

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to review the literature on the topics of Kammuang phonology and Lanna orthography, provide a general background of the Kammuang and ancient Lanna language, and review studies of language attitudes that have some relation to the current topic.

2.1 Kammuang phonology and the Lanna orthography

Only a few scholars have studied Kammuang phonology and the Lanna orthography. Many of these books have been helpful in writing this thesis. However, many of the scholars arrive at different conclusions regarding the details of Kammuang phonology and the Lanna orthography.

2.1.1 Ruengdet Pankhuenkhat and Kammuang and the Lanna orthography

Ruengdet (1982), states that the inventory of phonemes of Kammuang consists of seventeen consonants, two semivowels, eighteen vowels, three diphthongs and six tones. He gives helpful notes about consonant clusters in the Lanna script that other writers do not mention. He says that the Lanna script consists of eleven consonantal clusters: /kw/ /k^hw/ /tw/ /t^hw/ /cw/ /ʔw/ /nw/ /ɲw/ /sw/ /lw/ and /jw/. He notes that if /w/ is used in the consonantal clusters except /kw-/ and /k^hw-/, the pronunciation of /w/ may be lost e.g. /swà:y/ becomes /sà:y/ 'to swing' etc in some localities. He also talks about the correspondence of consonant phonemes that account for the

phonemes /r/, /h/ and /l/. The Thai phoneme /r/ does not occur in spoken Kammuang; it is always replaced by the phoneme /h/ or /l/. Thai /r/ becomes Kammuang /h/ in all words that are cognate in Central Thai and Kammuang. Thai /r/ becomes /l/ in Kammuang when the words are loan words from other languages.

Ruengdet (1982) has many useful sections in his work, especially the sections regarding consonant clusters and the correspondence of consonant phonemes. These two sections help in explaining some of the difficulties Kammuang speakers have when they study the Lanna script, because in the section on the correspondence of consonant phonemes he talks about the comparative study of the Lanna script and Standard Thai. According to Ruengdet's explanation about consonant clusters, the new Kammuang learners may know that there are not as many consonant clusters in spoken Kammuang as in Central Thai. Even in the Lanna orthography, there are many consonant clusters that are not pronounced as clusters in modern spoken Kammuang.

2.1.2 Kobkan Thangpijaigul, Scribner Messenger and the Northern Thai language

Kobkan and Messenger (1995) talk about the sound systems of the Northern Thai language. They state that the Lanna script has twenty individual consonant phonemes. They compare the Lanna consonants to their counterparts in standard Thai. They also discuss the details of the Lanna consonant clusters and vowels. The inventory of vowels is the same as in Thai. Pure vowels have phonemically distinct short and long forms. The Lanna script has six tones: mid-high level, low, falling, high falling, high, and rising. However, they mention that there is great regional variation in the contours of the tones.

Kobkan and Messenger also discuss the Lanna script. The principles of the Lanna writing system are generally similar to those of the Thai writing system. Although some individual symbols are significantly different from Thai, there are some Lanna consonant symbols that are the same as in Thai. There are a number of words that are written in the Lanna script beginning with two consonant symbols, but are pronounced with a single initial phoneme. In addition, they provide a table of Lanna consonant symbols in detail including the Lanna script, phonetic script, Thai script, examples of each consonant both when they are used as the initial consonant and final consonant, and Lanna vowel symbols. The Lanna script has eight independent vowels. They discuss the eight independent vowels and mentions that the names of these vowel symbols with the word *tǔa* plus the sound that the vowel symbol represents. They also mention that the Lanna script has three classes of consonants, as in Thai, but note that the members of each class are not exactly the same in the Lanna script and Thai script. In the table of the Lanna script consonant classes, they provide the Lanna script consonant in each class, along with their names and Thai equivalents (Kobkan and Messenger, 1995: 26). They also discuss tone marks and other special symbols that appear in the Lanna script.

Kobkan and Messenger's book was helpful for this thesis in explaining the Lanna script consonant clusters, the Lanna script consonant symbols, consonant classes, the Lanna script vowel symbols, and tone marks. Each entry is very clear and easy to understand because they provide the Lanna script, Thai script and phonetic script in order to compare each sound in the table. Although they do not mention the number of consonant clusters in the Lanna script, they explain the details of consonant clusters that other works do not mention.

2.1.3 Renu Wichasin and the Lanna script

Renu (2000) says that there are three parts to the sound system of the Lanna script: consonant phonemes, vowel phonemes and tonal phonemes. She divides the consonant phonemes into two groups based on their position in the syllable. Initial consonants are divided into two groups: twenty single consonants and eleven clusters. There are nine final consonants.

In addition, she mentions that there are two kinds of vowel phonemes in the Lanna script. There are eighteen single vowel phonemes that can be divided into nine short vowels and long vowels. Renu provides a table as well as examples of each vowel phoneme (Renu, 2000: 10). There are also six diphthongs in the Lanna script: three long diphthongs and three short diphthongs. She explains that most linguists believe that there are three diphthongs because the short and long varieties occur in complementary distribution.

After this, she discusses tone by using the tone box of William J. Gedney. She also mentions other linguists who have worked on the tonal phonemes of the Lanna script. There are six tonal phonemes: mid-level, low-falling, high-falling, high-rising, low-rising, and high-level with glottal closure. She displays a table and diagram that shows the tones of Lanna as well (Renu, 2000: 14).

Renu presents the Lanna script writing system very clearly. The way she explains each entry is similar to Kobkan (1995), because she provides the Lanna script, phonetic script and Thai script side by side, so it is easy for the reader to compare the sounds of the Lanna and Thai script. In addition she provides examples of each phoneme. Her work is very useful to the phonology section of this thesis explaining about consonant phonemes and vowel phonemes. The cluster section of her work is especially helpful because the number of the clusters in his work are the same as in Ruengdet (1982). In addition, the section on diphthongs in Renu's work is helpful in

making decisions about the number of diphthongs in the Lanna script. Another helpful section is the explanation of tonal phonemes. Most of the phonology section in this thesis is based on Renu's book.

2.2 General Kammuang and Lanna script background

2.2.1 Boonkhit Watcharasart and the Lanna script

According to Boonkhit (1995), there are eight modern Thai provinces that were once in the Lanna kingdom: Chiang Rai, Lamphun, Lampang, Chiang Mai, Phrae, Nan, Mae Hongson and Tak. However, in ancient times, some parts of Laos, China and Burma used to be included in the Lanna kingdom. He mentions the word 'Lanna' was first seen in 1526 in the ancient document of 'Nang Jan Di' temple, Chiang Khong, Chiang Rai Province, and also other ancient documents, such as "Four Pigs" in the Chiang Mai history of the 'Muen Lan' temple. The word 'Lanna' means 'the kingdom where there are one million rice fields.' Boonkhit begins with the Lanna era from 1296-1558 (Sarassawadi, 1996: 101), during which the Mengrai dynasty played an important role in ruling the Lanna kingdom. After the end of the Mengrai dynasty, Lanna was conquered by the Burmese. Many years later, King Kawila helped to reconstruct the Lanna kingdom in 1787. The Kawila era is called 'Kep phak sai sa, kep kha sai Muang', meaning 'the era of gathering Lanna people back to Lanna kingdom.' Boonkhit also refers to a list of Lanna documents that were written in the Lanna script in "Pap Sa" (a kind of notebook) and in "Bai Lan" (a kind a leaf) (Boonkhit, 1995: 15). These documents are in the Social Research Institute of Chiang Mai University. Boonkhit shows a map of the areas where scholars went to observe and study the ancient things that appear in those areas during the years 1978-1986. He discusses the reasons why Northern Thai people cannot read the Lanna script. He said that in 1937, the Thai government declared that Standard Thai would be the only language of education in government schools. Every Thai student must follow the

curriculum of the Ministry of Education. At that time, most Lanna young people had no chance to study their ancient language. Thus the only youth who had a chance to study Lanna were the monks. Nowadays, the number of Northern Thai people who can read Lanna is about 0.05%.

Boonkhit's article is very important to this thesis, especially in the section on "the attitudes of Northern Thai people towards Kammuang and the Lanna script" (Boonkhit, 1995: 26-30). He provides information on the Lanna language that is difficult to find in other books. Boonkhit explains the history of the Lanna kingdom and the ancient documents that still exist now in an understandable way.

2.2.2 Renu Wichasin and the study of the Kammuang and the Lanna script

Renu (2000) discusses the reasons why Kammuang speakers tend to forget their own regional language. She also mentions the importance of Lanna study including spoken Kammuang, the Lanna script, Lanna culture and Lanna history. In her book she mentions that there are four reasons why Kammuang speakers or Yuan people tend to ignore their own regional language (Renu, 2000: 4):

- 1) They try to adjust their lifestyle to be like the city lifestyle because they are afraid that they will be looked down on as low class people.
- 2) People have no chance to study their own regional language and literature because of the modern Standard Thai curriculum.
- 3) People who marry people from other regions have to use the standard language to communicate with each other.
- 4) The development of new technology that uses Standard Thai and English as basic languages.

Renu gives the following reasons why Lanna study is important (Renu, 2000: 4):

- 1) Lanna language study is necessary for communicating with the mother-tongue speakers of the regional language. If we can speak the regional language, it will be a good chance to build good relationships with the "owners (native speakers)" (Renu, 2000: 4) of the regional language.
- 2) We need to preserve the Lanna cultural heritage because we believe that language is at the heart of the nation. If we lose our regional language, it means that we also lose our unity.
- 3) Knowledge of Lanna is background knowledge for further study of other Thai-Tai language groups.
- 4) Lanna language study is essential to read and understand the ancient Lanna documents.
- 5) Lanna language study helps to understand ancient Thai literature, and a knowledge of Lanna can help in learning Standard Thai.

Renu's ideas are helpful for this thesis in the discussion of language attitudes. In addition, her topics provided the researcher the reasons why people have positive or negative attitudes towards their own language. Her second topic, about the importance of Lanna study, is helpful for the conclusions of this thesis.

2.3 Language attitude studies

2.3.1 Colin Baker and language attitudes towards Welsh

Baker (1992: 48-75) describes a research project that examined the origin of attitudes to the Welsh language. The project compared language attitudes with gender, age, language background, type of school and ability in Welsh. 797 children from three

different types of schools in North and Mid Wales participated in the research. The results suggested that attitudes to Welsh were generally favorable. However, the Welsh language was regarded as an unimportant language for playing sports and watching television and videos. Fourteen years of age is the critical period, when attitudes can become less favorable. Involvement in cultural contexts including Welsh culture and books appear to lead to favorable attitudes. Thus, attractive cultural activities are an essential support mechanism for this minority language.

Baker's article reported about language attitudes in a complex way. He used many technical terms in his study. Nevertheless, his study explains how language attitudes are influenced by a variety of factors: gender, age, and language background. Thus his study is useful to this thesis for analyzing attitudes towards Kammuang and the Lanna script. It also helped the researcher to see what factors can possibly influence peoples' language attitudes.

2.3.2 Preeya Nokaeo and various language attitudes studies

Preeya (1989) discusses a number of studies and reports done on language attitudes. These language attitude research projects are grouped into three major categories.

- 1) The attitudes and beliefs that native speakers have about their languages. In this kind of study, the subjects were simply asked for their attitudes and opinions towards their own language.
- 2) The attitudes of community-wide stereotyped impressions towards the speakers of a particular language or language variety.
- 3) The kinds of language behavior that result from certain attitudes or beliefs.

Preeya cites many case studies concerning attitudes towards language variation. The first example is the study of Cheyne (1970) which used the matched-guise technique

to examine reactions to Scottish and English regional accents. She found that both Scottish and English judges tended to rate Scottish speakers as lower in status than the English speakers. The second study was by Gibbon (1983) regarding attitudes towards the mixed Cantonese/English of English-Cantonese bilingual students. Gibbon found that the English-Cantonese bilingual students at the University of Hong Kong have both negative and positive attitudes towards mixed Cantonese/English, but still have a positive covert attitude towards it. They thought that the use of mixed Cantonese/English was a strategy of neutrality which enables speakers to avoid appearing either totally Chinese or totally Western. Another study that Preeya mentions in her literature review is Palikupt (1983). She conducted an attitudinal study of Central Thai and Northeastern Thai. The result was that, even though Northeastern speakers evaluated Central Thai favorably, they did not rate their own Northeastern variety less favorably, so it tells us that these people still have some language loyalty and own-group pride.

Preeya herself studied attitudinal reactions of Central Thai speakers and Northern Thai speakers towards their own dialect group or the contrasting group. Her research was conducted at two different localities: one at Chiang Mai University and the other at Thammasat University (Bangkok). Both Northern Thai native speakers and Central Thai native speakers were involved in both localities. The study at both localities came up with similar results. The Central Thai and Northern Thai speakers from both locations (Chiang Mai University and Thammasat University) had rather similar reactions towards the Central Thai language. They showed more favorableness to the Central Thai speakers (groups) in regard to the characteristic of "competence" and status dimensions such as education and socio-economic status, although the Northern Thai speakers had slightly more favorable attitudes toward Central Thai than Central Thai speakers had towards themselves! Thus the results of this study agrees with most studies on language attitudes and dialect attitudes, that "the high-prestige variety of a language always obtains positive evaluations from speakers of all

social groups" (Preeya, 1989: 133). Thereafter the Northern Thai and Central Thai speakers from both locations also gave similar reactions towards the Northern Thai language. They evaluated Northern Thai speakers more favorably in terms of personal integrity and social attractiveness dimensions such as 'friendliness' and 'sincerity.' According to the results of Preeya's study, both Northern Thai youth and Central Thai youth (the average age of the subjects in Preeya's study was 18 years old) feel Kammuang speakers or Northern Thai speakers are kind, helpful and socially attractive, but probably less-rich and less-educated than Central Thai speakers.

Preeya's study was helpful for this thesis in her discussion of native speakers' attitudes towards their own language. It is helpful to see how other researchers analyzed their data and what their results were. In addition, the results of Preeya's study also helped the researcher to know how Kammuang speakers feel about their own language and their evaluation towards the contrasting language, Central Thai.

2.3.3 Siwaporn Wattanarat and Lanna poetry (between 1984-1996)

Siwaporn's book (1998) is a study of contemporary Lanna poetry. She studied the characteristics of the language, values in the poetry, and the attitudes and current interests of the residents of Northern Thailand towards Lanna poetry in order to find ways to preserve and support the composition of Lanna poetry. Siwaporn mentions four ways of preserving contemporary Lanna poetry (Siwaporn, 1998: 154-155).

- 1) Lanna poetry is going to disappear because the people who know Lanna are only old people - teenagers are not interested in Lanna. The reason behind this is the influence of other cultures and the change of fashions. This is an important problem that the government and private sector should tackle by promoting and supporting Lanna poetry among the people by organizing workshops and providing financial support.

- 2) The government, private sector, universities, schools and colleges should have clubs or programs that support the composition of Lanna poetry and hold activities that are about Lanna culture.
- 3) A Lanna poetry contest should be held more often so it can help preserve and support Lanna poetry.
- 4) Lanna poetry should be a subject that is taught in North Thailand schools. It should be an obligatory class for primary and secondary schools and it may be an optional class in university curriculums.

At the end she emphasizes that if we follow her suggestions, we will definitely be able to preserve Lanna poetry.

Siwaporn gives very useful suggestions for preserving Lanna poetry. It helped the researcher to think about the ways Thai people could preserve Kammuang and the Lanna script. Even though Lanna poetry is only one part of the language, it also can help in preserving and supporting the use of Kammuang and the Lanna script.

2.3.4 Ralph Fasold and language attitudes

Fasold (1987) focuses on individuals and what they do with language. He mentions two views regarding attitudes: the mentalist view and the behaviorist view. The mentalist view of attitude is that it is a state of readiness that helps the person to prepare to react to a given stimulus in one way rather than in another. The behaviorist view of attitudes is found simply when the people respond to social situations. This view only needs to deal with the overt behavior. Fasold mentions a variety of methods for language attitude research: questionnaires, interviews, matched-guise technique, and other methods. He said there are three direct methods. The first one is using questionnaires that can have one of two types of questions, open or closed. Open questions allow respondents to express their feelings and views however they

might wish. For the closed questions, respondents cannot reveal their attitudes freely. The second method is the interview method that uses open questions, but this method needs much more time to complete and it is also expensive. The main problems of this method are in the recording and evaluation of the data. The last method is observation, which is the least obtrusive method, so the researcher can collect data in a natural way. Fasold also talks about the applications of social structure. He examines language attitudes by trying to understand how language is used as a symbol of group membership and identity. He mentions examples from the language attitude research of other scholars. For example, Trudgil and Tzavaras (1977) analyzed the Albanian language as a possible marker of group identity among Arvanites, a sociocultural group in Greece. They tried to discover how the status of Arvanitika in the community is declining. Another study was done by El-Dash and Tucker on Classical and Colloquial Arabic. One of the results was that the speakers of Classical Arabic came out as being perceived of having greater leadership ability and higher intelligence than the speakers of Colloquial Arabic. Another study of attitudes was about Spanish and English in a Mexican community in Chicago by Carranza and Ryan (1975). They used sets of semantic-differential scales and divided them into two sets, a status-steering set and a solidarity-stressing set. The subjects were Anglo and Mexican American high-school students at a Catholic high school in Chicago. The result was that both Mexican Americans and Anglos evaluated English as having more prestige than Spanish. English and Spanish were rated significantly differently depending on whether they were heard in the home context or in the school context. Spanish was higher when it was heard in the home domain, but in the school domain English was rated higher. English was also higher on both the solidarity and status scales.

Fasold's book was useful to this thesis. It talks about the kinds of methods that are used in surveying language attitudes. The language attitude studies that Fasold

mentioned in his book are very clear and give good examples for the researcher to see how those scholars conducted their attitude research.

2.3.5 Roland Walker and language attitude survey

Walker's article (1982) focuses the need for measuring language attitudes and language use in order to assess Bible translation needs in various parts of the world. He feels that it is important to measure language attitudes and language use because the result of the measuring will help indicate which language is most appropriate to use for Scripture translation and also to help predict future trends in the use of any given language. The differing social situations and functions of language varieties in these situations have a great effect on language choice and language attitudes. Walker discusses how language attitudes have been measured in the past. He mentions questionnaires, interviews, commitment measures, matched guise tests and observation. The commitment measure is one type of scaled and weighted measure. It tests the respondent's willingness to perform an activity without actually doing it. He also says that observation is the most indirect method, but it is also the most subjective and the most difficult to interpret. In order to gain an accurate assessment of language attitudes, indirect methods are very important. Walker said that most of the studies of language attitudes have been of urban populations who have little or no formal education, so these conditions have to be considered when planning the research. Language attitudes and language use research is aimed at discovering the real situation, not the ideal, thus the researcher must choose the method accordingly. Methods which are less direct help to get reliable data and can validate more direct methods. Walker gives the scale of directness in Figure 5.

Thai should be taught as a subject in school. However, there was much disagreement among the students about speaking Northern Thai in school, because many students believed that only Central Thai should be used in school. The study found that there was only one student who had ever attempted to write Northern Thai words in the Lanna script. Other students never attempted it because they thought that it would be hard to read and difficult to understand. In summary, the students in Lamphun still saw the importance of Kammuang, but they tended not to want to learn or use the Lanna script.

Stoke's research report was helpful to this thesis in planning methodology, especially the questionnaires for students and parents. The questions that he asked the students were very useful for this thesis in being good examples of questions for students. He inspired this researcher to start work on the questionnaire used for this thesis.

2.4 Recent efforts to revive Kammuang and the Lanna script

2.4.1 Ministry of Art and Culture Central Project

In 1986, The Art and Culture Central Project held a conference regarding developing a method to transfer the Lanna script into Thai script. The main reason behind this conference was that there were many scholars who knew the Lanna script and who wanted to transliterate books written in the Lanna script into the Thai script. Each of them had their own methodology for this transfer. Confusion occurred when there were many different ways of transliterating the Lanna script into the Thai script. Fifty scholars from every part of Thailand attended this conference at Chiang Mai University, 29-30 November 1986. Three different methods were agreed upon. The first method was transfer directly by transcribing every Lanna letter into a Thai equivalent. This method is suitable for documents that need accuracy in the letter transcription. The second method is transfer by using the Central Thai script to transcribe by following Central Thai word structure. For example, Lanna words not

containing initial clusters would be written as if they had those clusters since the Central Thai equivalents do. This method is suitable for people who are interested in general reading. The third method is transfer by using the Central Thai script to transcribe Lanna words as they are pronounced when read. Tape recordings were used in this method in order to record the Lanna reading without considering about the actual Lanna letters involved, since their sound values are often different from the written Thai sound values used in methods one and two.

This conference report is helpful to this thesis in writing the chapter about the current use of Kammuang and the Lanna script. From this conference, the researcher found that many scholars are interested in improving and supporting Lanna. Thus this conference shows that there are still some groups of people who want to preserve and use the Lanna language in the present day and also in the future.

2.4.2 Lamoon Janhom and the current action of Lanna preservation

According to Lamoon (1999), people now think more about the importance of their tradition, culture and history. The Lanna script is an important key to help one to learn and gain Lanna regional knowledge. Lamoon discusses the beginning of Lanna courses in schools, universities and colleges. The Graduate School of Silapakorn University has two majors, Thai history and Eastern history. These two courses of study teach facets of Tai-Thai, Mon-Kmer, and South Indian scripts. In 1986, Chiang Mai University introduced a masters degree in Lanna language and literature in the Graduate School curriculum. In 1998, the Education Ministry decided to allow the teaching of the Lanna script in primary schools, secondary schools and undergraduate programs in the Thai departments of Northern educational institutes such as Chiang Mai University and Rajabhat Institute, Chiang Mai. Lanna script courses in temples are also widespread. In addition, the Art and Culture Center and the Rajabhat Institute introduced a short "continuing education" curriculum for interested people. There are

many things that have occurred to preserve and support the study of the Lanna language, and many scholars who know the Lanna script and computers have designed computer software in order to help Lanna study. David K. Wyatt was the first person to invent a Lanna font. Udom Rungruengsri, Thawi Sawangpanyakun, Manit Kaewnamon have also been involved in these developments.

From Lamoon's article, the researcher finds that many scholars and institutions see the importance of and are interested in the Northern Thai language, including ancient Lanna documents and the Lanna script. There are many programs that have been held to foster cooperation with each other in order to help support and preserve the Lanna language. This article is useful to this researcher as an example of the positive attitudes of the people who have tried to do many things to preserve the Lanna language.

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