

A KORA-ENGLISH DICTIONARY, WITH ENGLISH-KORA INDEX

This chapter presents a Kora to English dictionary, with an English to Kora index, where the electronic version includes links to audio files illustrating the pronunciation of approximately one third of the Kora words – making it effectively a ‘talking dictionary’. Although the main function of the dictionary is to serve as an aid to the reader who is working closely through the texts in the original language, or who might be trying to learn the language, it may well also be used as a source of cultural information in its own right. With the needs of various users in mind, the organisation of the entries has been kept as clear as possible, and the reader has not been burdened with constant redirections to other entries. The dictionary is supplemented by three lists of specialised terms organised by semantic field, which collect together for easier reference (1) the names of the Korana clans, (2) the names of larger animals, birds and arthropods, and (3) the names of plants and plant products.

For purposes of compiling this consolidated dictionary, Meinhof’s Glossary¹ served as a convenient point of departure. This core was expanded by the addition of words from a variety of other sources, including the notebooks of Lucy Lloyd;² Jan Engelbrecht’s studies published in 1928 and 1936;³ the various narratives and comparative word lists collected by Louis Maingard;⁴ and the texts contributed by Benjamin Kats.⁵ A few archaic words from Carl Wuras’s Vocabulary⁶ not found elsewhere have also been entered, plus some additional Kora star names that were given to Lloyd by the |Xam speaker, †Asin.⁷ Most of the musical terms are from Percival R. Kirby;⁸ while a further few words were sourced from the brief list supplied by William Burchell.⁹ The main source for each lexical item is indicated at the end of the entry by an abbreviation in square brackets, where Mhf stands for Meinhof, Lld for Lloyd, Ebt for Engelbrecht, Mgd for Maingard, Wrs for Wuras and Kby for Kirby. (The numbers that appear after Ebt and Mgd refer to the dates of the relevant publications.) In the case of the words sourced from Lloyd’s manuscripts, most are from her second Kora notebook, but a few have been obtained from the narratives dictated to her by Piet Links.

With the likely user in mind, we have chosen not to clutter the entries through the addition of excessive grammatical information such as word class labels. The latter are in any case largely redundant, since an entry reflecting one of the singular gender suffixes *-b*, *-s* or *-i* is self-evidently a noun; entries featuring an affixed *-sa*

(and sometimes *-xa*) are adjectival; while entries with *-se* (and sometimes *-ka*) are adverbial. Entries without such affixes are almost always verbal in character.

The glosses provided are the core translation equivalents: any additional nuances that might arise, for example from situation-specific or metaphoric uses, should hopefully emerge from the texts themselves. Inevitably there are some words without exact equivalents, perhaps because they have a different semantic range from the closest counterpart in the target language, or perhaps because particular aspects of society and culture do not match one another exactly. In the case of the English to Kora index, only the key words are given: more detailed information will be found under the entry for the Kora word itself.

Readers who have worked through the preceding chapters will be aware that no official set of spelling and writing rules (that is, an orthography) was ever implemented for Kora. For the main entries in this dictionary, as explained in the chapter on Kora phonetics, we have adopted semi 'standardised' forms based on the conventions that were used by Meinhof. At the same time, we have tried to include most of the variants found in the heritage texts.

We have provided a separate listing for clicks followed by the letter 'g' (which is to say, clicks with audible posterior release), since they were expressly indicated not only by Lloyd and Engelbrecht (in his earlier work), but also by Maingard, and it seems better not to discard this information, since it may one day prove valuable for comparative studies. For the most part, these clicks match clicks that were recorded by other authors as plain.

The clicks it proved hardest to accommodate in this consolidated dictionary were those that feature simple aspiration. The conventions used to represent this accompaniment in the past varied considerably, even in the usage of a single author, and it seems clear that some speakers produced these clicks with only a faint degree of aspiration, whereas others gave them audible frication. The clicks written with a following letter 'k' in the earlier work of Engelbrecht typically match clicks recorded by others as fricated, but it appears that in the speech of his consultants they were probably aspirated, and since it did not seem appropriate to obliterate a possible dialectal difference by subsuming them under the fricated clicks written as !x, we have listed them separately as a subset of this series. (The solution is not elegant, but has the advantage of preserving potentially valuable information.)

For purposes of alphabetical ordering, the gender suffixes of the nouns have been excluded from consideration. In practical terms, this means that a word may occasionally appear a few entries later than might otherwise have been expected. *Compound nouns* have been organised in a way that has seemed likely to make it easiest for the reader to find them: they are placed after a particular verb where they are based on and commence with that verb – or after a particular noun, in cases where they commence with that noun. *Compound verbs* are organised in a sub-sequence immediately below the entry for the main verb.

In the arrangement of the entries, the vowels are ordered in the sequence: plain vowel (**a**), long vowel (**ā**), and nasalised vowel (**ã**). A non-click consonant always comes before a click, and the clicks themselves are ordered as follows:

Clicks: Dental (**!**), lateral (**||**), (post)alveolar (**!**), palato-alveolar (**‡**).

Accompaniments: **!**, **!g**, **!'**, **!h**, **!x**, **!kx'**, **!n**

If a word is not found immediately, the pointers below may be helpful:

- As a general rule, words encountered in the texts with vowel sequences spelled ‘*ue*’, ‘*ou*’ and ‘*ei*’ will be found under entries with the standardised spellings **oe**, **au** and **ai**.
- Nasalised vowels are not always consistently indicated in the texts, and the reader will encounter many variations involving these.
- Clicks written with a following ‘*k*’ in the work of Maingard and Lloyd are typically plain, but may occasionally reflect the fricated accompaniment (as **!x**) in the standard entry.
- A click represented without any additional letter (‘!’) in the work of Maingard and Lloyd will most often be found as a delayed ejective (‘glottalised’) click (as **!'**), but may occasionally be found as an ejective affricated click (as **!kx'**).
- Words featuring a palato-alveolar click (**‡**) were frequently recorded with a dental click (**!**), and vice versa.

Where occasional references are made to words in other languages, the sources are Haacke and Eiseb¹⁰ for the Namibian Khoekhoe dialects, which include Nama; Kilian-Hatz¹¹ for Khwe; Visser¹² for Naro; McLaren¹³ and Tshabe and others¹⁴ for Xhosa; Doke and others¹⁵ for Zulu; Pelling¹⁶ for Ndebele; Rycroft¹⁷ for Swati; Mabelle and Dieterlen¹⁸ for Sotho; Brown,¹⁹ and Cole²⁰ for Tswana; Van Warmelo²¹ for Venda; Louw²² for Karanga; Scott and Hetherwick²³ for Nyanja; Tobias and Turvey²⁴ for Kwanyama; and Viljoen and others²⁵ for Ndonga.

Endnotes

- 1 Carl Meinhof, “*Wörterverzeichnis*,” in *Koranadialekt des Hottentottischen* (Berlin: Reimer, 1930) (Supplement 12 to the *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen*), 78–145.
- 2 Lucy C. Lloyd, “Manuscript notebooks on !Kora [1879].” Originals housed with the Maingard Papers in the Manuscripts Collection of Archival and Special Collections at the Unisa Library in Pretoria; digitised versions available online at <http://lloydbleekcollection.cs.uct.ac.za> under the heading of Lucy Lloyd, Kora Notebooks, MP1–3. (The notebook labelled MP4 contains the work of Lloyd’s younger sister Isabella, and is not an entirely reliable source.) Words for plants and animals in the second notebook (MP2) were obtained during an outing to the Natural History Museum in Cape Town. Various other words and phrases obtained from Piet Links appear mainly in the first notebook (MP1).

- 3 Jan A. Engelbrecht, “*Studies oor Korannataal*,” *Annale van die Universiteit van Stellenbosch* 6, ser. B, no. 2 (1928); and *The Korana* (Cape Town: Maskew Miller, 1936).
- 4 Louis F. Maingard, “Studies in Korana history, customs and language” *Bantu Studies* 6, no. 2 (1932), 103–161; “Korana texts from Bloemhof,” *African Studies* 26, no. 1 (1967), 43–46; and “The Korana dialects,” *African Studies* 23, no. 2 (1964), 57–66.
- 5 Benjamin Kats (and Carl Meinhof, ed.), “*Korana-Erzählungen*,” *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen* 26 (1935/6), 161–174.
- 6 Carl Wuras, *Vokabular der Korana-Sprache* [1858], ed. Walther Bourquin, *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen*: Suppl. 1 (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, Hamburg: C. Boysen, 1920).
- 7 Lloyd, “Manuscript notes on star names in [Xam and Kora, obtained from †Asin [1874].” Digitised version available online at <http://lloydbleekcollection.cs.uct.ac.za> under the heading of Lucy Lloyd, [Xam notebooks, BC_151_A2_1049, 3901–3907. Thanks to José Manuel de Prada Samper for alerting me to this list.
- 8 Percival R. Kirby, “The music and musical instruments of the Korana” *Bantu Studies* 6, no. 1 (1932), 183–204.
- 9 William Burchell, *Travels in the Interior of Southern Africa*, vol. 2 (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, 1824), 253–255.
- 10 Wilfrid H. G. Haacke and Eliphas Eiseb, *A Khoekhoegowab Dictionary, with an English-Khoekhoegowab Index* (Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan, 2002).
- 11 Christa Kilian-Hatz, *Khwe Dictionary* (Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe, 2003).
- 12 Hessel Visser, *Naro Dictionary* (Gantsi, Botswana: Naro Language Project, 2001).
- 13 J. McLaren, *A New Concise Xhosa-English Dictionary* (rev. W. G. Bennie, transliterated J. J. R. Jolobe) (Cape Town: Longmans Southern Africa, 1963).
- 14 Sonwabo Lungile Tshabe, F. M. Shoba, Buyiswa Mavis Mini, H. W. Pahl, A. M. Pienaar and T. A. Ndungane, *The Greater Dictionary of IsiXhosa* (3 vols) (Alice: University of Fort Hare, 2006).
- 15 Clement Doke, D. M. Malcolm, J. M. A. Sikakana and B. W. Vilakazi, *English-Zulu, Zulu-English Dictionary* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 1990).
- 16 J. N. Pelling, *A Practical Ndebele Dictionary* (Bulawayo: Daystar Publications, 1966).
- 17 D. K. Rycroft, *Concise SiSwati Dictionary* (Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, 1981).
- 18 A. Mabile and H. Dieterlen (reclassified, rev. and enlarged R. A. Paroz), *Southern Sotho-English Dictionary* (South African orthography) (Moriya: Morija Sesuto Book Depot, 1988).
- 19 J. Tom Brown, *Setswana Dictionary: Setswana-English and English-Setswana* (Johannesburg: Pula Press, 1982).
- 20 Desmond T. Cole, *Setswana – Animals and Plants* (Gaborone: The Botswana Society, 1995).
- 21 N. J. van Warmelo, *Venda Dictionary: Tshivenda-English* (Pretoria: J. L. van Schaik, 1989).
- 22 C. S. Louw, *A Manual of the Chikaranga Language* (Bulawayo: Philpott and Collins, 1915).
- 23 David Clement Scott, *Dictionary of the Nyanja Language*, ed. Alexander Hetherwick (London: Lutterworth Press, 1929).
- 24 G. W. R. Tobias and B. H. C. Turvey, *English-Kwanyama Dictionary* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 1954).
- 25 J. J. Viljoen, P. Amakali and N. Namuandi, *Oshindonga/English; English/Oshindonga Dictionary* (Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan, 2004).