

## **Phonology**

As in other Tai dialects and languages, the phonological pattern of Lungming is based on the syllable. Each syllable has distinctions in tone,

initial (consonant or consonant cluster), nucleus (vowel or diphthong), and optional final consonant.

**Tones.** On open syllables (those ending with final vowel, semivowel, or nasal), Lungming has six tones. These tones, along with pitch levels and contours based on the Chao 5-level pitch scale (Chao 1930), include the following:

- 1 - high level, 55: *laa*<sup>1</sup> 'to seek'
- 2 - high rising, 45: *laa*<sup>2</sup> 'a flock'
- 3 - mid level, glottalized, 33: *laa*<sup>3</sup> 'to be cracked'
- 4 - low falling, from mid low to low, 21:  
*laa*<sup>4</sup> 'to take one's leave'
- 5 - low level, 11: *laa*<sup>5</sup> 'epidemic'
- 6 - falling, from mid-low to low and then rising to mid-low, glottalized, 212: *laa*<sup>6</sup> 'to snatch'

**Checked** syllables (those ending in *p t k ʔ*) with short **vowels** have tones phonetically similar to tones 1 2 3 4 5 of open syllables: *loʔ*<sup>1</sup> (final imperative particle), *loʔ*<sup>2</sup> (final imperative particle), *phat*<sup>3</sup> 'to ~~winner~~', *kok*<sup>4</sup> 'to simmer', *pik*<sup>5</sup> 'to be crowded'.

The **distinction** between tone 4 (low falling) and tone 5 (low **level**) in short syllables is very hard to hear. **In the** course of the fieldwork, this distinction ~~was~~ only discovered in the eighth week of intensive **study**, and a careful recheck showed that all Central **Tai** dialects in Kwangsi under investigation ~~had~~ it. Li's Lungchow **glossary** shows no such **distinction**, and with great respect and hesitation **Gedney** suggests a possible oversight.

Checked syllables with long vowels have tones phonetically similar to tones 1 2 3 5 of open syllables: *teep*<sup>1</sup> 'to drink with pleasure, smacking the lips', *kook*<sup>2</sup> 'rice husks', *yiip*<sup>3</sup> 'to pickle in brine', *laap*<sup>5</sup> 'to dry (meat)'. Tone 3 on the checked syllables is not glottalized as it is on the open syllables.

The six tones of Lungming had their origin in an earlier system of three tones on open syllables and no tonal contrast on checked syllables. Those tones on open syllables have been conventionally designated as A B C and the fourth category as D. The tones in each of these categories underwent phonemic splits, conditioned by the phonetic nature of the initial consonant of each syllable. With the D category, the splits were further conditioned by vowel length. The pattern of these splits in Lungming can be represented as follows:

tone initial				D	D
	A	B	C	short	long
aspirate	1	2	3	3	2
plain	1	2	3	3	2
glottal	4	2	3	3	2
voiced	4	5	6	4	5

In Lungming, tones B, C, and D exhibit a two-way split between earlier voiceless and earlier voiced initials. Tone A, however, deviates from this split by including the glottals with the voiced initials. In a study on early Tai tones and tonal splits, Gedney (1978) notes that the tonal splits that

occurred in tone B and tone D with long vowels often show the same conditioning factor. Such is the case for Lungming. Based on the Lungming data, as well as on data from other Tai dialects, Gedney suggests that the B and D proto-tones may have had some phonetic similarity.

Note that the checked syllables with short vowels and tones 1, 2, or 5, and the checked syllables with long vowels and tones 1 or 3, do not reflect the historical development of the tone. These syllables with their respective tones probably resulted from secondary shortening of the vowel, or they represent distinctive vocabulary such as loanwords and particles or syllables resulting from onomatopoeic processes.

**Consonants.** Lungming has the following consonant inventory:

	Labial	Labiodental	Alveolar	Palatal	Labiovelar	Velar	Glottal
<b>Stops</b>							
Vl. <b>unasp</b>	p		t	c		k	ʔ
Vl. <b>asp</b>	ph		th	ch		kh	
Vl. <b>spirants</b>		f	s	ɕ			h
Vd. <b>nasals</b>	m		n			ŋ	
Vd. <b>sonorants</b>		v	l	y	ʋ	ɰ	

The **initial** consonants of Lungming include:

**Voiceless unaspirated stops.** p t c k ʔ: paak<sup>2</sup>

'mouth', *taam*<sup>3</sup> 'gall bladder', *coo*<sup>3</sup> 'ancestor', *kʏn*<sup>4</sup> 'person', *?aa*<sup>4</sup> 'to crow'.

*Voiceless aspirated stops. ph th ch kh: phaaj*<sup>5</sup> 'to strike', *thʏn*<sup>1</sup> 'to swallow', *chuu*<sup>1</sup> 'rough', *khan*<sup>1</sup> 'to crow'. In some words, probably all loanwords, the informant fluctuated between initial *ch* and *š*: *kii*<sup>1</sup> *kwaan*<sup>1</sup> *chaaj*<sup>1</sup> or *kii*<sup>1</sup> *kwaan*<sup>1</sup> *šaaj*<sup>1</sup> 'machine gun'. These variations are cross-referenced in the glossary under the main entries.

*Voicelss spirants. f s š h: foon*<sup>6</sup> 'brown', *sii*<sup>2</sup> 'to abandon', *šop*<sup>3</sup> 'to smell', *huuj*<sup>4</sup> 'chief'.

*Nasals. m n ŋ: mit*<sup>3</sup> 'to pinch', *naa*<sup>2</sup> 'to scold', *gee*<sup>6</sup> 'fish barbel'. Before the vowels *uw* and *uu*, the nasals are often preglottalized.

*Voiced sonorants. v l y w ʋ: vey*<sup>4</sup> 'fence', *laaj*<sup>5</sup> 'to unroll', *yiim*<sup>4</sup> 'salt', *poog*<sup>1</sup> *moo*<sup>4</sup>-*wa*<sup>4</sup> 'a herd of oxen', *maʋ*<sup>4</sup>-*ʋa*<sup>4</sup> 'a leaf'. Note that *w* and *ʋ* only occur initially due to an assimilation process (see **Consonant Assimilation**).

Initial consonant clusters consist of a consonant plus *w* or *y*. There are no final clusters.

*Clusters with w. kw khw: kwaan*<sup>2</sup> 'to rake', *khwiin*<sup>1</sup> 'circle'.

*Clusters with y. py phy ty thy cy ky khy my ny ly sy hy: pyom*<sup>1</sup> 'to take down', *phyaa*<sup>1</sup> 'rocky mountain', *tyook*<sup>2</sup> 'to chop fine', *thyaaw*<sup>6</sup> *?uu*<sup>1</sup> 'to dance', *cyaaŋ*<sup>6</sup> *vaa*<sup>4</sup> 'to speak', *kyaaʋ*<sup>3</sup> 'to be near', *khyow*<sup>4</sup> 'ball', *myook*<sup>2</sup> 'flower', *nyat*<sup>3</sup> 'to be very tired', *lyan*<sup>3</sup> 'to play', *syow*<sup>1</sup> 'pimple', *hyaa*<sup>6</sup> 'summer'.

**Consonant Assimilation.** A number of morphemes, including the article  $-a^4$  and the interrogative particle  $-aa^3$ , acquire an initial consonant through assimilation with the final vowel or consonant of the preceding syllable. These patterns are illustrated in the following table:

Preceding	Final	Initial	Example
--ii		y	kway <sup>1</sup> ?ii <sup>3</sup> -ya <sup>4</sup> 'a little further'
--uw		w	teew <sup>4</sup> luw <sup>6</sup> -wa <sup>4</sup> 'a fence'
--uu		w	kyn <sup>4</sup> maa <sup>6</sup> puu <sup>1</sup> -wa <sup>4</sup> 'a horse groom'
--yy		--	yeen <sup>4</sup> syv <sup>4</sup> -a <sup>4</sup> 'a color'
--ee		y	cook <sup>2</sup> kaa <sup>3</sup> fee <sup>1</sup> -ya <sup>4</sup> 'a cup of coffee'
--aa		--	cook <sup>2</sup> caa <sup>4</sup> -a <sup>4</sup> 'a cup of tea'
--oo		w	pooj <sup>1</sup> moo <sup>4</sup> -wa <sup>4</sup> 'a herd of oxen'
--p		p	?an <sup>4</sup> tiip <sup>5</sup> -pa <sup>4</sup> 'one dish'
--t		t	maat <sup>2</sup> -ta <sup>4</sup> 'one time, once'
--k		k	mow <sup>2</sup> nok <sup>4</sup> -ka <sup>4</sup> 'a flock of birds'
--m		m	?an <sup>4</sup> kho <sup>1</sup> -na <sup>4</sup> 'a pit'
--n		n	fog <sup>1</sup> sin <sup>2</sup> -na <sup>4</sup> 'a letter'
--ŋ		ŋ	neeg <sup>3</sup> -ga <sup>4</sup> 'at one side'

'to eat', *ʔiip*<sup>2</sup> 'to step on (something)', *luwŋ*<sup>5</sup>  
 'loose', *thuu*<sup>1</sup> 'head', *phɤn*<sup>1</sup> 'rain', *yeen*<sup>4</sup> *sɤ*<sup>4</sup>  
 'color', *neʔ*<sup>3</sup> 'this', *cheek*<sup>2</sup> 'to tear', *vat*<sup>4</sup> 'to  
 dip', *thaa*<sup>1</sup> 'eye', *thoŋ*<sup>1</sup> 'to leak', *cook*<sup>2</sup> 'cup'.

Diphthongs also occur and are analyzed as a vocalic nucleus plus a final *w* or *y*. Those with a final *w* include *iiw*, *eew*, *aw*, *aaw*, *ow*: *kiiw*<sup>1</sup> 'to call', *leew*<sup>6</sup> 'completely', *law*<sup>3</sup> 'liquor', *laaw*<sup>1</sup> 'to fear', *yow*<sup>2</sup> 'to stay'. Those with a final *y* include *uuy*, *ey*, *eey*, *ay*, *aay*, *ooy*: *tuuy*<sup>4</sup> 'person', *pey*<sup>1</sup> 'to go', *ʔeey*<sup>4</sup> (vocative particle), *khay*<sup>1</sup> 'to open', *laay*<sup>4</sup> 'striped', *nooy*<sup>2</sup> 'little'. There are also the diphthongs *ɤu* and *au* in which *u* represents the semivowel corresponding to the high back unrounded *u*: *sɤu*<sup>6</sup> 'to buy', *mau*<sup>2</sup> 'new'.

The diphthongs *ey*, *ɤu*, and *ow*, in many cases, reflect the earlier high monophthongs *ii*, *uu*, and *uu*, respectively, e.g., *khwey*<sup>2</sup> 'to ride' (cf. Siamese *khii*<sup>2</sup>), *sɤu*<sup>6</sup> 'to buy' (cf. Siamese *swu*<sup>4</sup>), and *mow*<sup>1</sup> 'pig' (cf. Siamese *muu*<sup>5</sup>).

**Final nasals** include *m n ŋ*: *saam*<sup>1</sup> 'three', *nan*<sup>3</sup> 'to itch', *sooŋ*<sup>1</sup> 'two'.

**Final voiceless stops** of checked syllables include *p t k ʔ*: *poop*<sup>2</sup> 'bubble', *choot*<sup>2</sup> 'to incite', *lok*<sup>5</sup> 'child'. The final glottal stop only occurs in *laʔ*<sup>3</sup> (**final emphatic particle**), *leʔ*<sup>3</sup> (sentence-**final emphatic particle**), *loʔ*<sup>1</sup> (**final imperative particle**), *loʔ*<sup>2</sup> (**final imperative particle**), *loʔ*<sup>3</sup> (**emphatic clause-final particle**), *neʔ*<sup>3</sup> 'this, **these**'.

The following chart shows all the possible rhymes in the Lungming data:

Vowel	Final Consonant										
	0	p	t	k	ʔ	m	n	ŋ	w	y	ɰ
i		ip	it	ik		im	in	iŋ			
ii	ii	iip	iit	iik		iim	iin	iinŋ	iiw		
uu	uu	uup	uut	uuk		uum	uun	uunŋ			
uu	uu	uup	uut	uuk		uum	uun	uunŋ		uuy	
ɣ			ɣt	ɣk			ɣn	ɣŋ			ɣɰ
ɣɣ	ɣɣ										
e	e				eʔ					ey	
ee	ee	eep	eet	eek		eem	een	eenŋ	eew	eey	
a	a	ap	at	ak	aʔ	am	an	aŋ	aw	aay	aɰ
aa	aa	aap	aat	aak		aam	aan	aanŋ	aaw	aay	
o		op	ot	ok	oʔ	om	on	oŋ	ow		
oo	oo	oop	oot	ook		oom	oon	oonŋ		ooy	

William J. Gedney's

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