

DOBU PHONEMICS

Daphne Lithgow
 Summer Institute of Linguistics

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Dobu language is the strategic language of the Dobu family of languages in the D'Entrecasteaux Islands of the Milne Bay Province of Papua New Guinea. Dobu itself is the mother tongue of the 7,700 speakers inhabiting the south-east of Fergusson Island, the north-west of Normanby Island and its far eastern tip, Dobu Island itself and the surrounding small islands. There are 5 main dialects, Edugaula, Ubuya, Galubwam, Sanalowa and Loboda, with minor variations within each. Edugaula is recognized as the prestige dialect and this statement is based on Edugaula speech.

Dobu is the official church language and lingua franca of the D'Entrecasteaux Islands and is used with varying degrees of comprehension throughout the islands and the whole Milne Bay Province. It is one of the three official languages used on the Government-sponsored Radio Milne Bay.

The Dobu area has an 80% literacy rate and there is a voluminous corpus of published material produced mainly by the United and Roman Catholic churches in a variety of orthographies and spelling. The

Bible Society has given consultant help in the past and many of their suggested changes have already been incorporated.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a scientific basis for an orthography that accurately represents the language and is acceptable to the people.

The data for this paper was collected during residence in the village of Mwemweyala, Dobu Island, from September 1972 to August 1975 using a variety of speakers of all ages and both sexes.

Consultant help from Barry Irwin, of S.I.L., is gratefully acknowledged.

2 INTERPRETATION

2.1 The status of items that may be either consonant or vowel

2.1.1 The status of [y] versus [i]

The semi-vocoid [y] occurs as the onset of a syllable and [i] occurs as the nucleus of a syllable. [y] often has a fricative quality. See 4.3.1.

['yage]	'thing'
['lisu]	'wave'

2.1.2 The status of [w] versus [u]

The semi-vocoid [w] occurs as a syllable onset and [u] occurs as the nucleus of a syllable.

['wagu]	'my uncle'
[lu'luta]	'coconut fibre sheath'

2.2 The status of items that may be either sequences or units

2.2.1 Labialized consonants

The sequence C^wV could be interpreted in three ways.

- a. as CCV
- b. as CVV
- c. as C^wV

a. Interpretation as a CCV sequence would introduce CC clusters and there are none in the language.

b. Interpretation as CuV. Two vowels in sequence are always two syllable peaks etically. Therefore CuV in words like tabwa would be pronounced as two "etic" syllable peaks. However this contrasts with two syllable peaks in words like tabua.

['tab ^w a]	'growing sprout of coconut'
[ta'bu ^a]	'local asparagus'
[k ^w a'k ^w ana]	'leaves'
['kuaku'ana]	'blunt'
[m ^w am ^w a'lina]	'pulped up'
['mua'mula'lina]	'nice-smelling'
['?ima'yag ^w a]	'it became high tide'
['?igi'gua]	'he plucked it'

c. Interpretation of C^wV as a single consonant followed by a vowel. This interpretation is decided on for the following reasons:

1. Reduplication. A feature of the Dobu language family is its reduplication in the formation of verb aspects, diminutives, insignificance of nouns and adjective formation.

Normally 2 syllables are reduplicated.

[ya' ^v wali]	'I sing'	[ya' ^v wali' ^v wali]	'I am singing'
['magi]	'betel palm'	['magi'magi]	'worthless palm similar in appearance'
['siwa]	'to pour'	['siwasi'wena]	'poured'

A C^wV follows the normal pattern.

['yagi'm ^w ane]	'I buy/sell'	[ya'gim ^w agi'm ^w ane]	'I am buying'
['m ^w at ^h a]	'snake'	['m ^w at ^h a'm ^w at ^h a]	'worm'
['p ^w asa]	'to be wet'	['p ^w asap ^w a'sana]	'rotten with damp'

2. Pairs of words exist with the same stress pattern, uttered with the same amount of timing, the only contrast being between the consonant and its labialized counterpart. In other words each is equivalent to one etic syllable. Symmetry then adds to the argument of one emic syllable. Thus C^WV is the best interpretation.

[$'mat^h a$]	'eye'
[$'m^w at^h a$]	'snake'
[$be'bai$]	'yam'
[$b^w e' b^w ai$]	'white-breasted sea eagle'

3. Some few words fluctuate C with C^W indicating that C^W is emically one phonetically complex unit.

[$'mam^w a' nena$]	'with his/her spouse'
[$'m^w am^w a' nena$]	

4. A less significant argument is that the Dobu language family has a series of labialized consonants. The basic series is $/p^w/$, $/b^w/$, $/m^w/$, $/k^w/$, $/g^w/$. Different languages add other members to the series.

Dobu adds $/ʔ^w/$
Yamalele adds $/ʔ^w/$, $/f^w/$
Duwau adds $/h^w/$, $/n^w/$.

2.2.2 VV interpretation

The following VV sequences have been found in Dobu.

	i	e	a	o	u
i	ii	ie	ia	io	iu
e	ei		ea	eo	eu
a	ai	ae	aa	ao	au
o	oi	oe	oa	oo	ou
u	ui	ue	ua	uo	uu

Examples:

	i	e	a	o	u
i	iine	giegwausowala	mulia	biobio	nui
e	keigwana		geaosa	eowa	kweu
a	tai	taeya	taana	anuwao	tauna
o	toila	doe	toawaniwani	toolo	tou
u	guinuwa	nuena	manua	tuosooso	nuugu

Meanings:

women	to make happy	to follow	small cooking pot	coconut
casuarina		to complete task	to give instructions regarding task	to quell
man	to fly	earth to blacken teeth	houses	that one
roughly	to float	to blow in a squall	to stand	sugar cane
work	his thought	bird	to rub something in the hands and crush it	my sib. of opp. sex

They have been interpreted as sequences of two vowels, not as a single complex nucleus, for the following reasons:

1. The minimum length of words in Dobu (except for the conjunctions be, ga meaning 'and', ta meaning 'and/but' and the interjection o meaning 'yes') is two syllables with 2 mora of timing. Such words are mostly of the CVCV pattern.

['t ^h ana]	'basket'
['busa]	'faeces'

CVV words are also said with two mora of timing and follow the same pattern with two peaks of syllabicity.

['t ^h ai]	'man'
['p ^h ou]	'egg'
['sae]	'to shine (of moon)'

2. Stress is non-phonemic in Dobu and can fluctuate, especially on shorter words. In some words, either member of the VV sequence may take the stress.

['t ^h auna / t ^h a'una]	'that one'
[Wa'lauya / 'Wala'uya]	'village name'

3. The Galubwa dialect of Dobu still retains intervocalic /h/, which has been lost from the other dialects to give VV sequences.

<u>Galubwa</u>	<u>Edugaula</u>	
['sit ^h o'holo]	[si'toolo]	'they stand'
[nu'huna]	['nuuna]	'his/her sib. of opp. sex'
[ʔi'hona]	[ʔi'ona]	'he/she said'

3 OUTLINE OF PHONEMES

3.1 Chart of Phonemes

3.1.1 Consonants

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Velar	Glottal
v1	/p/ /pw/	/t/	/k/ /kw/	/ʔ/ /ʔw/
vd	/b/ /bw/	/d/	/g/ /gw/	
Fricatives		/s/		
Laterals		/l/		
Nasals	/m/ /mw/	/n/		
Semi-vowels	/w/	/y/		

3.1.2 Vowels

	Front	Central	Back
High	/i/		/o/
Low	/e/	/a/	/u/

The symbols /e/, /u/ and /o/ are not the true phonetic norms but are used throughout the paper for ease of typing. They represent /ɛ/, /ʊ/ and /ɔ̂/ respectively.

3.2 Formational Statement of Phonemes

3.2.1 Consonants

Phoneme	Allophone	Description, Occurrence, Example
	[p ^h]	Lightly-aspirated voiceless bilabial stop; occurs in all environments.

		/pepekwa/ [p ^h e'p ^h ek ^w a] 'butterfly'
	[p ^w]	Labialized voiceless bilabial stop; occurs before [a] and [e]. /pwasapwasana/ [p ^w asap ^w a'sana] 'rotten with damp'
/t/	[t ^h]	Aspirated voiceless alveolar stop; occurs in all environments except preceding [i]. /tetela/ [t ^h e't ^h ela] 'story'
	[k ^h]	Aspirated voiceless velar stop; occurs in all environments. /kokolaka/ ['k ^h ok ^h o'lak ^h a] 'rat'
/kw/	[k ^w]	Labialized voiceless velar stop; occurs before [a] and [e]. /kwakwakwala/ ['k ^w ak ^w a'k ^w ala] 'thorns'
/ʔ/	[ʔ]	Voiceless glottal stop; occurs in all environments. /ʔiʔeʔai/ [ʔi'ʔeʔai] 'he/she eats'
/ʔw/	[ʔ ^w]	Labialized voiceless glottal stop; occurs before [a] and [e]. /ʔwelaa/ [ʔ ^w e'laa] 'weather'
/b/	[b]	Voiced bilabial stop; occurs in all environments. /bababana/ ['baba'bana] 'wide'
/bw/	[b ^w]	Labialized voiced bilabial stop; occurs before [a] and [e]. /bwebwebwe/ [b ^w e'b ^w eb ^w e] 'augur shell'
/d/	[d]	Voiced alveolar stop; occurs in all /dedoi/ [de'doi] 'to cry'
/g/	[g]	Voiced velar stop; occurs in all environments. /gegela/ ['gegela] 'King parrot'

/gw/	[g ^w]	Labialized voiced velar stop; occurs before [a] and [e]. /gwegwe/ [g ^w eg ^w e] 'belongings'
	[s]	Voiceless grooved alveolar fricative; occurs in all environments. /sisisi/ [si'sisi] 'small lobster'
	[l̥]	Voiced alveolar flapped lateral, fluctuating with voiced alveolar flapped vibrant according to the speaker's ideolect; occurs in all environments.
	[ɾ]	/lolimana/ [l̥ol̥i'mana] 'to do it again'
	[m]	Voiced bilabial nasal; occurs in all environments. /mamatana/ [mama'tana] 'sharp'
/mw/	[m ^w]	Labialized voiced bilabial nasal occurs before [a] and [e]. /mwemweyala/ [m ^w em ^w e'yala] 'village name'
	[n]	Voiced alveolar nasal; occurs in all environments. /nenai/ [ne'nai] 'flounder'
	[w]	Voiced high close rounded non-syllabic vocoid; occurs in all environments except before [u]. /wowoli/ [wo'woli] 'squall'
	[y]	Voiced high close front unrounded vocoid; occurs in all environments except before [i]. /yuyuna/ [yu'yuna] 'his tail'
	[ɥ]	Voiced high close front unrounded non-syllabic vocoid with a pronounced fricative quality fluctuating with [y] especially in an [eya] sequence. /neya/ [neya] 'to paddle'

3.2.2 Vowels

- [i] High close front unrounded vocoid; occurs in all environments except following /t/ or /y/.
/iluilua/ [i'lui'lua] 'mosquito larva'
- [ɛ] Mid front open unrounded vocoid: occurs in all environments.*
/esaesae/ [e'sae'sae] 'again and again'
* for ease of typing [e] will be used for [ɛ] throughout the paper.
- [a] Low central open unrounded vocoid; occurs in all environments.
/asakowasi/ [a'sak^ho'wasi] 'to walk round a place'
- [ʌ] Mid central open unrounded vocoid; fluctuating freely with [a] in unstressed syllables.
/ʔasuinuanua/ [ʔa'sui'nua'nua]~ [ʔʌ'sui'nuʌ'nuʌ] 'afternoon'
- [ɔ̃] Mid back open unrounded vocoid pulled forwards toward the mid position; follows labialized consonants especially in unstressed positions.
/imwawasa/ ['ʔm^wɔ̃'wasa] 'he dies'
/pwalikeke/ ['p^wɔ̃li'k^hek^he] 'millipede'
/kwakwakwala/ ['k^wɔ̃k^wɔ̃'k^wɔ̃la] 'thorns'
- /o/ [ɔ̃^] Mid back open unrounded vocoid: occurs in all environments*
/olaola/ ['o^ʎla'o^ʎla] 'seafoods'
- /u/ [u] High back open unrounded vocoid: Occurs in all environments.*
/uwenunu/ ['uwe'nunu] 'fan'
*For ease of typing [o] will be used

for [ɔ̂] and [u] for [u] throughout
the paper

3.3 Contrastive Features

Consonants contrast as to manner of articulation between voiced and voiceless stops, nasals, a fricative, a lateral and semi-vocoids

There is labialization of bilabial, velar and glottal stops and nasals

Contrast as to place of articulation occurs in stops at bilabial, alveolar, velar and glottal positions. Nasals and semi-vocoids contrast in bilabial and alveolar position. The affricate and lateral articulate at the alveolar position only.

Vowels contrast vertically as to high and low tongue position. High vowels contrast as to front and back positions and low vowels as to front, mid and back positions.

3.3.1 Consonant Contrasts

The stops /p,pw,b,bw,t,d,k,kw,g,gw,ʔ,ʔw/ contrast word initially and medially.

/pedidi/	[pe'didi]	'a certain plant'
/pwedeu/	[p ^w e'deu]	'last born'
/beleya/	[be'leya]	'bread fruit'
/bwelama/	[b ^w e'lama]	'to anoint body with coconut oil'
/tetela/	[t ^h e't ^h ela]	'story'
/dedela/	[de'de'la]	'to shake'
/kekeu/	[k ^h e'k ^h eu]	'little finger'
/kwekeu/	[k ^w e'leu]	'a small dark striped fish'
/gelewa/	[ge'lewa]	'type of palm'
/gwelele/	[g ^w e'lele]	'to rattle (of cowrie shells)'
/ʔelomi/	[ʔe'łomi]	'for a group of people to be in one place'
/ʔwelaa/	[ʔ ^w e'laa]	'weather'
/ʔupa/	[ʔ ^h upa]	'to set a time for an event'

/ʔupwa/	[ʔup ^w a]	'to cut'
/pepwe/	[p ^h ep ^w e]	'penis of male banana'
/ʔebe/	[ʔebe]	'instrument for'
/bwebwebwe/	[b ^w e'b ^w eb ^w e]	'augur shell'
/tete/	[t ^h et ^h e]	'ridge'
/dede/	[dede]	'aromatic grass'
/keke/	[k ^h ek ^h e]	'to tap'
/kwekwe/	[k ^w ek ^w e]	'frog'
/gege/	[gege]	'to open'
/gwegwe/	[g ^w eg ^w e]	'belongings'
/ʔeʔe/	[ʔeʔe]	'exclamation to attract attention'
/ʔweʔwe/	[ʔ ^w eʔ ^w e]	'portion'

Nasals /m,mw,n/ contrast word initially and medially.

/mata/	[mat ^h a]	'eye'
/mwata/	[m ^w at ^h a]	'snake'
/nate/	[nat ^h e]	'that one'
/wama/	[wama]	'fish type'
/yama/	[yama]	'Mars'
/yamwa/	[yam ^w a]	'to wait'
/wana/	[wana]	'his uncle'

The semi-vocoids /w,y/ contrast initially and medially, as do the phonetically similar /w,ʔw/.

/wama/	[wama]	'fish type'
/ʔwama/	[ʔ ^w ama]	'garment'
/yama/	[yama]	'Mars'
/wewe/	[wewe]	'tub for sago solution'
/ʔwe we/	[ʔ ^w eʔ ^w e]	'portion'
/seye/	[seye]	'adverb, (to cut) till part falls off'

The bilabials /p,pw,b,bw,m,mw,w/ contrast initially and medially.

/pani/	[p ^h ani]	'difficult'
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/pwana/	['p ^w ana]	'cloud'
/bani/	['bani]	'to fish with a line'
/bana/	['bana]	'to encounter anything soft'
/bwana/	['b ^w ana]	'portion in rear of house'
/mata/	['mat ^h a]	'eye'
/mwata/	['m ^w at ^h a]	'snake'
/wana/	['wana]	'his uncle'
/lepa/	[' ^v lep ^h a]	'to thrash pole when netting fish'
/lepwapwaise/	[' ^v lep ^w a'p ^w aise]	'deciduous tree'
/deba/	['deba]	'forehead'
/debwa/	['deb ^w a]	'fish type'
/nema/	['nema]	'man's name'
/nemwa/	['nem ^w a]	'mosquito'
/newa/	['newa]	'nest'

The alveolars /t,d,s,l,n,y/ contrast initially and medially.

/tana/	['t ^h ana]	'basket'
/dana/	['dana]	'forked prop'
/sana/	['sana]	'exceedingly'
/lasa/	[' ^v lasa]	'to shap'
/nali/	['na ^v li]	'branch'
/yala/	['ya ^v la]	'desire'
/mata/	['mat ^h a]	'eye'
/bada/	['bada]	'here'
/ʔasa/	['ʔasa]	'village'
/ʔala/	['ʔa ^v la]	'shoulder'
/tana/	['t ^h ana]	'basket'
/baya/	['baya]	'to use canoe paddle as oar'

The velars and glottals /k,kw,g,gw,ʔ,ʔw/ contrast initially and medially.

/kayo/	['k ^h ayo]	'to dog-paddle'
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/kwayo/	['k ^w ayo]	'to blind animals'
/gayo/	['gayo]	'to wade'
/gwaya/	['g ^w aya]	'a skin disease'
/ʔayo/	['ʔayo]	'thy food'
/ʔwalo/	['ʔ ^w alo]	'top and bottom ropes of fishnet'
/seka/	'sek ^h a]	'fluid ejected by millipede'
/pekwa/	['pek ^w a]	'sago scoop'
/pega/	['pega]	'stem of coconut/sago/banana leaf'
/segwa/	['seg ^w a]	'to become grey-headed'
/ʔeʔa/	['ʔeʔa]	'to be eating'
/leʔwa/	[' ^v leʔ ^w a]	'to break inhibitions on palms, reefs etc.'

3.3.2 Vowel Contrasts

The five phonemic vowels contrast initially, medially and finally.

/idosā/	[i'dosa]	'for skin to clear after infection'
/edolo/	[e'do ^v lo]	'many-pronged fish spear'
/adeli/	[a'de ^v li]	'characteristic of'
/olisa/	[o'lisa]	'type of mangrove'
/udina/	[u'dina]	'belonging to banana'
/ila/	['i ^v la]	'to return'
/eli/	['e ^v li]	'to avoid people or village because of betrothal taboo'
/ali/	['a ^v li]	'rays (fish)'
/ole/	[o ^v le]	'to add wood to fire'
/ula/	['u ^v la]	'to throw'
/ʔina/	['ʔina]	'his/her/its'
/ʔena/	['ʔena]	'in (it)'
/ʔana/	['ʔana]	'his/her/its/'
/ʔona/	['ʔona]	'small fish scoop-net'

/niso/	['niso]	'odour'
/nidi/	['nidi]	'those ones'
/nedu/	['nedu]	'long grass'
/natu/	['nat ^h u]	'son/daughter'
/noso/	['noso]	'deep sea crab'
/nuta/	['nut ^h a]	'to be moist'
/bani/	['bani]	'to fish with line'
/mane/	['mane]	'where?'
/tana/	['t ^h ana]	'basket'
/tano/	['t ^h ano]	'to delouse person in the daytime'
/manu/	['manu]	'for'
/debi/	['debi]	'fish type'
/ʔebe/	['ʔebe]	'instrument for'
/deba/	['deba]	'forehead'
/lepo/	['lep ^h o]	'tide rip'
/tebu/	['t ^h ebu]	'to be pregnant'

3.4 Phoneme Distribution

3.4.1 Consonant Distribution

Dobu has no non-suspect consonant clusters. Any consonant may fill the syllable onset position, except that

1. /t/ never occurs before /i/.
2. labialized consonants occur only before /a/ and /e/.

Dobu syllables are all open, i.e. have no final consonant. However in slurred and/or rapid speech, some vowels are elided, though these omissions do not affect the stress pattern in any way. If the word is reduplicated, the final vowel now occurring in the middle of the word as well is also lost.

/kasikasi/	['k ^h asi'k ^h asi]	['k ^h as'k ^h as]	'mangrove'
/nemunemu/	['nemu'nemu]	['nem'nem]	'village name'
/kagutoki/	['k ^h agu't ^h ok ^h i]	['k ^h agu't ^h ok ^h]	'thank you'

3.4.2 Vowel Distribution

All vowels may precede or follow any consonant. (Note restrictions in 3.4.1)

The following VV sequences occur in all positions.

Those marked x do not occur initially.

X does not occur at all.

	i	e	a	o	u
i	ii	x	x	x	iu
e	ei	X	x	eo	eu
a	ai	ae	aa	ao	au
o	oi	x	x	oo	ou
u	x	x	ua	x	x

4 THE SYLLABLE

The syllable in Dobu takes one mora of timing and consists of a nucleus of one vowel preceded by an optional consonant onset, (C)V.

4.1 Syllable Types

4.1.1 Dobu has 2 syllable types V and CV either of which may occur initially, medially or finally. (Note the omissions of 3.4.1)

/ona/	['ona]	'word'
/eisa/	['eisa]	'how many?'
/tou/	['t ^h ou]	'sugar cane'
/sae/	['sae]	'to shine'
/bagula/	['bagu ^l a]	'garden'
/toitoila/	['t ^h oi't ^h oi ^l a]	'roughly'

5 THE PHONOLOGICAL WORD

5.1 The phonological word in Dobu is usually of from one to 10 syllables, with one primary stress and regularly patterned secondary stresses, bounded by juncture. (See 5.2)

However the word in Dobu may consist of up to 14 syllables, though such long words consist of compound stems joined by loose juncture, with the necessary affixation. See 6.2.4 for the writing of such words.

5.2 Stress

Stress in Dobu is non-phonemic in 2-syllable words occurring on the penultimate syllable. In many 3-syllable words it falls on the antepenultimate. In some such 3-syllable words, stress fluctuates; in others it is fixed.

/ona/	['ona]	'word'
/tana/	['t ^h ana]	'basket'
/pou/	['p ^h ou]	'egg'
/tetela/	[t ^h e't ^h e ^v la]	'story'
/bagula/	['bagu ^l a]	'garden'
/tamagu/	['t ^h amagu/t ^h a'magu]	'my father'

In words of more than 3 syllables, the stress patterns can be regarded as combinations of 2- or 3-syllable segments, with the characteristic stress patterns of such.

One-syllable words

V	' <u>o</u>	'yes'
CV	' <u>be</u>	'and'

Two-syllable words

CV.V	' <u>po.u</u>	'egg'
CV.CV	' <u>ni.ma</u>	'hand'
V.CV	' <u>a.ba</u>	'creeper type'

Three-syllable words

V.CV.V	<u>e'ta.i</u>	'harvest'
V.CV.CV	<u>e'ta.la</u>	'python'
CV.CV.CV	<u>gi'da.ba</u>	'stick insect'
CV.V.CV	<u>'ma.i.na</u>	'bad smell'

Four-syllable words

CV.V.CV.V	2+2	<u>'wa.i</u> 'wa.i	'to be strong'
V.CV.CV.V	2+2	<u>'e.si'</u> nu.a	'to choose'

CV.CV.CV.CV.	2+2	<u>'mwa.ta'mwa.ta</u>	'worm'
CV.CV.CV.V	2+2	<u>'bwa.ge'go.i</u>	'bark sago bucket'
V.CV.V.CV	2+2	<u>'i.la.'i.la</u>	'to be returning'
<u>Five-syllable words</u>			
V.CV.V.CV.CV	3+2	<u>'i.la.i 'la.ma</u>	'to be returning here'
V.V.V.V.CV	2+3	<u>'a.i 'a.i.la</u>	'to turn and move away'
CV.V.CV.V.CV	2+3	<u>'ʔa.i 'ʔa.i.la</u>	'true'
CV.CV.CV.CV.CV	3+2	<u>'se.la.be 'na.ya</u>	'near'
CV.CV.CV.CV.CV	3+2	<u>ʔi'mwa.la 'to.ni</u>	'he knows'
<u>Six-syllable words</u>			
V.CV.V.CV.CV.CV	2+2+2	<u>'e.sa 'e.sa'se.na</u>	'wealthy'
CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV	4+2	<u>ʔi 'mwa.la.to 'ni.na</u>	'he knew it'
CV.V.CV.V.CV.CV	2+2+2	<u>'wa.i 'wa.i 'sa.na</u>	'very strong'
CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV	2+2+2	<u>'tu.pi 'tu.pi 'na.ya</u>	'next to'
<u>Seven-syllable words</u>			
CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV	3+2+2	<u>ʔi'mwa.la 'to.ni 'na.ya</u>	'he really knew it'
CV.CV.V.CV.V.CV.CV	2+3+2	<u>'wa.da 'i.la.i 'la.ma</u>	'you may be returning here'
CV.CV.CV.V.CV.V.CV	2+2+3	<u>'sa.ʔu 'to.i 'to.i.la</u>	'to put down roughly'
CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.V.CV	2+2+3	<u>'ʔi.da 'sa.ʔu 'na.o. ʔe</u>	'he may remove from one place to another'
<u>Eight-syllable words</u>			
CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.V.CV.CV	3+2+3	<u>si 'ka.bo 'ka.bo.e 'di.ya</u>	'they were tricking them indeed'
CV.V.CV.V.CV.CV.CV	3+2+3	<u>si 'i.la 'i.la.li 'ma.na</u>	'they are returning again'
<u>Nine-syllable words</u>			
CV.CV.CV.V.CV.V.CV.CV.V	3+2+2+2	<u>ʔi 'sa.ʔu 'o.pe 'o.pe 'po.i</u>	'he puts things on top of each other'

CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV 3+2+2+2

ʔi 'mwa.la 'mwa.la 'to.ni 'na.ya 'he is really knowing it'Ten-syllable words

CV.CV.CV.V.CV.V.CV.CV.CV.CV 3+3+2+2

wa 'lo.ʔa.e 'nu.a 'bo.bo 'ʔa.na 'you speak and bring about peace'Eleven-syllable words

CV.V.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV 2+2+2+2+3

'si.e 'da.gi 'ʔu.mu. 'ʔu.mu.le 'na.ya 'they laugh inwardly at him'Twelve-syllable words

CV.CV.V.CV.CV.CV.V.CV.CV.CV.CV 2+3+2+3+2

'wa.da.e 'ʔa.la 'ma.i. ʔi 'ʔi.ta'ne.mi 'be of good cheer'Fourteen syllable words

CV.V.CV.V.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV 3+2+2+2+2+3

si 'a.wa 'a.wa 'go.ma'ge.yo 'ge.yo 'ni.da.ya

'they say we are being bad people indeed'

Thirteen syllable words

CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV 3+2+2+2+2+2

si 'we.la 'we.la 'ba.na 'li.ma 'li.ma 'na.ya

'they keep on calling us witches indeed'

5.3 Length

Length in Dobu is non-phonemic, the primary stressed syllable of the word being lengthened.

/bagula/	['ba·gu ^h la]	'garden'
/tamagu/	['t ^h a·magu /t ^h 'ma.gu]	'my father'
/kodo/	['k ^h o·do]	'basket'

In longer words, there is a tendency for each syllable to lose its full mora of timing, so that many syllables are slurred. Especially is this true for syllables beginning with glottal, which, in many cases, is barely audible in rapid speech.

6 ORTHOGRAPHY

6.1 Dobu phonemes, their allophones, the old orthographies and the suggested new orthography are listed below.

PHONEME	ALLOPHONES	1900 orthog.	1930 orthog.	previous suggested orthog.	suggested NEW ORTHOGRAPHY.
	[p ^h]	p	p	p	p
/pw/	[p ^w]	po	pw	pw	pw
/t/	[t ^h]	t	t	t	t
	[k ^h]	k	k	k	k
/kw/	[k ^w]	ko	kw	kw	kw
/ʔ/	[ʔ]	ʔ and ʋ for initial cap. glottal	ʔ and ʋ for initial cap. glottal	ʔ and ʋ ^c for init.	ʔ/c and ʋ ^c cap.
	[ʔ ^w]	ʔ ^w	ʔ ^w	ʔ ^w	ʔ ^w
/b/	[b]	b	b	b	b
/bw/	[b ^w]	bo	bw	bw	bw
/d/	[d]	d	d	d	d
	[g]	g	g	g	g
/gw/	[g ^w]	go	gw	gw	gw
/s/	[s]	s	s	s	s
	[l̥]	l	l	l	l
	[r̥]	r	r		
	[m]	m	m	m	m
/mw/	[m ^w]	mo	mw	mw	mw
/n/	[n]	n	n	n	n
/w/	[w]	w/u	w	w	w
/y/	[y]	y/i	y	y	y
	[y]	y or omitted altog.			
	[i]	i	i	i	i
/e/	[ɛ]	e	e	e	e
/a/	[a]	a	a	a	a
	[ʌ]				
	[ɔ̃]				
/o/	[ɔ̃ [^]]	o	o	o	o
/u/	[u]	u	u	u	u

6.2 Note on Orthographical Problems

6.2.1 The greatest problem in Dobu orthography is in the use and symbolization of the glottal stop.

The last two generations of Dobu speakers have been educated largely in English with no instruction in the reading and writing of the vernacular. As glottal stop is not an English phoneme, its significance in Dobu was not therefore learned, so Dobu writers tended to ignore it and leave it out altogether. The glottal has the highest functional load of all consonants, so dropping it from the writing of the language can only be done with detriment to the language as a whole.

Criticism of using ' to represent the glottal is that it is

1. not a proper letter, therefore the sound it represents is not regarded as a proper letter.
2. too insignificant to see clearly. This is especially so of the symbol on modern typewriters.
3. confused with the single quotation punctuation mark.
4. inaccurate at the beginning of a sentence 'V... reinforces the idea that the glottal is something added to the vowel to make it strong and doesn't recognize that the glottal is a full phoneme which necessitates lower and upper case forms.

Whatever symbol is used to represent the glottal, a widespread educational campaign is needed to reteach its significance and use.

The present suggestion favored by the Education Department in the area, is to use C for initial capital glottal and ' for initial and medial glottal, at present. They favor ultimate progression to the use of c for the small glottal, following the usage in Kâte and Yabim.

Another suggestion from literate Dobuans is the use of a raised small c to represent capital glottal e.g. ^cenega not Cenega or 'Enega with ' used elsewhere. This focusses attention on the glottal as a phoneme in its own right but is not so radical as the use of C and c.

It also satisfies the argument that non-English phonemes should have non-English symbols. (Glottal is an English sound but not an English phoneme e.g. mɛʔl 'metal')

6.2.2 A further area of disagreement is in the representation of labialized glottal stop.

The original orthography circa 1900 used o, with o to represent labialization, so labialized glottal was written ʼo.

The present suggestion is to use w instead of ʼo.

6.2.3 A further problem connected with orthography is with the spelling. The 1900 orthography used as few y and w as possible, substituting i and u, or leaving them out altogether.

e.g.	<u>weʼiiaaia</u>	for	<u>weʼiweʼiyaya</u>	'sign, omen'
	<u>anua auauna</u>	for	<u>anuwa auwauna</u>	'new house'

This has changed over the years and the present tendency is to write syllables where possible, though some inconsistencies remain. We propose to prepare a dictionary of standard spellings (with the old usage in brackets) to help stabilize the situation.

6.2.4 The writing of long words is also a problem area. Suffixes added to compound stems, which makes phonological words of unwieldy length, difficult to teach in literacy. A suggestion of Rev. Ralph Lawton, U.C. linguist who has worked on the Dobu language, was to use a hyphen at positions of loose juncture. This broke the word into readable units but retained the inherent connection. However local usage, also recommended by the Bible Society, is to make complete breaks at such points.

<u>siguinuwa</u>	'they do'
<u>sida guinuwa</u>	'they may do'
<u>tamagu</u>	'my father'
<u>tama ʼaiʼailigu</u>	'my true father'
<u>yawali</u>	'I sing'
<u>yawali limanaya</u>	'I really sing again' (verbal clitic added to modifier)

6.3 English words as spoken by Dobu speakers

<u>English</u>	<u>Dobu</u>
money	mani
bread	biledi
prophet	palopita
leper	tolepelo
Pharisees	palisiyao
Saducees	sadusiyao
school	sikuli

6.4 Sample text

Phonetic transcription	ʔeb ^w euna	t ^h ut ^h a	t ^h ai
Proposed orthography	<u>Cebweuna</u>	<u>tuta</u>	<u>tai</u>
Literal translation	one/another	time	man

manat^huna sit^hauya bagulaya sabi bagula^v. T^ha
manatuna sitauya bagulaya sabi bagula. Ta
with-child-his they-went garden-to to garden. And/but

t^ha t^hai nina nigeya nat^huna ʔana masula^v
ta tai nina nigeya natuna 'ana masula
but man the not child-his his food

ʔiʔewaʔewa. Ga t^hut^ha^o nina t^hai nina paisewa
'i'ewa'ewa. Ga tuta nina tai nina paisewa
he-was-taking. But time the man work

ʔieʔalena g^wama nina mabot^hanina. K^haiwe dudulana^v ʔenaya
'i'e'alena gwama nina mabotanina. Kaiwe dudulana 'enaya
he-began-it child the with-hunger-his. Tree tall it-in/to

ʔim^wela^v ga ʔit^huʔe ga ʔib^wau t^hamana ʔenaya
'imwela ga 'itue'e ga 'ibwau tamana 'enaya
he-climbed and he-ascended and he-called father-his him-to

ʔig^wae t^hamagau niʔat^hu yabot^hana.
 'igwae tamagu ni'atu yabotana.
 he-said father-my completed.action/already I-hunger.

Ga t^hamana ʔig^wae ʔuyam^wayam^wa get^he sena nina
 Ga tamana 'igwae 'uyamwayamwa gete sena nina
 And father-his he-said you-be-waiting this place the
 yałosaloni t^ha ʔenega t^haap^wesa.
 yalosaloni ta 'enega taapwesa.
 I-finish and/but then we-appear.

G^wama nina ʔib^wau mat^hoi t^ha t^hamana nigeya
 Gwama nina 'ibwau matoi ta tamana nigeya
 Child the he-called three-times but father-his not
 ʔieieisa ga g^wama nina ʔibot^hana ʔaiʔaila ga
 'ieieisa ga gwama nina 'ibotana 'ai'aila ga
 he-was-answering and child the he-hungered truly and
 k^haiwe ʔenega ʔibeʔu ga ʔim^wawasa.
 kaiwe 'enega 'ibe'u ga 'imwawasa.
 tree then he-fell-down and he-died

Free translation

Once upon a time a man and his child went to their garden to work. They went in the morning but the man didn't take any food for his son. When the man began his work, the child became hungry. He climbed to the top of a tall tree and called to his father, "Father, I'm hungry."

His father said, "Wait a bit, till I've finished my work here and then we'll go."

The child called three times but his father didn't answer. The child became really hungry and fell down from the tree and died.