

10.4.3 Orthographies

Kayah Li has no established written form, although orthographies for Kayah languages have been devised. A Roman-letter orthography has been developed by Catholic missionaries for a language of the western portion of the Kayah area, and several prayer books exist in this orthography. The language is either a type of Western Kayah or one of the transitional dialects between Kayah and Kayaw (Lehman 1967 mentions a Catholic script used for Manaw; this is probably a reference to the same orthography).

There also exists a script of recent invention used principally by members of the indigenous self-determination organization, the Karenni National Progressive Party.

The following chart displays the characters in alphabetical order:

Consonants

က	k	တ	t	ရ	r
ခ	kh	ထ	th	ၣ်	j
ဂ	g	န	n	လ	l
င	ng	ပ	p	ဝ	w
ဆ	s	ဖ	ph	ဇ	θ
ဆဲ	sh	မ	m	ဈ	h
ဃ	z	ဉ	d	ဍ	v
ည	ny	ဏ	b	ဎ	c

Vowels

အ	a
ဣ	ə
ဩ	i
ဧ	o
ဧ်	u
ဧဲ	ε
ဧ့	u
ဧ်	e
ဧဲ	o

Tones

း	(high*)
ဲ	low
ံ	mid

Digraphs

အဲ	ie
ဣဧ	uo
ဣဩ	uə
X+ဈ	breathy phonation

1.1 Phonology

Kayah Li is a tone language, with some ‘tones’ including phonation; as well as pitch features.

The transcription is generally IPA for segments. Tones are marked with macron (\bar{x}) for mid level, acute accent (\acute{x}) for high level, grave accent (\grave{x}) for low falling, and no mark (x) for low level.

Eastern Kayah Li

Grammar, Texts, Glossary

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