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## **YUNNANESE DIALECT PHONOLOGY IN THAILAND**

Zirivarnphicha THANAJIRAWAT

Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia

Mahidol University, Thailand

janida\_20@hotmail.com

### **Abstract**

As Yunnanese people immigrated in Thailand many years ago, nobody knows their language and where they are. This research aims to study Yunnanese dialect phonology and distribution in Thailand. The phonology of Yunnanese dialect data have been analyzed by phonemic approach and tones have been analyzed by computer software program PRAAT. Yunnanese language areas are presented on the map. This research found that Yunnanese in Thailand has five subdialects: Yunnanese phonology from Muang Hai of Xishuangbanna Autonomous Region of Tai Ethnic Group, Yunnanese phonology from Kunming, Yunnanese phonology from Longling, Yunnanese phonology from Simao, and the cities in the northern part of Yunnan, which are classified into two groups. The consonants, vowels and tones are difference both their number and characteristic depending on their origin places. At the present time, Yunnanese people settle down in four provinces: Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Mae Hong Son and Bangkok in Thailand.

### **Keywords**

Yunnanese, Chinese dialect, phonology, dialect phonology, dialect geography, Thailand

## **FONOLOGÍA DIALECTAL DEL YUYANNESE EN TAILANDIA**

### **Resumen**

A partir de la emigración de los hablantes de Yunnanese a Tailandia hace algunos años, nadie conoce su lengua y dónde se encuentra actualmente. Este artículo pretende estudiar la fonología del

dialecto Yunnanese, a través de una aproximación fónica y tonal mediante el programa informático PRAAT. La investigación ha permitido delimitar en un mapa las áreas lingüísticas del Yunnanese en Tailandia y se han determinado cinco subdialectos desde un punto de vista fonológico: el Yunnanese de Muang Hai de la región autónoma de Xishuangbanna, perteneciente al grupo étnico Tai, el Yunnanese de Kunming, el Yunnanese de Longling, el Yunnanese de Simao, y las ciudades de la parte norte de Yunnan, que se han clasificado en dos grupos. Las consonantes, vocales difieren tanto en relación al número como a las características en función del origen de las localidades. Actualmente, los hablantes de Yunnanese se han establecido en cuatro provincias tailandesas: Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Mae Hong Son y Bangkok.

### **Keywords**

Yunnanese, dialectología china, fonología, fonología dialectal, geografía dialectal, Tailandia

## **1. Information of Yunnanese in Thailand**

In Thailand, Yunnanese is one of the minority groups living in the northern part of Thailand. Yunnanese people who had immigrated in Thailand can be divided into two groups: first, Yunnanese people had migrated down through the northern part of Thailand for trading purposes by using horses or donkeys through the mountain pass. Second, Yunnanese of Chinese military group or Kok Min Tang which Thai called ‘division 93’ had migrated since 1800 for the politic result of China. Their situation like “illegal immigrant” and did not have nationality. Until after the long vision and kindness of his Majesty the King of Thai government, the agreement in November 1969 between Thailand and Taiwan that Thai government have been responsible for appropriately taking care and managing this ethnic group. Moreover, the Thailand policy had been set the joint volunteer protection, nationality transferring and agricultural training. The cooperating of Thailand and Taiwan brought the peace and security to the North of Thailand.

## **2. Yunnanese dialects phonology**

Yunnanese dialect belongs to the south-western subdivision of the Mandarin group. As Yunnanese 云南 has many provinces which their phonologies are different.

This research found that there are 5 subdialects of Yunnanese in Thailand as explain below:

- Yunnanese subdialect 1: YS1, is Yunnanese phonology from Muang Hai of Xishuangbanna Autonomous Region of Tai Ethnic Group (孟海县, 西双版纳傣族自治州, Méngghǎi, Xīshuāngbǎnnà dǎizú Zìzhìzhōu).

- Yunnanese subdialect 2: YS2, is Yunnanese phonology from Kunming in Yunnan (昆明, Kūnmíng).

- Yunnanese subdialect3: YS3, is Yunnanese phonology from Longling in Yunnan (龙陵县, Lónglíng Xiàn).

- Yunnanese subdialect4: YS4, is Yunnanese phonology from Simao district in Yunnan (思茅区, Sīmáo Qū).

- Yunnanese subdialect5: YS5, is from the informants who do not know where they came from; they just know the city is in the northern part of Yunnan.

## 2.1. Yunnanese Consonant Phonemes

The consonants phonemes: /p, ph, t, th, k, kh, m, n, ŋ, ts, tsh, tɕ, tɕh, f, s, z, ɸ, x, l, ʔ/ can occur in Yunnanese which differentiate number in each subdialect as shown in table 1 below:

Point of Articulation Manner of Articulation			Bilabial	Labio- dental	Alveolar	Alveolo- palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosives (Stop)	- voice	-asp	p		t		k	(ʔ)
		+asp	ph		th		kh	
Nasals	+ voice		m		n		(ŋ)	
Affricates	- voice	-asp			ts	tɕ		
		+asp			tsh	tɕh		
Fricatives	- voice			f	s	ɕ	x	
	+ voice				z			
Lateral Approximants					l			ø

Table 1. Yunnanese Consonant Phonemes

Note:

/ŋ/ found that in Yunnanese subdialect 1 and 2 of Yunnanese is phoneme, but [ŋ] is the allophone of /n/ in Yunnanese subdialect 3, 4 and 5.

(ʔ) found in Yunnanese subdialects 3, 4 and 5 occur with the tone [31<sup>ʔ</sup>]

From the table 1, the contrastive consonants of Yunnanese subdialects can divide into 2 groups. The different consonants of group 1 and 2 is the phonemes /ŋ/. The 18 consonants of Yunnanese in group 1 except /ŋ/ can occur in the initial consonant while all consonants in group 2 can occur in the initial consonant. Moreover the phoneme /n/ of group 2 has two allophones: [n] and [ŋ]. In YS5, [n] and [ŋ] can occur both the initial and final positions while YS3 and YS4 can occur only in the final position. The contrastive consonants of Yunnanese subdialects are shown in the table 2 below:

Yunnanese subdialect	Yunnanese consonant group 1		Yunnanese consonant group 2		
	YS1	YS2	YS3	YS4	YS5
Consonant phoneme	19 consonant phonemes /p, ph, t, th, k, kh, m, n, ŋ, ts, tsh, tɕ, tɕh, f, s, z, ɕ, x, l/		18 consonant phonemes /p, ph, t, th, k, kh, m, n, ts, tsh, tɕ, tɕh, f, s, z, ɕ, x, l/		
Initial consonant	18 initial consonants /p, ph, t, th, k, kh, m, n, ts, tsh, tɕ, tɕh, f, s, z, ɕ, x, l/ <div><div><div>/n/ ↗ [n] /_V# /n/ → [n] /_VC#</div><div><div>/n/ ↗ [n] /_V# /n/ → [n] /_VC# /n/ ↘ [ŋ] / _/ε, a, iu/#</div></div></div></div>				
Final consonant	/n, ŋ/ <div><div>/n/ → [n] /iε_# /n/ ↘ [ŋ] /V_# V ≠ /iε/</div><p><u>Note</u> [n] ~[ŋ] occur as free vary in other conditions except when [n] following /ɔ, ia, iɔ/</p></div>				

Table 2. The contrastive consonant of Yunnanese dialect in Thailand

## 2.2. Yunnanese Vowel Phonemes

Yunnanese vowel phonemes have three types: monophthongs, diphthongs and triphthongs. They are difference in number of vowel. YS1 and YS2 have 8

monophthongs, while YS3 and YS5 have 6 monophthongs and YS4 has 5 monophthongs. The vowel phonemes /i, a, ə, u, o/ occur in every subdialects. The vowel phoneme /ɔ/ appears in YS1 and YS2 while it is an allophone: [ɔ] of /o/ in YS3, 4 and 5. [o] occurs before final velar nasal; [ŋ] while [ɔ] occurs elsewhere in YS3, 4 and 5. The last vowel phoneme /ʉ/ appears in all subdialects except YS4, because it is an allophone: /ʉ/ of /i/ in YS 4.

All Yunnanese subdialects have four triphthongs: /iau, iəu, uai, uəi/. There are thirteen diphthongs: /iɛ, ia, iɔ, iu, ai, au, əi, əu, ɔi, ou, ui, ua, uɔ/ in YS1 while /ou/ disappears in YS3- 5 and /ɔi/ disappears in YS2- 5. All vowel phonemes are shown as follow in the table 3 below:

Yunnanese subdialect	Monophthongs	Diphthongs	Triphthongs
<b>YS1 Muang Hai</b>	8 monophthongs /i, ɛ, a, ə, ʉ, u, o, ɔ/	13 diphthongs /iɛ, ia, iɔ, iu, ai, au, əi, əu, ɔi, ou, ui, ua, uɔ/	4 triphthongs /iau, iəu, uai, uəi/
<b>YS2 Kunming</b>		12 diphthongs /iɛ, ia, iɔ, iu, ai, au, əi, əu, ou, ui, ua, uɔ/	
<b>YS3 Longling</b>	6 monophthongs /i, a, ə, ʉ, u, o/. /o/ → [o] / _[ŋ]# ↓ [c] / _# elsewhere	12 diphthongs /iɛ, ia, iɔ, iu, ai, au, əi, əu, ui, ua, uɔ, uə/	
<b>YS4 Simao</b>	5 monophthongs /i, a, ə, u, o/ /i/ → [i] ↓ [ʉ] ↗ [o] / _# /o/ → [o] / _[ŋ]# ↘ [c] //tɕ, l/_#		
<b>YS5 Northern</b>	6 monophthongs /i, a, ə, ʉ, u, o/. /o/ → [o] / _[ŋ]# ↓ [c] / _# elsewhere		

Table 3. The contrastive vowel of Yunnanese

### 2.3. The contrastive of Yunnanese tones

Yunnanese tones can be divided into 2 patterns which have 4 tones and 5 tones which explain below:

#### 2.3.1 Yunnanese tone pattern 1

Yunnanese tone pattern 1 has 4 tones. Yunnanese tone pattern: 1 found in YS1, YS2, YS4, and YS5 as shown in charts 1-4 below:

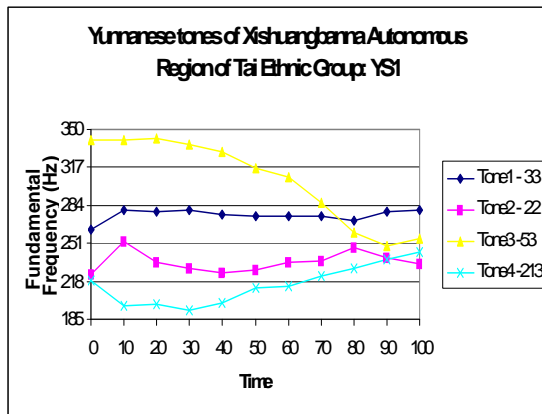


Chart 1. Four tones phonetic realization of YS1

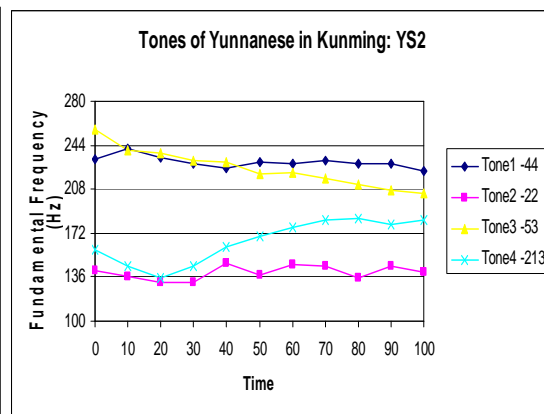


Chart 2. Four tones phonetic realization of YS2

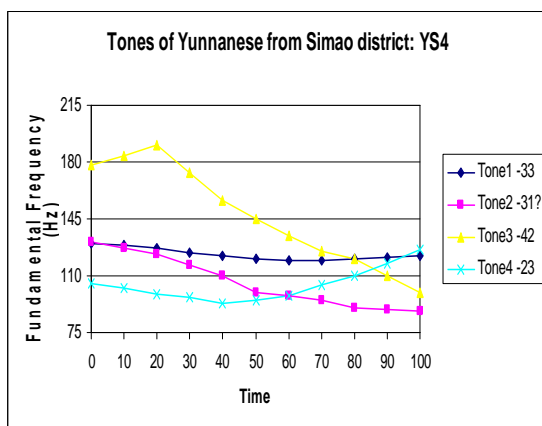


Chart 3. Four tones phonetic realization of YS4

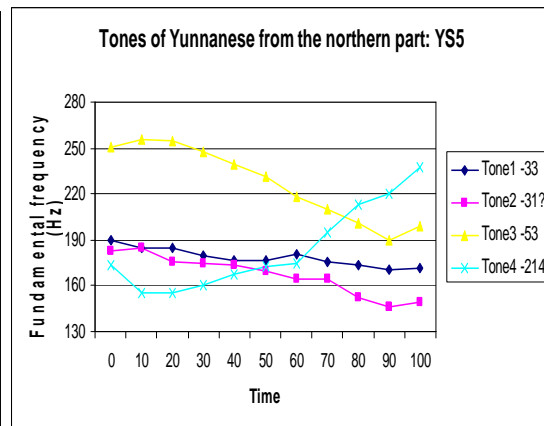


Chart 4. Four tones phonetic realization of YS5

The summary of 4 tones in pattern 1 are 1) mid level or mid high level tone, 2) low level or mid falling tone, 3) high falling tone and 4) low rising or low falling rising tone. All four tones in pattern 1 are shown in table 4 below:

Subdialect Tones	YS1	YS2	YS4	YS5
Tone 1	33	44	33	33
Tone 2	22	22	31?	31?
Tone 3	53	53	42	53
Tone 4	213	213	23	214

Table 4. Yunnanese tones pattern 1

### 2.3.2 Yunnanese tone pattern 2

Yunnanese tone pattern 2: YS3 has 5 tones: they are, 1) high level tone, 2) low level tone, 3) high falling tone, 4) low rising tone, and 5) mid falling tone. Yunnanese tone pattern 2 is shown in chart 5 below:

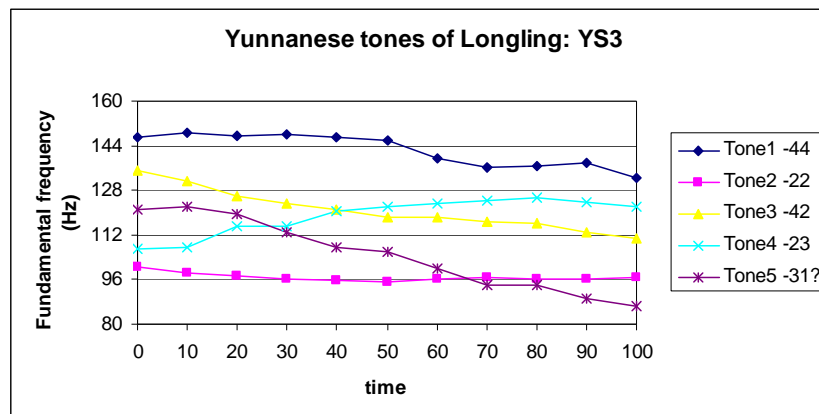
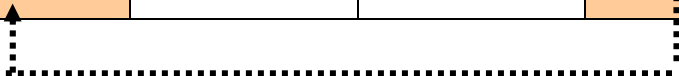


Chart 5. Four tones phonetic realization of YS3 in Yunnanese tone pattern 2

From the Chinese history, there are four different types of tone were identified in Middle Chinese: 1. Ping (平) 'level', 2. Shang (上) 'rising', 3. Qu (去) 'departing', and 4. Ru (入) 'entering'; (ending with a stop -p, -t, and -k). The four tons were further split into eight categories according to voicing initial consonants. Two registers from voicing initial consonants, traditionally called Yin (阴) 'voiceless initials' and Yang (阳) 'voiced initials'; Yin is applied to the higher or upper register while Yang is applied to the lower register in Middle Chinese.

At the present, tones of Yunnanese divided into 2 patterns which have 4 tones and 5 tones follow table 4 and charts 1-5. Four and five contrastive tones in pattern 1 and 2 which have developed from the four historical tone categories that mad up the Middle Chinese tone system. The development of Yunnanese Chinese tone system can be represented as shown in tables 5 and 6 below:

Tone	平Ping 'level'	上Shang 'rising'	去Qu 'going'	入Ru 'entering'
阴Yin Upper Level Tone	[44] and [33] Tone 1 Mid High level tone	[53] and [42] Tone 3 High falling tone	[212] , [23] and [214] Tone 4 Low rising or Low falling rising tone	[22] and [31 <sup>2</sup> ] Tone 2 Mid to low falling or Low level tone
阳Yang Lower Level Tone	[22] and [31 <sup>2</sup> ] Tone 2 Mid to low falling or Low level tone			



#### Tone of Ru sheng merge with Yang Ping

Table 5. Four Yunnanese tones pattern 1 which has developed from the four historical tone categories of Middle Chinese

Tone	平Ping 'level'	上Shang 'rising'	去Qu 'going'	入Ru 'entering'
阴Yin	[44] Tone 1 High level tone	[53] Tone 3 High falling tone	[23] Tone 4 Low rising tone	[31 <sup>2</sup> ] Tone 5 Mid falling tone
阳Yang	[22] Tone 2 Low level tone			

Table 6. Five Yunnanese tones pattern 2 which has developed from the four historical tone categories of Middle Chinese

From tables 5 and 6 show that the tone development from Ancient Chinese to Middle Chinese and into Yunnanese in Thailand can be described as follows:



1. The ancient level tone category (平声 Ping Sheng) split into two tone categories: upper level tone (阴平 Yin Ping) and lower level tone (阳平 Yang Ping). Yin Ping corresponds to Mid level or Mid High level tone while Yang ping corresponds to Mid to Low falling or Low level tone in Yunnanese in Thailand.

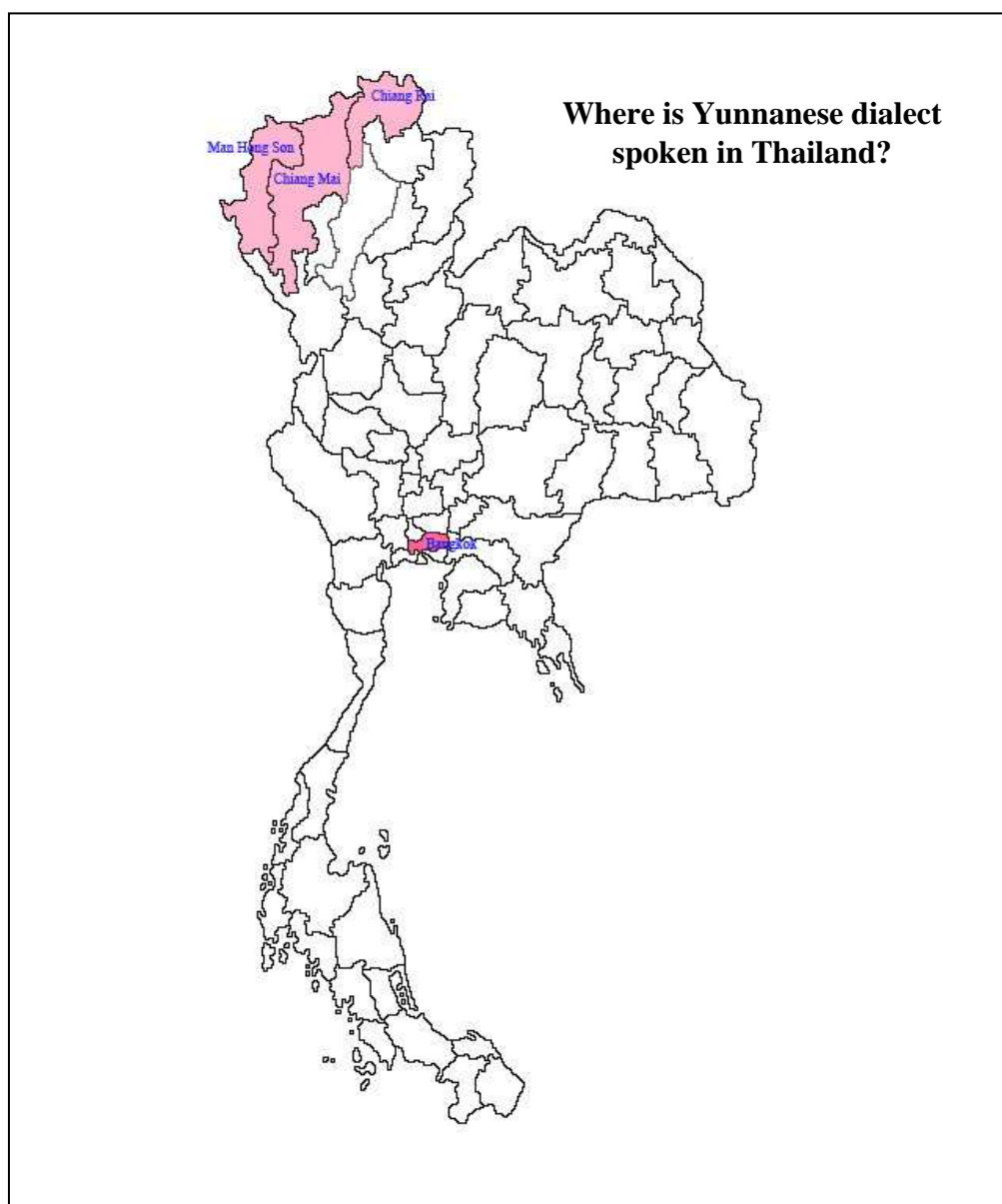
2. The ancient rising tone category (上声 Shang Sheng) corresponds to High falling tone.

3. The ancient departing tone category (去声 Qu Sheng) corresponds to Low rising or Low falling rising tone.

4. The ancient departing tone category (入声 Ru sheng) which ending with a stop -p, -t, and -k have been lost in Yunnanese in Thailand. As the final stops p, t, k were all lost, so this tone category merged with the Yang Ping category in Yunnanese pattern 1. On the other hand, although all final stops p, t, k in Yunnanese pattern 2 were as lost as Yunnanese pattern 1, this tone did not merge with the Yang Ping category and corresponds to Mid falling tone.

### **3. The Geographical of Yunnanese dialect in Thailand**

From the language survey of Yunnanese dialect in Thailand found that at the present time, Yunnanese people settle in four provinces in Thailand. They are Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Mae Hong Son and Bangkok where can not show the area of subdialect. Because they live together in the community, not depend on their place from Yunnan. The map below just present the provinces where Yunnanese dialect is spoken by Yunnanese people have been living in Thailand now.



Map 1. Yunnanese dialect is spoken by Yunnanese people have been living in Thailand

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