



CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT : THAILAND

Ngarmta Nandakwang (Ing)



Overview



Name: Thailand (or Pra-Thet-Thai : ประเทศไทย , in Thai meaning “Land of the Free”)

Capital: Bangkok (or Krung Thep: กรุงเทพฯ, meaning “City of Angels”)

Overview

Population: Thais are well-known for their friendliness and hospitality. A large majority of the over 68 million citizens of Thailand are ethnic Thai, along with strong communities whose ethnic origins lie in China, India and elsewhere. About 8-10 million people reside in the capital city of Bangkok.

People: Thai (80%), Chinese (10%), Malay (3%), and the rest are minorities (Mon, Khmer, hill-tribes). Ethnic Thais form the majority, though the area has historically been a migratory crossroads and has thus produced a degree of ethnic diversity. However, cultural and social integration has brought about unity of this diversity.

Religion: Buddhism (95%), Muslim (4%), others (1%)

Thai Language

The Thai language uses a phonemic alphabet of forty-four consonant and fifteen basic vowel graphemes. The latter are assembled into about thirty-two vowel combinations. In Thai writing, characters are horizontally placed, left to right, with no intervening space, to form syllables, words, and sentences. Vowel graphemes are written above, below, before, or after the consonant they modify, although the consonant always sounds first when the syllable is spoken. The vowel graphemes (and a few consonants) can be combined in various ways to produce numerous compound vowels (diphthongs and triphthongs)

All syllable must contain a vowel sound, but may begin and/or end with a consonant sound. A syllable which ends in a vowel sound is called *open*, and a syllable which ends in a consonant is called *closed*. Each syllable is pronounced in one of five lexical Tones: mid, high, low, rising, or falling; as a result, speaking correctly creates pleasing melodic patterns which has led the language to sometimes be called a *sing-song* language by foreigners.

Thai Language

Unlike the Chinese language, the Thai alphabet is phenolic, so pronunciation of a word is independent of its meaning (English is also an alphabetic language). Because of this, it is possible to pronounce a word without knowing its meaning. On the other hand, as mentioned above, like Chinese and around half of the world's languages (not including English), Thai is a tonal language. The use of tones in Thai is lexical, meaning that each word has a certain pitch characteristic with which it must be spoken to be properly understood. The Thai language uses five tones: mid, low, high, rising, and falling.

Each syllable, consisting of one or more consonant and a simple or compound vowel (possibly inherent or implied, and thus not written) has a tone determined by several factors, including the type and presence of consonants (consonants are divided into three classes for this purpose), the vowel duration, and the presence of one of four tone marks. Some people incorrectly assume that the tone marks identify all necessary tones, or perhaps force certain tones, but neither of these is correct. Actually the final tone of a syllable is determined by the tone mark in conjunction with factors mentioned above.






Language Vs Thai Melody

Thai Language is a Tonal Language. In a tone language the relative pitch at which a syllable is uttered or reflection given to it may be phonemic, that is, may effect the meaning of the syllable. For example, the syllable kai may have meaning if uttered at relatively high pitch, another meaning if uttered at a relatively low pitch, and a third meaning if uttered with an obvious downward inflection.

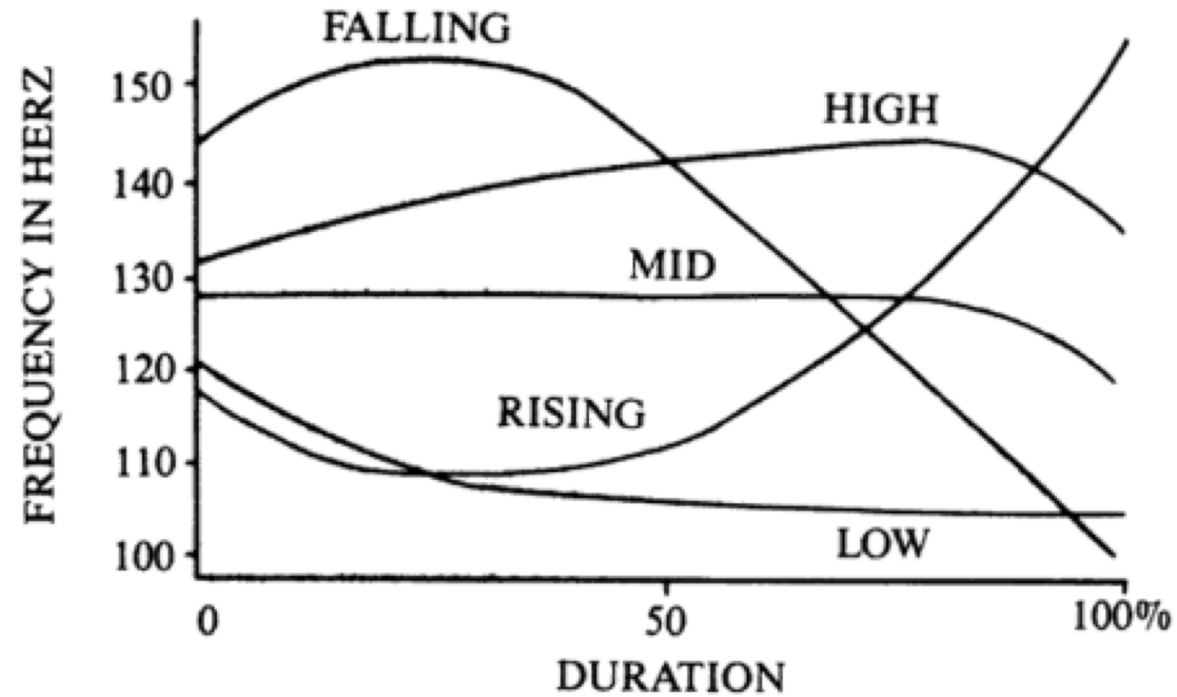
Thai therefore has what may be termed “speech melody” The intelligibility of any utterance of a speaker of Thai depends to certain extent upon the accuracy with he relates the pitch contour of this utterance with the pitch contours of the utterances surrounding it. In Thailand speech melody and song melody have both pitch and rhythm characteristics

The tone of Thai : Thai has five underlying tones, namely: mid low ,falling ,high and rising.

The Thai tuning system comprises seven pitches that are approximately equidistant within the octave, but melodies are constructed from pentatonic scales sets

	mid	low	falling	high	rising
contour:					
tone-mark:	(no mark)	(\)	(^)	(/)	(v)

Average fundamental frequency contours for tones on double vowels
(Gandour, 1976):



Songs & Games

- Lullaby

The texts of Thai lullaby songs are usually in poetic form. A striking feature of Thai Lullaby singing is that, in theory, a given tune can be sung any song text, an important procedure in performance practice is the selection, and application, of given texts to suitable melodies, especially for the purpose of theatrical performance

Thai Lullaby from Central Thai

- [Thai Lullaby 1 -Nok Ka Wao \(Crow\)](#)
- [Thai Lullaby2 - Nok Ka Min \(Canary\)](#)

Thai Lullaby from Northern Thai

- [Thai Lullaly \(Northen Thai\)-Ou ja ja อื้อ จาจา](#)

Thai Lullaby from Southern Thai

- [Thai Lullaby-Southern Thai](#)

Simply Lullaby (well known in Thailand)

The image shows a musical score for a lullaby in 2/4 time. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff contains the first line of the melody, and the second staff contains the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes, with horizontal lines indicating the duration of each syllable. The lyrics are: Yok Yek Oay Num Tuam Mek Kra Taay Loy Kor Maa Hang Ngor Gord Kor Yok Yek.

Yok Yek Oay Num Tuam Mek Kra

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Taay Loy Kor Maa Hang Ngor Gord Kor Yok Yek

- [Thai Lullaby -Yok Yek](#)

Games

[Game-Mon Son Pha](#)

[Mon Son Pha2](#)

CHANG

- [CHANG \(Elephant\)](#)