

(H) Phàasàa and Pháasăa (1/2)

Shan (native term: Phàasàa Tái, ဟဲးသးတဲး) and Lao (native term: Pháasăa Láaw, ພາສາລາວ) are Tai languages from Southeast Asia. Shan is spoken in Myanmar and Thailand by about 3 million people, and Lao is spoken in Laos and Thailand by about 20 million. They are quite closely related, but are essentially mutually incomprehensible due to grammatical changes in both languages. Similarly, they are both written in writing systems that descend from the ancient Sanskrit script Brahmi, but these writing systems have rather different ways of marking the same sounds. The Shan writing system is a modification of the alphabet used by Burmese and Mon, whereas the Lao script is a streamlined form of the Thai alphabet.

Note: the diacritics (accent marks) above the Shan and Lao vowels in the Roman transcription of the native terms for the two languages shown above serve to mark tone. The doubled vowels indicate long vowels.

HI. Your task is to determine what goes in the blanks in the Shan and Lao columns. If you think that more than one answer is possible, write the likeliest one first, then the second-likeliest, and so on.

Shan	Lao	English	Shan	Lao	English
တၢ်ဝ်း	ທ້ອງ	belly	လၢ်တၢ်း	ເລືອດ	blood
လၢ်	ລູກ	child	လၢ်	ຊ້າງ	elephant
မၢ်	ໝາກ	fruit	မိ	ນິດ	knife
ບၢ	ພ້າ	large knife	သၢ်	ຊ້າງ	left
ဆၢ	ເນື້ອ	meat	ဆၢ	ນ້າ	mother's younger sibling
ဆၢ	ນອກ	outside	ဂၢ	ກາບ	pith
ဂၢ	ຮາກ	root	လၢ	ເຊືອກ	rope
ລိ	ແດດ	sun	သၢ	ຊື້	to buy
ဂိ	ຄ້ຽວ	to chew	လၢ	ເລືອກ	to choose
တၢ	ຕາກ	to dry in the sun	ဂູ	ກອດ	to embrace
ဂ	ຮູ້	to know	ຕູ	ຕອກ	to pound



(H) Phàasàa and Pháasăa (2/2)

Shan	Lao	English
ပိတ်,	ເຜີດ	to roar
တိတ်,	ແຕກ	to split
လိခ်.	လိမ်	tongue
မံ.	ໄມ້	wood
မွပ်,		to crouch
	ແປດ	eight
	ເປືອກ	rind

Shan	Lao	English
သွတ်း	ຊອກ	to seek
လုတ်,	ດູດ	to suck
ပိတ်,	ປີກ	wing
ဂုံ.		bad
လာ်း		to pull
(e)	ມ້າ	horse

H2. Out of the symbols ဝ်, ိ, and ဃ in Shan, and ໄ, ງ, and ັ in Lao, which represent consonants, which vowels, and which tones?

Consonants Vowels

Tones

