

A WORD-LIST OF ELOYI

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The Eloyi people¹ (called *afo* by the Hausa, and *epe* by the Idoma) are indigenous to the southern districts of Nasarawa Division of Benue Province. The Eloyi are divided into two main dialect areas known as Eloyi Mbambu (those along the Benue River who tend to live in larger villages) and the Eloyi Mbeci (lit. the Eloyi of the Rocks) around and to the north of Edeje (called Udegi on most maps). Both sections are strong animists and each compound has its own network of fetishes and idol houses.

They form one of the many smaller tribes of the Niger-Benue Valley area, but it is very difficult to estimate their number (perhaps something in the region of 10,000-20,000) as their villages generally consist of various tribal sections. The area contains much fertile farming land which attracts people from surrounding areas - particularly the Idoma, Bassa, Igbirra and Hausa. Owing perhaps to the highly complicated structure of Bantu-type plural and concordial forms, few people from other tribes can speak their language, even after having lived in the district for many years.

Many of the Eloyi along the Nasarawa-Loko road can speak Hausa through contact with Government departments, traders, etc., and most of the Eloyi Mbambu can understand the Agatu dialect of Northern Idoma by their contact with Agatu markets across the Benue and with the number of Agatu-speaking people who live in their area.

As no data for this language has been previously published, the following word-list has been obtained through the author's knowledge of Idoma, and must be regarded as tentative.

PHONEMICS²

The phonemes of Eloyi seem to be as follows:

CONSONANTAL

Plosives	labial	labio-dental	alveolar	palatal	velar	labio-velar
voiceless	p		t		k	kp
voiced	b		d		g	gb
Affricates						
voiceless				c		
voiced				j		
Nasals						
voiced	m		n	ɲ	ŋ	
Fricatives						
voiceless		f	s	ʃ		
voiced		v	z	ʒ		
Lateral						
voiced			l			
Vibrant						
voiced flap			r			
Semivowels						
voiced	w			y		

¹ See endnote.

² The Editors have retranscribed the author's material in a broader notation.

VOCALIC



PROSODIC FEATURES

Vowels occasionally occur long (marked :) or overlong (marked ::).

There are three levels of tone, high ˊ, mid ˉ (but usually unmarked in this paper), and low ˋ. Very occasionally falling or rising tones occur.

PHONETIC NOTES

1. The voiceless plosives p, t, k are aspirated.
2. k has a lightly rounded allophone before u, and a strongly rounded allophone before o and ɔ.
3. The nasals m, n, ŋ, when tone-marked, are syllabic.
4. r is a single downward flap.
5. All final low tones have an extra low glide.

WORD-LIST³

1. all - every	úwunáwuná	pl. mbanámбанá
- whole	kpé::kpeyí	pl. kpé::kpeмба
2. and (linking nouns)	m̀b̀ùla	
*3. animal	izóʃì	pl. izóʃì
4. ashes	kùl̀b̀	
5. at home	è yi mogbà (= he is home)	
6. back - of body	ósú	
7. bad	úwùrá	pl. m̀b̀ìrá
*8. bark - of tree,	kukù	pl. ekù
peel, husk, shell		
9. <u>because</u> they were afraid	kuwóngù bó ríyi	
10. belly	ùb̀ù	pl. ìb̀ù
*11. big	úwòʃì	pl. m̀b̀èʃì
- fat	bùl̀b̀m̀à	
12. bird	òkpàkù	pl. ákpàkù
13. bite	kù	
14. black	rukùjì	pl. warukùjì
	ùjì	pl. wèjì
15. blood	enjì	
16. blow - wind	tù	
- mouth	fu	
17. bone	kúkù	pl. ékù
18. breathe	féj̀s̀	
19. burn	pùm̀ò	

³ An asterisk before a number draws attention to an item in the list of Additional Words.

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20. canoe	kódá, kódá	pl. ádá
21. child	úmé	pl. émé
- young child	úmé ʃerí	pl. émé ʃerí
22. cold	tùmò	
23. come	bó	
24. cook (verb)	vyé	
- food	vyówé	
25. count	wàyímà	
26. cut	kpólò	
27. day	ɔnu (= sun)	
28. debt	kókpá	pl. ákpá
29. die	kpómò	
30. dig	vú	
- a hole	vúkùnò	
31. dirty	yéjírí	
32. dog	izú	pl. ízú
33. drink	wó	
34. dry	ʃírímà	
35. dust	umbùrù	
36. ear	kólù	pl. álù
37. earth, soil	ézí	
38. eat	rí	
39. egg	kɔʃi	pl. aʃi
40. elephant	ìnji	pl. inji
41. eye	kúyi	pl. éyi
42. fall - stumble	kpɛji	
- come down	tàmà	
43. far	h̀dàmà	
44. fat - grease	afyà	
- oil	ɛzí	
45. father	ádá	pl. mbádá
46. fear (noun)	ìyi	
(verb)	ríyi	
47. feather	kucere	pl. icere
48. few people	énzù <u>ókpó cá::</u>	
49. fight (verb)	kírèwà	
50. fire	ɔyi	pl. eyi
51. fish	ùmù	pl. èmù
52. five (numeral)	kɔlò	
(adj.)	élò	
53. float	fúlòmèmbi (= to be on surface of water)	
54. flow - river	rimà	
55. fly (verb)	eyìmò (also = stand, run)	
56. fog, mist	kubú	pl. ebú
*57. foot	kòdàba	pl. àdàba
58. four (numeral)	kondo	
(adj.)	endo	

59. fowl	ènu	pl. enu
60. fruit	kúmúmà	pl. ímúmà
61. give – one item	tó	
– several items	kú	
62. goat	emú	pl. émú
63. good	ʃòʃi	
64. grass	kósè	pl. ósè
65. guts, intestines	kókò	pl. ákò
66. hair – of head, body	kújí	pl. íjí
*67. hand – palm of	kici	pl. luci
68. he (animate subjects)	é or á	emphatic uwu ^é or uwu ^á
69. head	réʃí	pl. éʃí
70. hear	pwà	
*71. heart	kùdú ɲgwebjì	
72. heavy	eyíólú	pl. oyíólú
73. here	múne	
74. hippopotamus	ìnjíwembi	pl. ìnjíbembi
	(= elephant of water)	
75. hit	kpá	
76. hold – in hand	ràwú mowú (= hold fist)	
	ràwú mewó (= hold arms)	
77. house	ùgù	pl. ìgù
78. how?	woté	
*79. hunt (verb)	tókótó	
80. husband	ónú	pl. ánú
81. I	mi	emphatic imimì
82. if he goes	a ku kiyá njiba kamà	
83. in the house	m ^e mi ùgù	
84. kill	ɲgbé or mgbé	
85. know	yítù	
*86. lake, pool	kùbú	pl. èbú
87. laugh	ɲòɲgomà	
88. leaf	kúpú	pl. épú
89. left side	kamba ɲgɔzù (= side of toilet)	
90. leopard	ìce	pl. íce
91. lie – tell a	sís ^e rá	
92. lie down	nomà	
93. live, exist	féjò (= to have breath)	
	réyi (= to live, be awake)	
	yi (= to be, exist)	
	ɔomò (= to be in a place)	
94. liver	kutu	pl. itu
95. long – rope-like	oyiwòʒi	pl. iyiwòʒi
96. louse	kòʃámá	pl. àʃámá
97. male	anzónú	pl. anzónú
98. many people	énzù rìbàrìbà	
99. monkey	ekó	pl. ékó

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100. moon	óvyá	pl. évyá
101. mother	éné	pl. mbéné
*102. mountain, hill	kocakú	pl. acakú
103. mouth	kenzu	pl. lonzu
104. name	éjì	
105. narrow - of a path	èyi féré	pl. oyi féré
106. near	kèlè	
107. neck	kító	pl. lùtó
108. new	úwopó	pl. mbepó
109. night	útú	pl. ítú
110. not good	í jòfì mó (= it good not)	
<u>do not go</u>	kù sò mó (= you go not)	
111. nose	régù	pl. ágù
*112. <u>old man</u>	onzú mákó (also = elder)	
113. one (numeral)	kònzé	
114. <u>other thing</u>	kíyá ñjìfo	
115. person	ónzù	pl. énzù
116. play (noun)	éné	
(verb)	nénè	
*117. pull	yí	
118. push	bó	
*119. rat - grey	ekúlu	
- brown	òdíci	
120. rain	ùkpò (also = God)	pl. èkpò
*121. right - true	ògèca	
122. right side	kamba ñgunjì (= side of eating hand)	
123. river	rísù	
124. road	oguze	pl. eguze
125. root	kokpa	pl. akpa
126. rope	òrìmóci	pl. èrìmóci
127. rotten	vumà	
128. rub	hzo	
129. salt	otópwà	
130. sand	òjè	
131. say	zò	
132. scratch oneself	vò	
133. sea	—	
134. see	má	
- look at	yésè	
- be able to see	mébe	
*135. seed	kúyi	pl. éyi (of fruit)
136. sew	gó	
137. sharp - of knife	rímò	
138. short - of man	odàngirí (= dwarf)	
139. <u>sing a song</u>	sokómú	
- sing songs	sámú	
140. sit down	hzmà	

141. sky	ójí (= above)	
142. sleep (noun)	ondò	
(verb)	kpondò	
143. small	werí:	pl. <u>ńberí:</u>
- tiny	wiríwiri	
144. smell (noun)	ùmbò	pl. ìmbò
(verb)	pùmbò (= to smell something)	
	wùmbò (= to stink)	
145. smoke (noun)	úwú	
146. smooth - of skin	sé:sé (also = to shine, clean)	
147. snake	ɔ:ku	pl. a:ku
148. <u>some</u> people	énzù <u>ńbófimò</u>	
	énzù <u>ńbàfo</u> (= other people)	
149. soup	ɔsò	pl. esò (= gravy)
*150. spit (verb)	fɔtè	
151. split - wood	za	
152. squeeze	pírí (also = to wring out, pinch)	
*153. stab, pierce	gu	
154. stand	rìmà	
155. star	kúlóvyó	pl. ìlóvyó
156. steal	wèlò	
157. stone	kóci	pl. éci
158. <u>straight</u> stick	kúweyi <u>kuyi tototo</u>	
159. <u>suck</u> breast	wókómè	pl. <u>wámè</u>
	(= drink breast(s))	
160. sun	ɔnu	
161. swallow (verb)	bìri	
162. swell - of body	ńemà	
163. swim	tém̄bi	
164. <u>that</u> man	ónzàwù	
165. <u>there</u>	mɔmò	
166. they (animate subject)	o emphatic umba o	
167. thick - of soup	étù	
*168. thin - of man	ḡéréré (also = narrow)	
169. think	kámàsa	
170. <u>this</u> man	onzele	
171. <u>three</u> (numeral)	kolá	
(adj.)	elá	
172. throw	tó	
173. tie - around waist	sémuḡí	
- on head	púrefí	
- string, etc.	mà	
174. tongue	òtíyè	pl. ètíyè
175. tooth	kúnì	pl. éḡì
176. tree	kúweyi	pl. éweyi
177. turn - change	fùléwó (= to turn hand)	
- about, upside down	fùlòbirí	
- return	gbàmà	

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178. two (numeral) (adj.)	kòpo epò	
179. vomit	komò	
180. walk	zemà	
*181. warm, hot	yóyí	
182. wash - oneself - cloth	womò gbò	
183. water	—	pl. embítà
184. we	kí emphatic	kínzú kí
185. wet	yembi (= to have wet) walembi (= to be wet)	
186. what?	kìngbé	
187. when?	ɔnúné	
188. white	ùru	pl. ìru
	kùru (when no noun precedes)	
189. who?	uwé	
190. wide - of river	wówà	
191. wife	óko	pl. éko
192. he will go	è bé rímò	
193. wind	kòkpò	pl. ekpò
194. wing	kúkówó	pl. ékówó
195. with me	mbula mi	
196. woman	okókpàyi	pl. ekókpàyi or ékómbèkpàyi
197. woods, bush - forest	kókátá kúkù	pl. ákátá pl. ékúkù
198. worm	ùgbògbò	pl. ìgbògbò
199. you (singular) (plural)	ɲɔ emphatic ɲɔ lu emphatic lúní lu	
200. year	kárí	pl. lórí

ADDITIONAL WORDS

*3. cf. meat	kuvyé	pl. ivyé
*8. cf. skin	kukpo ñgwéñú (= skin of body)	
*11. cf. fat, large	búlòmà	
*57. cf. leg	kólé	pl. álé
*67. cf. fist finger	ɔwú èfi	pl. awú pl. àfi
*71. cf. inside *'insides', belly	mèmi (= on the inside) ùbù	
*75. cf. beat - drum, etc. strike (and make cry)	bí bíwémú	
*79. cf. shoot kick	kpízíziṅgà (= shoot gun) tókólé (= throw leg) kpákólé	
*86. cf. creek, stream	ókú	pl. ékú
*102. cf. mound, rise	úkpóci	pl. ékpóci

*112.	cf. feeble old man	onyákókó	
*117.	cf. stretch	ndà	
*119.	cf. mouse	icí	pl. ící
	cutting-grass	izórici	
*121.	cf. that's it exactly	riyi tàyi cá::	
*135.	cf. corn, yam (collective)	òyiri	
*150.	cf. saliva	òtè	
*153.	cf. to pierce through,		
	enter	sa	
*168.	cf. tall and thin	èyi úlálá	
*181	cf. tepid	wùlèwùlè	

NOTE. The Eloyi were first visited by Rohlfs in 1867. See Gerhard Rohlfs, 'Die Art der Begrüssung bei verschiedenen Negerstämmen', *Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen*, Gotha Justus Perthes, pp. 333-336, (Afu). See also *Reise durch Nord Afrika, 1865 bis 1867*, Ergänzungsheft No. 34 zu *Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen*, Gotha Justus Perthes, (Afu). For a more recent notice, with a map, see *Peoples of the Niger-Benue Confluence, Part X, 'Western Africa'*, of the *Ethnographic Survey of Africa*, London, International African Institute, 1955, pp. 136-9. In this last source, Afu is erroneously classified as a Kwa language. Greenberg classifies this language, 'Afo', as in the 'Plateau' sub-group of the Benue-Congo sub-family of the Niger-Congo family. See Joseph Greenberg, *The Languages of Africa*, Part II, *International Journal of American Linguistics*, Vol. 29, No. 1, January, 1963, Bloomington, Indiana University, and Mouton and Co., the Hague, Netherlands. The name 'Benue-Congo' is approximately equivalent to 'Central Branch', of Greenberg's earlier work, and includes the languages called 'Benue-Cross', by Westermann, and 'Semi-Bantu' by Johnston.—*Editors*.