

Chipaya official alphabet 2005 (revised)
Sabine Dedenbach-Salazar (DOBES team)
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The following table is a revised adaptation of the 2005 official alphabet (which intended to reflect the Chipaya phonemes). The 2005 alphabet was elaborated by a group of Chipaya speakers, independent from outside researchers. The letters we use are the same, but some have been re-allocated to their actual points and manners of articulation (which are not always correctly depicted in the official alphabet table). We also show occlusives and affricates separately, and we highlight the retroflex palatal consonants vs. the non-retroflex palatals. This alphabet is applied to the examples presented in our text.¹

articulation point articulation manner	bilabial	alveolar	prepalatal	palatal		velar	postvelar
				– retroflex	+ retroflex		
simple occlusive	p	t				k**	q
aspirated occlusive	ph	th				kh	qh
glottalised occlusive	p'	t'				k'	q'
simple affricate		ts		ch	čh		
aspirated affricate		tsh		chh	čhh		
glottalised affricate		ts'		ch'	čh'		
fricative		s	ś*		ž*	j**	x**
nasal	m	n		ñ			
lateral		l (voiced) lh (voiceless) ***		ll			
vibrant		r*					
semi-consonant	w			y			

¹ This alphabet and its underlying phonological system is not in all respects identical with those proposed by Olson & Olson (1962) and by Cerrón-Palomino (phonological chart and orthography, 2006: cap. I). All three – as well as the 2005 Chipaya alphabet itself (and a Chipaya alphabet established by the Chipayas in 2002) – differ in several aspects, some of which are commented upon here. Despite the considerable efforts made by the Olsons, Cerrón-Palomino and the Chipayas themselves in order to elaborate the phonological system, it has to be said that many uncertainties remain and more work needs to be done on Chipaya phonology (and phonetics).

- * These consonants seem to have allophones: [s̺] ~ [s̺h], [z̺] ~ [z̺h], [r] ~ [rh] as our consultants consistently write the simple and 'aspirated' form for certain words and insist that the pronunciation differs, but no minimal pairs have been established so far, which makes a closer study necessary. There also seems to be some uncertainty about articulation point and manner of /s/ and /s̺/ as well as about their status as phonemes.
- ** Labialised /kw/, /jw/ and /xw/ also exist, although these consonants are not represented in the Chipaya 2005 alphabet; for the time being these consonants are therefore conceived of as combinations of the respective phoneme with the semi-consonant /w/.
- *** Olson & Olson (1962: 25) distinguish a voiced alveolar lateral from a voiceless one. Cerrón-Palomino (2006: 54) gives a lateral velar, which, according to identical examples, is the same as the lateral prepalatal given in the Chipaya 2005 alphabet. However, the distribution of this lateral is not limited to word initial position.

The vowels are used as presented in the official alphabet (see below).

ALFABETO DE LA NACION "URU CHIPAYA, URU IRUHITO Y URU MURATO"

FONEMAS CONSONANTES		PUNTO DE ARTICULACIÓN						
MODO DE ARTICULACION	BI LABIALES	DENTALES	ALVEOLARES	PREPALATALES	PALATALES	POS PALATALES	VELARES	POS VELARES
OCCLUSIVAS SIMPLES	P parina	T tothi	TS tsars	Š šana	CH chara		K kerka	Q qawñi
OCCLUSIVAS ASPIRIDAS	PH phaši	TH thami	TSH tshayi	ŠH sheqi	CHH chhañi	CHH chhata	KH khaña	QH qhaš
OCCLUSIVAS GLOTALIZADAS	P' p'ata	T' t'anta	TS' ts'irqa		CH' ch'ama	CH' che'eqa	K' k'ari	Q' q'oštu
FRICATIVAS			S sami	Ž žoñi	Ž žhuki	ČH čhara	J jək	X xora
NASALES	M maška		N najna		N niñi			
LATERALES			L las	LH lhuwa	LL lluch'uta			
VIBRANTES			R royta					
SEMI CONSONANTES	W watsi				Y yaku			

LAS VOCALES EN CHIPAYA

	ANTERIOR	CENTRAL	POSTERIOR
ALTA	i		u
MEDIA	e		o
BAJA		a	

NOTA: PARA EL ALARGAMIENTO DE LAS VOCALES UTILIZAR DIERESIS (¨)



Edias Parades
PRESIDENTE
C.E.T.U.



Antonio Mamani Condori
P.D.T.E. JUNTA ESCOLAR DEL
COL. "URUS ANDINO" CHIPAYA

Antonio Mamani Condori
P.D.T.E. JUNTA ESCOLAR DEL
COL. "URUS ANDINO" CHIPAYA

Cesimon L. Soara Mollo
TRANSCRIBIDA DE LENGUA
URU CHIPAYA

Edias Parades
PRESIDENTE
C.E.T.U.

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La Prensa, La Paz, 13 de octubre de 2005, en el suplemento "Pacha", p. 6, con el siguiente comentario:

"Resolución Ministerial No. 292/05, del 13 de septiembre de 2005 kamachixa akhama siwa:

POR TANTO:

La Ministra de Educación, en uso de sus facultades conferidas por Ley

RESUELVE:

Artículo Único. – (DECLARACIÓN) Se declara oficial el adjunto alfabeto único, para la escritura del idioma de la Nación Originaria Uru chipaya...."

Observation S. Dedenbach-Salazar:

There are a few mistakes; some are of typographical nature (such as "čhata" illustrating "CHH", which has to be "CHH"); some consonants are ascribed to the wrong category (such as "š", which, of course, is not an occlusive consonant, but a fricative). We have therefore produced a modified table (see above).

References

Alfabeto de la Nación Uru Chipaya, Uru Iruhitu y Uru Murato

2005 In: *La Prensa*, La Paz, 13 October 2005, Suplemento “Pacha”, p. 6.

Cerrón-Palomino, Rodolfo

2006 *El chipaya o la lengua de los hombres del agua*. Lima: Fondo Editorial de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú.

Olson, Ronald D. & Frances Olson

1962 Phonological data. Ms. [Data and analysis for Ronald Olson 1967: The syllable in Chipaya. In: *International Journal of American Linguistics* (1967) 33: 300-304. Bloomington, Indiana.]