

**NOTES TOWARDS A
SECOANA
GRAMMAR**

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Notes Towards a Secoana Grammar by William Crisp

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WILLIAM CRISP

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SECOANA
GRAMMAR**

NOTES
TOWARDS A
SECOANA GRAMMAR.

COLLECTED BY
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SECOND EDITION.



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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN 1864, the Rev. J. Fredoux, of the Paris Missionary Society, published at Capetown a short tract entitled, "A Sketch of the Sechuana Grammar." Though only extending over twelve pages, this little book contained the key to the whole subject. M. Fredoux's lamented death deprived Secoana students of a master singularly able and observant. His book soon became out of print, and in 1880 the task fell to the present writer of drawing out more at length the lines already given, and of adding to them such further knowledge as continued use of the language had contributed. In the present edition a few errors have been corrected, and some additional information supplied. The Serolong dialect has been used throughout.

BLOEMFONTEIN,

September, 1885

NOTES

TOWARDS A

SECOANA GRAMMAR.

I. ORTHOGRAPHY.

1. THE Secoana Language has 34 sounds, which are represented by the following letters:—

VOWELS.

a	pronounced as a in English in <i>hard</i>			<i>Examples.</i>
e	”	a	”	<i>ba, they.</i>
é	”	i	”	<i>gó betsa, to beat.</i>
è	”	r	”	<i>péló, heart.</i>
i	”	ee	”	<i>gó òma, to stand.</i>
ō	”	ou	”	<i>gó bína, to dance.</i>
o	”	o	”	<i>gó bōna, to see.</i>
ó	”	u	”	<i>motse, town.</i>
u	”	u	”	<i>péló.</i>
				<i>go ruta, to teach.</i>

CONSONANTS.

b	pronounced as b in English			<i>baba, enemies.</i>
f*	”	v	in Dutch in <i>vader</i>	<i>go fóla, to recover.</i>

* This letter should be slightly aspirated. In the Setlhapiñ dialect it is a pure *h*. In some other dialects it is pronounced as *bh*, which was probably its primitive sound, since further on it will be found to be capable of permutation into *ph*.

k	pronounced as k in English			<i>ka, by.</i>
l	"	l	"	<i>lé, and.</i>
l	before <i>i</i> or <i>u</i> represents a liquid <i>d</i> sound			<i>lîlô, things.</i>
m	pronounced as m in English			<i>mashi, milk.</i>
n	"	n	"	<i>nare, a buffalo.</i>
p	"	p	"	<i>pitsa, a pot.</i>
r	"	r	"	<i>rôna, we.</i>
s	"	s	"	<i>selô, a thing.</i>
t	"	t	"	<i>tau, a lion.</i>
y	"	j	in French in <i>Jacques</i>	<i>yaka, as.</i>
c*	"	ch	in English in <i>cheese</i>	<i>go-côma, to hunt.</i>
g	"	g	in Dutch in <i>gaan</i>	<i>gapê, again.</i>

COMBINATIONS.

ny	pronounced as gn in French	in <i>seigneur</i>	<i>'nya, no.</i>	
sh	"	sh in English	in <i>shall</i>	<i>go skupa, to point.</i>
tl	"	tl	"	<i>tlala, hunger.</i>
ts	"	ts	"	<i>twela, a path.</i>
ñ	"	ng	"	<i>en? what?</i>

ASPIRATED CONSONANTS.

ch	c followed by an aspiration	<i>chaka, a battle-axe.</i>
kh	k " "	<i>khudi, a hollow place.</i>
ph	p " "	<i>phéfô, wind.</i>
th	t " "	<i>thata, hard.</i>
tsh	tl " "	<i>letshô, an eye.</i>
tsh	ts " "	<i>letska, a lake.</i>
kg	k " by a guttural	<i>kgombô, an ox.</i>

NOTE.—The following examples will show how necessary it is to master the distinction between the unaspirated and aspirated consonants.

Go <i>cola</i> , to take off a nether garment.	Go <i>chola</i> , to receive.
Go <i>pôta</i> , to pass on one side.	Go <i>photha</i> , to thresh.
<i>Tala</i> , green.	Go <i>thala</i> , to rule lines.
Go <i>tlatsa</i> , to fill.	Go <i>tlhatsa</i> , to vomit.
<i>Twela</i> , a path.	Go <i>twêla</i> , to live.
<i>Kaba</i> , a fan. <i>Khaba</i> , The Modder River.	Go <i>kgaba</i> , to adorn one's self.

2. When one vowel follows another, usually each must be distinctly sounded; e.g. *lonaô*, a foot; *go bua*, to speak; *tiègo*, delay. *O* before *a*, *e*, and *i* has sometimes a diphthongal sound somewhat like *w* in English; e.g. *go shoa*, to die; *koathao*, a punishment; *go nodla*, to sink; *lorot*,

* Cheese is perhaps the least aspirated *ca* which English can supply; great care must be taken to pronounce *c* without any aspiration.

red ants. Words in which *o* comes before *a*, *e*, and *i*, and in which both vowels are distinctly sounded, should be written as follows:—Moköa, *a heap*; boböi, *cowardice*. When the three vowels *aea* come together, as in the words *go tsamaea, to go away*; *go baea, to place*; they are sounded as *aiah* in *Isaiah*.

In pronouncing, each syllable must be divided at the vowel; e.g. *tha-mo, a neck*, not *tham-o*. The accent is always on the penultima, except when the word ends with *ñ*, as in *bönañ* (*see*); then the last syllable is very decidedly emphasized. When a sentence contains two or more consecutive monosyllabic words, the first of the two, or of each two, is emphasized; e.g. *Ga ke e se ke be ke èè go ya teñ, I have never yet been to eat there*. So also when a monosyllable ends a sentence the emphasis is thrown back on to the vowel of the preceding word; e.g. *Kea sha, I am burning*; *Ba tla shoa, They will die*.

Emphasis has much to do with distinguishing between many Secoana words. The student is recommended to ask a native to pronounce carefully for him the following:—*Go fula kubu, to shoot at a hippopotamus*, and *go fula louñö, to pluck fruit*; *Ke mothó, I am a man*, and *Ke mothó, It is a man*; *A o botlhókó? Are you sick?* and *A o botlhókó? Is he sick?* or to try and master the differences in accents and emphasis in the following words:—*Go tlóla, to jump*; *go tlhóla, to conquer*; *go tlöla, to anoint*; *go tlhóla, to remain for a day*; *go tlhóla, to spy*; *go tlhóla, to create*.

3. Of the consonants, some are *soft* and others *hard*, as shown below; and, according to fixed rules, those of the former class are often permuted into those of the latter.

Soft.	Hard.	Examples of Permutation.	
b	p	<i>go böna, to see</i> ;	<i>pönö, a sight</i> .
f	ph	<i>go femëla, to defend</i> ;	<i>phemëlö, defence</i> .
g	kg	<i>logata, a skull</i> ;	<i>likgata, skulls</i> .
h	kh	<i>go huma, to be rich</i> ;	<i>khumö, wealth</i> .
l	t	<i>go löpa, to request</i> ;	<i>töpä, a request</i> .
r	th	<i>lorakö, a wall</i> ;	<i>lithakö, walls</i> .
s	tsh	<i>go sila, to grind</i> ;	<i>tshilö, a grindstone</i> .
sh	ch	<i>go shótöfela, to hope</i> ;	<i>chólöfèlö, hope</i> .