

NGEQ PHONEMES

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1. Consonants

1.1 Stops:

i. Unaspirated, voiceless:

/p/ -- Bilabial; /piin/ 'top of mountain'; /piq/ 'to sleep'

/t/ -- Alveolar; /tu/ to leave, flee; /tEc/ to sell

/č/ -- Palatal; /callOOk/ inside of banana tree; /pič/ dig

/k/ -- Velar; /kEc/ 'to pick'; /qiik/ 'pig'

/q/ -- Glottal; /toq/ 'hot'; /pAOq/ 'to carry on the back'

ii. Unaspirated, Voiced:

/b/ -- Bilabial; /been/ 'to have done'; /bOOy/ 'salt'

/d/ -- Alveolar; /dOq/ 'to place, put away'; /diing/ 'tray'

/j/ -- Palatal; /jaac/ 'flick lighter'; /jeeng/ 'gold'

iii. Aspirated:

/ph/ -- Bilabial; /phAAng/ 'muzzle loading gun';

/phar/ 'sound of bird in flight'

/th/ -- Alveolar; /thahooy/ 'that's alright';

/thuy/ 'sound of spitting'

/kh/ -- Velar; /khEEen khuuy/ 'flute'; /khanaan/ 'hill'

Aspirated stops are rare in Ngeq. Usually even in borrowed Lao words they substitute an unaspirated stop equivalent to the aspirated stop and put a short /a/ vocoid between the stop and the aspiration, as in /pahaa/ borrowed from /phaak/, "disease, epidemic".

1.2 Continuants:

i. Nasal:

/m/ -- Bilabial; /plAOOm/ 'to wrap in leaf';

/ciam/, 'to feed'

/n/ -- Alveolar; /neq/ 'to do something'; /kIn/ 'to tie up'

/ny/ -- Palatal; /nyuq/ 'to fear'; /teiny/ 'tabu'

/ng/ -- Velar; /ngEq/ 'not, negative'; /hiing/ 'to pour into'

ii. Non-nasal:

/s/ - [s] -- Dental sibilant; /sOq/ 'red';
/kasay/ 'month'

[ʃ] -- Grooved dental sibilant; /nsiang/ 'fat,
oil'; /nsay/ 'blood vessel'. Occurs only word
word medial.

[yh] -- Palatal fricative; /ruas/ 'bushland';
/rias/ 'elder' Occurs only word final.

/h/ -- Glottal fricative; /nhaang/ 'bone';
/haang/ 'wasps'

/w/ -- Dental-labial fricative; 'turn around'

/l/ -- Alveolar liquid; /laas/ 'mat'; /mpiil/
'tamarands/'

/6/ -- Palatal liquid; /yaač/ 'finished'; /nkay/
'that'

/r/ - [r̃] -- trilled alveolar liquid; /par/
'to fly'; /heer/ 'fat, plump'. Occurs word
final and initial.

[ɹ] -- Flapped alveolar liquid; /saraal/
'to blister'; /prual/ 'burned'. Occurs word
medial.

1.3 *Chart of Consonants*

	<i>Labial</i>	<i>Alveolar</i>	<i>Palatal</i>	<i>Velar</i>	<i>Glottal</i>
<i>Stops</i>					
Voiceless	p	t	ç	k	q
Voiced	b	d	j		
Aspirated	ph	th		kh	
<i>Continuants</i>					
Spirants			s		h
Nasal	m	n	ny	ng	
Non-nasal	w	l	y		
Trilled		r			

There are a total of 21 consonantal phonemes in Ngeq. All of these 21 may be used as initial consonants to make up a syllable.

All except the aspirated and voiced stops are found word finally.

The palatals when used word or syllable final are preceded by the /i/ vocoid. This tends to raise the glided high vowels to a central position, as in /luas/ [lueyh] "to release", /buany/ [bueyny] "to heap up", /biac/ [bieyc] "to be poor".

1.4 *Consonant Clusters*

A pre-main consonant may stand before the main consonant (see chart). For the palatals there is usually a vowel following them and the next consonant, or between them and the next consonant.

Only /l/, /r/, and /w/ are considered as standing in the post-main position of clusters.

The aspirated consonants do not precede a post-main consonant.

Only in the case of a /yy/ could /y/ be considered as standing in post-main position, though I would prefer to call it a palatalized /y/ or a pre-main /y/.

CONSONANT CLUSTERS

*Pre-main**Main**Post-main*

m

p
b
ml
r

n

n
t
dr
l

ny

ñ
j
s
ny

y

y

ph
th
kh

ng

k
q
ng
hr
l
wl
rl
r

w

2. Vowels

2.1 Description of Vowels

i Front High:

/i/ -- [i] - Lax, short; /diq/ 'to be short'; /yir/
'downpour'

/ii/ -- [i.] - Lax, Long; /diiq/ 'to ride'; /wiing/
'to return'

/ia/ - [ia] -- Offglided from high lax front to
lower low central; /carriang/ 'to be dry';
/kiar/ 'close together'

[ie] -- Offglided from high front to low
front vocoid /kapias/ 'scissors'; /takias/
'nine'

/ei/ - [ei] -- On glided from a tense high front to
lax high front; /teiny/ 'tabu'; /teik/ 'lead'

ii. Front Low:

/e/ - [e] -- Upper, short; /čeq/ 'child' /kantek/
'to hit, run into'

/ee/ -- [e.] - Upper, long; /čEEK/ 'puckery'; /teeq/
'old, past'

/E/ -- [ɛ] - Lower, short; /tEč/ 'sell'; /prEc/
'peppers'

/EE/ -- [ɛ.] - Lower, long; /qEEq/, 'want'; /lEEq/
'tired'

iii. Central High; Lax:

/I/ -- [i] - Short; /kIn/ 'tie up'; /la kIq/ 'great
crowd'

/II/ -- [i.] - Long; /ntIIq/ 'a parrot'; /tIIm/
'shade'

/IA/ -- [iʌ] - Short offglide from high to low
central /pIAN/ 'eggplant'; /kIANG/ 'obstinate'

/IIA/ -- [+ʌ] - Long offglide from high to low central;
/phIIANy/ 'flopping around (as horse's
mane when galloping)'; /mIIANG/ 'city'

iv. Central Low;

/A/ -- [ʌ] - Short, upper; /trAm/ 'to soak'; /pAng/
'net'

/AA/ -- [ʌ.] - Long, upper; /sAAng/ 'five' /tAAs/
'to tell'

/Aa/ -- [ʌa] - Short On glide from upper low central
to lower low central; /ngAam/ 'many, univer-
sal'; /nkAan/ 'germs'

/Aaa/ -- [ʌa.] = Long on glide from upper central to
lower low central; /pangAaan/ 'dish';
/kalAaan/ 'open eyes'

/a/ -- [a] - Short, lower; /ban/ 'care for'; /bang/
'bamboo shoots'

/aa/ -- [a.] - Long, lower; /qaang/ 'light'; /maam/
'flute'

v. Back High:

/u/ -- [u] - Short, lax; /caruq/ 'Lovei tribe';
/nyuq/ 'to fear'

- /uu/ -- [u] - Long, lax; /čaruuq/ 'deep'; /čarruum/ 'to meet, notice'
 - /ua/ -- [ua] - Offglide from high back to lower low central; /suam/ 'damp'; /puan/ 'four'
 - /ou/ -- [ou] - Tense onglide; /toun/ 'to accuse suspect'; /pouk louk/ 'discarded'
- vi. Back Low;
- /o/ -- [o] - Short, upper; /toq/ 'hot'; /ton nyon/ 'noisy'
 - /oo/ -- [o.] - Long, upper; /kloon/ 'fused together'; /soom/ 'nest'
 - /AO/ -- [ʌ] - Onglided from central low to back lower low; /pAOq/ 'to carry' /canghAOk/ 'spoon'
 - /Aoo/ -- [ʌ.] - Onglided long; from central low to back lower low; /kawAooK/ 'to dip out'; /panAooN/ 'first'
 - /O/ -- [ɔ] - Short, lower; /karrOk/ 'cow'; /dOq/ 'to put away'
 - /OO/ -- [ɔ.] - Long, lower; /pOOq/ 'fill teeth'; /rOOq/ 'paper, money'

/uo/ ?

High vowels exhibit a fairly symmetrical pattern except that the high central vowels show no register contrast.

Low vowels show a heavy concentration towards center and back. The lower low is characterized by onglided vowels, not unlike the relationship of the high tense onglided vowels to their higher lax counterparts. Low vowels, however, show no voice quality contrast as the high vowel set does.

2.2 Chart of Vowels

H I G H	L A X	Front /i/ /ii/ /ia/	Central /I/ /II/ /IA/ /IIA/	Back /u/ /uu/ /ua/
	T E N S E	/ei/		/ou/ /uo/
L O W	U P P E R	/e/ /ee/	/A/ /AA/	/o/ /oo/
	L O W E R	/E/ /EE/	/Aa/ /Aaa/	/AO/ /Aoo/
			/a/ /aa/	/O/ /OO/