

ESLLI 2010 – Ganda

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Consider the following data describing pronunciation of certain words in Ganda (a Bantu language having circa 3M speakers in Uganda, central Africa).

[ēnato]	‘a canoe’	[akaato]	‘little canoe’
[ēnapo]	‘a house’	[akaapo]	‘little house’
[ēnugēni]	‘a stranger’	[akaugēni]	‘little stranger’
[ēntabi]	‘a branch’	[akatabi]	‘little branch’
[ēmpipi]	‘a kidney’	[akapipi]	‘little kidney’
[ēṅkoosa]	‘a feather’	[akakoosa]	‘little feather’
[ēmmāmo]	‘a peg’	[akabāmo]	‘little peg’
[ēṅṅōme]	‘a horn’	[akagōme]	‘little horn’
[ēmmwa]	‘a dog’	[akabwa]	‘little dog’
[ēnnimiro]	‘a garden’	[akadimiro]	‘little garden’
[ēṅṅulu]	‘a leg’	[akagulu]	‘little leg’

Notes:

- The data were somewhat modified to make the problem easier.
- In answering the following question assume that all Ganda words follow the regularities shown above.
- When describing phonetic regularities, refer to natural classes not just particular sounds. (e.g. If I asked you about English aspiration, I would like to hear ‘word initial voiceless stops aspirate’, rather than ‘word initial [p, t, k] aspirate’.)
- If there are two consonants in a row (e.g., [mm] in [ēmmbwa]), they are really pronounced as two consonants, not just one.

Questions about the data above:

1. Is it possible to predict when a vowel is nasal (IPA marks nasality by a tilde, e.g., [ã], [ẽ]) and when it is oral (e.g. [a], [e])? If yes, how; if not, why?

2. What are the three allomorphs of the indefinite article?

3. State the rule that determines which of the three allomorphs of the indefinite article is used in which situation. How would you describe the process (e.g., is it assimilation, deletion, ...)

4. Sometimes (look at the last 5 examples), the indefinite article affects the pronunciation of the following consonant (i.e. the first consonant of the stem). When and how? How would you describe the process (e.g. is it assimilation, deletion, ...)

5. Fill in the blanks.

_____	'an animal'	[akaobi]	'little animal'
_____	'a bone'	[akagumba]	'little bone'