

THE TORCH

FOR ZEWEI

(2025 Conlang Relay)

graphic design is my passion.

Okay, Z-Star, here's the deal. I got a text in Plumlang for you, also known as [l̥úwŌ!æːníjɑːt̪ʃæphíj], the language of the Lemonade Boys. I've also got a lore description of the language, and all the grammar and vocab you're gonna need. Get hyped.

I stayed up all night to finish this. This time two days ago, I was at work already. Alas, such is the life of Rhea the Clanging Clonger. I'm gonna go to bed soon after you read this. Nanight.

THE LORE

Plumlang is spoken by Lemonade Boys from a far-flung, seldom-contacted dimension. The Lemonade Boys are powerful but no longer technologically advanced, themselves living in a post-apocalyptic Earth-like planet where most of their old civilisation's technology has been lost. They are a society concerned primarily with warfare. Oh yeah, and they all look and sound exactly like Michael Rosen did about a decade and a half ago. They've all got six fingers. There are no other visible differences, although their gastric anatomy is notably different to that of humans.

Although there are no Gods in Lemonade Boy superstition, there is a strong reverence for nature and a high degree of ancestor worship, to the extent that it is very common for older people to be extremely rude to younger people, who will never retaliate or show displeasure at it. This, uhh, comes through in the text.

THE LANGUAGE

Plumlang is a split-ergative language with 49-64 phonemic tones and one personal pronoun. The phonology is comprised entirely of Michael Rosen voice clips, and the morphology is almost entirely based on tone with minimal affixes and particles.

PHONOLOGY

	Labial			Dental	Alveolar			Palata l	Velar			Uvular	Glottal
Nasal	m	m̥	m̥̥		n	n̥	n̥̥		ŋ	ŋ̥	ŋ̥̥		
Plosive	p ^h		b		t ^h	d			k ^h	k ^w	g		
Ejective					t ^h				k'				
Lat. Aff.					t ^l	d ^l							
Affricate	ɕ ^h ɕ ^w				tɕ	dɕ	tɕ ^h	dɕ ^h	kɕ				
Fricative	f			θ	ð	s	s̥	z	ʃ	ʃ̥	ʃ̥̥	ʀ	h ^w ɦ
Approx.					ɹ ^w	l	r	j	w				
Click	ɕ̥	ɕ̥̥	ɕ̥̥̥	l	ll	ll ^h							

	Front	Back
High	/i/	/u/
Mid	/e/	/ɔ/
Low	/æ/	/ɑ/

	Mid	High	Low	Creak y
/i/ _C\$	ī	ī̇	ī̈	ī̉
/i/ _\$	ĩ	ĩ̇	ĩ̈	ĩ̉
/e/	ē	ē̇	ē̈	ē̉
/æ/	æ̃	æ̃̇	æ̃̈	æ̃̉
/ɑ/	ɑ̃	ɑ̃̇	ɑ̃̈	ɑ̃̉

/ɔ/	<u>ɔ</u>	<u>ó</u>	<u>ò</u>	<u>õ</u>
/u/	<u>u</u>	<u>ú</u>	<u>ù</u>	<u>ü</u>

PRACTICAL ORTHOGRAPHY

PHONEME	SYMBOL
<u>V</u>	˜V
m	m
<u>m</u>	˜m
<u>m</u> _↓	m°
p ^h	p
b	b
⊙↑ <u>ɸ</u> ^w	px'
⊙↑	p'
f	f
h ^w	hw
w	w
θ	th
ð	dh
n	n
<u>n</u>	˜n
t ^h	t
d	d
<u>tɸ</u>	tl'
<u>tɪ</u>	tl
<u>dɪ</u>	dl
<u>tʃ</u>	ts
<u>dʒ</u>	dz
s	s
<u>s</u>	ss
z	z
<u>ɹ</u> ^w	r
r	rr
l	l
<u>tʃ</u>	c
<u>dʒ</u>	j
ʃ	sh
j	y
ŋ	ng
ŋ	˜ŋ
k ^h	k
k ^w	kw
g	g
k'	k'
<u>kx</u>	kx
<u>χx</u> ^w	xw
R	x
h	h
⊙!	!

⊙	⊙
^h	^h

Ambiguity (e.g. <px> = /⊙↑[Ⓜ]/ or /p^hⓂ/) is resolved with an intermediate <.> (e.g. <p.x> = /p^hⓂ/)

TONE

Tones are the basis of Plumlang's morphology. Only certain nouns have an inherent Tone, and for all words except for particles it is morphologically variable.

As I said before, there are 64 phonemic tones in Plumlang (I think...I mighta done my maths wrong). In the attached ExCel spreadsheet, you will find the 49 tones which I could be bothered to name (all tones used in the text are depicted in that spreadsheet, don't stress).

All tones in Plumlang possess a Nucleus, a repeating sequence of phonetic tones. For example, the Nucleus of Tone 1 is [M]. This means that in a word of any length with Tone 1, every vowel will be mid tone.

Meanwhile, the Nucleus of Tone 39 is [CMLH]. This means that in a trisyllabic word with Tone 39, the phonetic tones of the vowels will be *Creaky, Mid, then Low*. In a nine-syllable word with Tone 39, the tonal melody of the word will be *Creaky; Mid; Low; High; Creaky; Mid; Low; High; and Creaky*.

Words which consist of only a Nucleus are called Sequential Tones. Only Sequential Tones may have Nuclei with *multiple phonetic tones in them*.

The other 48 Tones are Non-Sequential. These Tones may only possess one phonetic tone in their Nucleus. However, they also have a Periphery, which is a phonetic tone which appears in another position relative to the Nucleus.

The 48 Non-Sequential Tones can be best understood on a three-dimensional chart (which I cannot make in MS Word), where one axis is the position of the Nucleus relative to the Periphery (this is called the Contour), another is the tone of the Nucleus, and the other is the tone of the Periphery.

For example, Tone 5 has a Final Contour, a Low Nucleus, and a High Periphery. This means that the Periphery (a phonetic high tone) appears only in the first syllable before the repeating Nucleus (a phonetic low tone), which occupies every subsequent syllable. In a Tone with Initial Contour, the Nucleus occupies every syllable except for the final syllable, which is occupied by the Periphery. In a Tone with Medial Contour, the Periphery occupies the first and last syllable, with the Nucleus occupying the medial syllable(s).

All of this means, for example: if you see a disyllabic noun with the tonal melody "HL", and you see that the noun's Contour is Final, then the noun must have a Low Nucleus and a High Periphery. Therefore, it possesses Tone 5.

PHONOTACTICS

Permitted consonant clusters are indicated in the second attached ExCel spreadsheet. Some suffixes will cause illegal clusters, which are resolved in a manner indicated on that sheet in the red cells.

Some tones (as indicated in the spreadsheet) are only able to occur in words of a certain number of syllables. If the tone is morphologically obliged but the word is too short to contain it, then the root is extended by one of two methods:

1. The first vowel is extended.
2. A semivowel is syllabified.

THE TEXT

Wongga olíjój jéeèf wílj Oúæfálf, “Rræk’ Oérri !wáa lxuàà fo twĩgĩ m̥utceñ ēēem, !òò bàdhàlli roui. !uũrl !wàã! !o thiítli !imri !waa! Fiinc pxùllhwá k’ũrdæ gwææzli yúngu íĩæ ñùrráng. Fiinc m̥uldax kx’rôú !wáa ur!óbalf kob p’ii debi !wáã. Rèya wòngga wílj !waa kiìli liílli kòòòb k’ũcen gwææz èepxùd íĩæ ñgãà.”

Kií oorẽ gwææz úõnúm fo oorẽ li mērd...

Wongga kæælan wílj Oúæfálf, “Zãwæy tlæñya èèdhãlf dhùthrré !wáa fo yãrá.”

Wongga Oúæfálf wílj, “M̥uldax p’ii dhùthrré m̃i!óshalf! Xõc xedzép.x !wáaá whuk húxa !wá! óórre ñgãà héèthrrí yããpOá mèerd !òòò bàdhà kũĩjri. Æærnzè m̃i!õshalf adlir !waa; ngærlajà gabi !waa!

Wongga kæælan wílj: “Dhùuth càlar dhùthrré ñgãà íæ wílj liílli kòòòb eédhalf. Ñgãà k̃i !wá! àashi ææærng m̃i!óshalf, bàdha ki k’ũcen gwææz.”

NOTE: Whenever an exclamation mark appears ***bolded in italics***, it is pure punctuation. Elsewhere, it is a phoneme. Sorry about this.

THE LEXICON

limri – adj. Important.

!o – v. To have. Irregular.

!wa – prn. Personal pronoun.

!wurl – v. To listen.

liili – n.(medial Contour) Cord.

lxwa – n.m. Cloaca.

-lli – Privative suffix.

Aashi – n.m. Year.

Adlir – n.(final) Supplies.

Ærng – v. To grow.

-alf – Adjectival nominaliser.

Badha – prn. Distal demonstrative.

Calar – adv. With the intention of returning.

-cen – Nominal plural suffix.

Debi – adj. Everlasting.

Dhuth – v. To bring.

Edh – V. To rejuvenate. rejuvenate {edh}

Em – n.(Sequential) Woman

Epxud – adj. Deep.

Finc – v. To go on a trip for a goal, e.g. to go on a quest, run an errand, go on holiday, etc.

Fo – coord. And.

Gabi – n.s. Water.

Gwææz – adj. Six.

Gwæzli – adj. Nine.

Heth – adj. Hot.

Huxa – v. To move.

-i – Pronominal plural suffix.

læ – n.f. Tail.

læ – n.m. Lake.

-ja – Reflexive voice suffix.

Jef – adj. Wise

K'uc – n.f. Unit of length equivalent to the forearm of a Lemonade Boy.

K'urdæ – n.s. River.

Kælan – n.m. Mentor.

Ki – v. Copular verb. Irregular.

Kob – adj. Mighty.

Kwid – adj. Still.

Kx'row – n.(initial) Trail.

Li – adj. Three.

Merd – n.s. Sun.

M̃i!osh – adj. Little.

Muldax – v. To make.

M̃ush – n.f. Egg.

Nga – Prn. Interrogative pronoun.

Ngærla – v. To fill with liquid.

Ñurrang – adj. Arid (of a place).

Olijoj – n.f. Old person.

Oorre – n.i. Moment.

P'ii – Contra-expectational particle.

Pxullhwa – n.s. Umbilical cord.

-re – Agentive nominaliser. For your purposes, this creates nouns with Initial Contour.

Reya – v. To persist.

-ri – Inchoative verbaliser.

Rowi – v. To starve.

Rræk' – v. To remove something from inside something else.

Thitl'i – n.m. Errand.

Tlænya – n.i. Bag.

Twigi – v. To sell.

Ur!ob – v. To recount a story, whether fictional or historical.

Whuk – coord. While.

Wij – prn. Proximal demonstrative.

Wongga – v. To say.

Wonum – n.m. Moon.

Xedzep.x – n.f. Apparel

Xoc – v. To remove something from the outside of something else.

Yang – adj. Big.

Yara – v. To go.

Yulngu – n.f. North.

Zawæy – v. To fill with non-liquid(s).

-ze – Causative voice suffix.

-Ōa – Adverbial suffix.

Ōerri – n.i. Nose.

Ōhwæf – adj. Immature.

MORPHOLOGY

I'm only gonna list the cases relevant to the text.

NOUNS

Some nouns related to the giving of life possess an inherent Sequential Tone. These nouns will have various tones in the nominative/absolutive (combined in tables as *direct*). All other nouns only have an inherent Contour. Different cases will apply different combinations of Nucleus and Periphery.

Nouns of all Contours will have a High Nucleus and Mid Periphery in the nominative/absolutive; and a Creaky Nucleus and Low Periphery in the instrumental. For example, a noun with Final Contour in the nominative will take the tonal melody M[H], while one with Medial Contour would take M[H]M, and one with Initial will give [H]M.

The applications of Nucleus and Periphery will here be presented in the format of +NP, e.g. high Nucleus and low Periphery would be +HL regardless of Contour.

Again, only relevant inflections are included.

	DIR	ACC	ERG	DAT	GEN	LOC	ALL	ABL	INST	
Initial	+HM		+CM			+CH	+HL	+MC	+LC	
-AGNT					+LH					
Medial			+LH	+CL	+CH			+ML		
-NMLR				+CH						
Final					+MC	+MH				
Seq.				39	4		38		35	

Plumlang has a split-ergative system, where pronouns and animates are given nominative/accusative, but inanimates and nouns which are the products of derivational morphology always take ergative/absolutive.

PRONOUNS

There is one interrogative pronoun: *nga*.

In the locative, it is *ñgãà*.

The demonstrative pronouns take the following tonal melodies:

In accusative, HL

In dative, LM

In genitive, HC

In ablative, CM

There is one personal pronoun: *!wa*.

1st person imposes initial Contour

2nd person imposes final Nucleus

3rd person imposes medial Nucleus

Nominative gives +HL

Accusative gives +LC

Dative gives +LM

Genitive gives +MH

Locative gives +CH

ADJECTIVES

Adjectives agree for case and definiteness with the modified noun.

	DIR	GEN	LOC	ABL
Definite	43	41	38	
Indefinite	1	2		4

VERBS

Verbs are inflected for person, tense/aspect, and mood.

	TONALITY	COPULAR	PUNCTUAL	DURATIVE	“Have”	INCH.	CAUS.	REFL.
1 st person	Contour	[+initial]			[+medial]	[+final]	[+initial]	
2 nd person		[+final]			[+initial]		[+final]	
3 rd person		[+medial]			[+final]	[+medial]		
Future	Periphery	[+mid]		[+low]		[+low]		
Present		[+low]		[+high]		[+high]		
Past Imp.		[+creaky]		[+creaky]		[+creaky]		
Past		[+high]		[+mid]		[+mid]		
Realis			[+creaky]		[+mid]		[+creaky]	
Irrealis			[+high]		[+creaky]		[+high]	
Indicative		Nucleus	[+mid]				[+creaky]	[+mid]
Subjunctive	[+low]			[+high]	[+mid]	[+low]		
Optative	[+high]			[+low]	[+high]	[+high]		
Imperative	[+creaky]				[+low]	[+creaky]		

ADVERBS

Adverbs match the tone of the verb they are modifying.

PARTICLES

Particles and coordinators and the such always take Tone 1.