

Part VI

The Sounds (Phonemes) of Menominee

A REVIEW

THE SOUNDS (PHONEMES) OF MENOMINEE

A REVIEW

Consonants: p t c k h q
 m n
 s
 w y

Vowels: a ~~æ~~ e i o u
 ā ~~æ~~ ē ī ō ū

Diphthongs: ua (as in nekuatuasetah)
 ia (as in nianan)

The Consonants

The letters p, t, k, h, m, n, s, w, and y stand for about the same sounds they do in English, except that s sometimes sounds a little more like English "sh" (as in "shelf") in some words for some speakers, and a w at the end of a word is not always rounded - the lips are sometimes brought together without rounding them.*

c stands for a sound like "ch" in English "church". For example necias, ocipiw.

q stands for the glottal stop: āneq nap. wēqsekan. ags~~æ~~-en.

*Students of Menomini should listen carefully to the way native speakers pronounce w at the end of words.

The VowelsShortLong

a sounds like the vowel in "but"
For example: kan, anam, sōpomah

ā sounds like the first vowel in
"father." For example: wāpah,
netān.**

ɛ sounds like the vowel in "cat."
For example: sākɛw, nōnākanɛp.

ē sounds like ɛ, only longer and
clearer: For example: wēwēnen,
nēqnemāw, anēm.

e sounds like the vowel in "bit".
For example: nekot, kenah, eneq.

ē sounds like the vowel in "wait".
For example: wēqsekan, mēsenaq,
sēwehtākan.

i sounds like the vowel in "see".
For example necias, nepiam,
āyiniw.

ī sounds like i only longer and clearer.
For example ocipīw, pihtiknon, nīs,
nīw.

o sounds like the vowel in "put".
For example nekot, enoh,
nīcianok, metomoh.

ō sounds like the vowel in "wrote".
For example: sōpomah, nōhekan, pōsō.

u sounds like the vowel in "soon".
For example: ohpuan, nekuatuasetah.

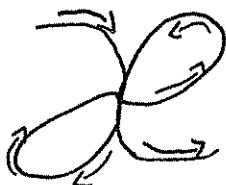
ū sounds like u, only longer and
clearer. For example: sūniyan.

**For some speakers, ā sounds more like the vowel in "tall."

Basis of the System

The spelling system just described is based on the one used in Leonard Bloomfield's The Menomini Language and the one used in his 11,000-12,000 entry Menomoni-English Lexicon. The two changes we made are:

a. Instead of "ɛ" (for the vowel sound in "cat"), a special symbol which would have to be specially installed on a typewriter, we write "ae", which can be typed on an ordinary typewriter. In handwriting this can be written "æ". This is just "ae" written close together. It is written starting in the upper left hand corner:



b. The second change is that where Bloomfield placed a raised dot after a vowel to show that it was long (for example a[•]neq nap), which cannot be typed on an ordinary typewriter, we write a long mark over a long vowel (for example āneq nap). This can be typed on an ordinary typewriter by turning the cylinder and using either the dash or the underline.

