Ruango, Vaganakai, Talasea

Linguistic work done by: SIL

Data checked by: Brent Wiebe (Data based on 4 years work in the language. 27 May 1997)

Phonemic and Orthographic Inventory

α b d e g γ i k l m n ŋ o p r t u β
 a b d e g h i k l m n ng o p r s, t u v
 A B D E G H I K L M N Ng O P R S, TUV

Consonants

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

b bahele 'crocodile'
 bebe 'butterfly'

β dava 'wait'
 vala 'rain'

g ge '3pf'
 aga 'canoe'

γ bahele 'crocodile'
 haloho 'yelp'

d dagi 'dig'
 made 'sit'

k ku 'tail'
 bakovi 'man'

			p	karapa pagana	'wing' 'leaf'
l	laho balaka	'walk' 'time'			
			r	ara rahi	'what' 'sew'
m	barema mama	'morota' 'chew'			
			t	sika basi	'food wrap' 'far'
n	bana naru	'iron-wood' 'water'			
			t	hate tovu tata	'liver' 'sugar' 'my father'
ŋ	gilanga ngaru	'disease' 'want'			

Vowels

i		u
e		o
	a	
a	aga dagi iau	'canoe' 'big' '1 st singular'
e	ere bahele	'who' 'crocodile'
i	ivu baki	'feather' 'bread fruit seed'
o	ola ngango	'long' 'yellow'
u	ubi puru	'hit' 'go down'

When followed by another syllable, certain vowel sequences combine to become one syllable.

ia	ia	'him'
	biako	'type of edible seaweed'

iu	luaviu	'message'	oi	luhoi	'think'
ei	nuverei	'story'	oa	koa	'grasshopper'
eo	pikeo	'shark'	oe	koea ioe	'here' 'you'
ea	duea	'bridge of the nose'	ou	matou	'you all'
eu	mateu	'ours'	ui	bubui	'calf'
ai	maia navai	'like' 'why'	ue	kue	'snort'
ae	tamaea	'tell like'	ua	bua tabua	'betel nut' 'first born'
ao	mao	'ripe'			
au	iau pitaui	'me' 'net'			

Suprasegmentals (tone, stress, length)

Stress is not phonemic. Stress is predictable and occurs penultimately. It is realized by loudness and lengthening.

'manu	'fish'
ra'vulu	'ten'
ngata'vine	'woman'

We need to check out stress on words beginning with γ a. It seems that three syllable words beginning with the voiced velar fricative followed by an /a/ are stressed on that syllable.

' γ ania, ' γ arua, γ anitu, γ atelanga

Syllable Patterns

V	i '3 pr sg real noun mk'	u.vo 'deep ocean'	i.a 'him'	bi.a.ko 'seaweed sp.'	ma.ta.i 'look at'
CV	na 'at'	ma.o 'ripe'	bo.la 'wide'	nga.va.mu 'your mouth'	e.re 'who'

Conventions: Phonological

/t/ --> [s] ~ [ʃ] _ i

[t] occurs in front of every vowel except /i/, word initial and word medial. [s] ~ [ʃ] only occurs in front of /i/, also both word initially and word medially:

mata /mata/ [mata] 'eye' *bisi* /biti/ [bisi], 'grub'

hate / γ ate/ [γ ate] 'liver' *siko* /tiko/ [siko] 'catch'

Word final /u/ is often not sounded after /m/.

Conventions: Orthographic

Developed in 1978 by John Bosco in conjunction with SIL, the Bola people already have their orthography established. John Bosco is himself a Bola man. The orthography is in use in about eleven vernacular preschools in the area. People surveyed expressed that they did not like using special characters, such as <ŋ> or <f> because they have never seen them before, and other languages do not use them (that they know of).

In the orthography they are now using, they write <s> to represent the phoneme /t/ before /i/. From our experience and surveying, we have seen that they prefer to write <s> instead of the phoneme /t/ which it represents. This may be due to the influence of Tok Pisin and English in the area.

In the early 1900's the German Catholic missionaries choose <ch> to represent /ɣ/ for their written religious materials in Bola. This was <c> was later dropped and the grapheme changed to <h> by John Bosco in the 1970's because the people associated the <ch> to the English <ch>. In turn now many younger Bola are pronouncing /ɣ/ as the English [h]. There was some debate before we came about using <x> as the grapheme. However, most people say they prefer the <h> and the vernacular preschools use the <h>.

The <ng> was chosen by John Bosco to represent /ŋ/ before we came, most likely because of the influence of English on the Bola. As there are no consonant clusters and /n/ never occurs before /g/, there is no confusion with <ng>.

The voiced stops /b/, /d/, and /g/ are often pre-nasalized as [ᵐb], [ᵐd], and [ᵐg]. This is purely optional and depends entirely on the mood of the speaker. Therefore the prenasalization is not phonemic and does not need to be written.

Transcription of a recorded passage

/ a nuruβei na kopa

a βuriki a kopa ri kaloyoa o bulu a kulu e bakato || ri kaloyoa ri bebe turana βalai || ri bebe turana βalai |β
alal | βalai ri maroyu || ri taparaki purua o kulia na naru || ri
ninu ria || ri ninu ninu ri yilolo ri kaloyorikea tabua a kulu | ra kulu e bakato ||
ri βalai || ri βalai βalai βalai | ri kalolo ŋane || /

< A Nuruvei na Kopa

A vuriki a kopa ri kalohoa o Bulu a kulu e bakato. Ri kalohoa ri bebe turana valai. Ri bebe turana valai, valai, valai ri marohu. Ri taparaki purua o Kulia na naru. Ri ninu ria. Ri ninu ninu ri hilolo ri kalohorikea tabua a kulu, ra kulu e bakato.

Ri valai. Ri valai valai valai, ri kalolo ngane. >

' A group of bats carried a breadfruit tree from Bulu. They carried it and flew with it. They flew and flew and flew until they got thirsty. They put the tree down at Kulia at the water. They drank. They drank and drank and bathed, then they picked up the tree again.

They came. They came and came and now they sang.'

Bibliography

Wiebe, Brent 1995. Bola organised phonology data. Manuscript. SIL, Ukarumpa.

