1. Introduction
Nominalization refers to “the process of forming a noun from some other word class (e.g. red-ness) or (in classical Transformational Grammar especially) the derivation of a noun phrase from an underlying clause (e.g. His answering of the letter... from He answered the letter)” (Crystal 1991: 232-234).

This study deals with the first type of nominalization, which is labeled as “lexical nominalization” by Givón (1984: 498)”. It is a process of lexical formation or word formation. In Thai, lexical nominalization means the process of deriving nouns from verbs, which can be done in several ways. The present study focuses only on deriving abstract nouns from verbs. This process may be specially labeled as “abstract nominalization” and the derived nouns as “abstract nominals” (see Prasithrathsint 1997).

Abstract nominals in Thai are marked by either kaan- (กัน) or khwaam- (ข้าม); for example:

1. kin ‘to eat’ \(\rightarrow\) kaan-kin ‘eating’
2. phäitanaa ‘to develop’ \(\rightarrow\) kaan-phäitanaa ‘development’
3. sadéeeg ‘to perform’ \(\rightarrow\) kaan-sadéeeg ‘performance’
4. sük ‘to be happy’ \(\rightarrow\) khwaam-sük ‘happiness’
5. yuüitítham ‘to be just’ \(\rightarrow\) khwaam-yuüitítham ‘justice’
6. ciçcay ‘to be sincere’ \(\rightarrow\) khwaam-ciçcay ‘sincerity’

According to Prasithrathsint (1997), the nominalizers kaan- and khwaam-developed from the lexical nouns kaan ‘work, affair, matter’, and khwaam ‘sense or substance of a matter; legal case, lawsuit’, respectively. The study also shows that kaan-nominalization emerged after khwaam-nominalization. In the Sukhothai period (the 13th century), three incidences of khwaam- nominalization were found. The kaan-nominalization, which is the most general pattern today, emerged in the late Ayutthaya period, i.e. around four centuries later, but became productive in the 20th century.

There are interesting questions concerning these two nominalizers in Thai; for example: “Why does Thai need two nominalizers?” “How are they different?” Are they complementarily distributed among the verbs in Thai? Prasithrathsint (1996) shows that

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1 I am grateful to Natchanan Yaowapat who presented the earlier version of this paper at SEALS XV on my behalf. Thanks also go to those who gave comments, especially Pittayawat Pittayaporn.

2 The other type of nominalization is “grammatical nominalization”, which refers to “the process via which a prototypical verbal clause—either a complete sentence (including the subject) or a verb phrase (excluding the subject) is converted into a noun phrase.” (Givón 1984: 498)
the two nominalizers differ in their occurrence in speech styles; i.e., kaan- nominals tend to occur more frequently in academic writing and khwaam- nominals in description and narration.

It is important to note that choosing kaan- or khwaam- to add to a verb is not at all arbitrary. There seem to be some rules that control the choice. However, so far there has been no attempt to explain precisely when to use kaan- and when to use khwaam-. On the contrary, there are only observations; for instance, Haas (1964: 29, 82) notes that when placed before active verbs to form noun derivatives, kaan- can almost always be rendered in English by the suffix -ing and sometimes by -ion, -sion, -al, -ance/-ence, and -ment. As for khwaam-, she says that it is usually rendered in English by -ness, -ity, -ment, -ance/ence, -(t)ion, -(t)ude, -ure, -y, -ery, -ship, -dom, and sometimes -ing. Yaemmadda (1987) suggests that khwaam- occurs with verbs, adjectives’, and nouns, but kaan- with verbs only. He also adds that generally nominals with kaan- are similar to gerunds in English and that kaan- signifies movement whereas khwaam- signifies stability.

Suggesting that they are differentiated by types of verb, Morev (2004) states that kaan- is used for converting verbs, particularly action verbs, into abstract nouns, and that khwaam- is used for turning non-action verbs; i.e., verbs denoting states, feelings, qualities and properties into abstract nouns. He also suggests that in some cases both can be used with the same verb, but the meaning of the derived nominals will be different, e.g. kaan-taay ‘dying’, ‘death’ (a name of process) vs. khwaam-taay ‘death’.

As can be seen from the above observations, kaan- and khwaam- overlap to a considerable extent. Nevertheless, it can be generalized that kaan- is used with action verbs and khwaam- with non-action or stative verbs. However, this generalization is not completely valid because there are counterexamples. In actuality, some non-action verbs, which should be nominalized with khwaam-, are found to be nominalized with kaan-; for example:

7. ráprúú ‘to perceive’ \(\rightarrow\) kaan-ráprúú ‘perception’
   * khwaam-ráprúú

8. dáyyn ‘to hear’ \(\rightarrow\) kaan-dáyyn ‘hearing’
   * khwaam-dáyyn

9. dáykln ‘to smell’ \(\rightarrow\) kaan-dáykln ‘smelling’
   * khwaam-dáykln

10. rianruú ‘to learn’ \(\rightarrow\) kaan-rianruú ‘learning’
    * khwaam-rianruú

11. tratsaruú ‘to be enlightened’ \(\rightarrow\) kaan-tratsaruú ‘enlightenment’
    * khwaam-tratsaruú

12. damroguyú ‘to exist’ \(\rightarrow\) kaan-damroguyú ‘existence’
    * khwaam-damroguyú

13. wíkhrê ‘to analyze’ \(\rightarrow\) kaan-wíkhrê ‘analysis’
    * khwaam-wíkhrê

14. phakhphê ‘to rest’ \(\rightarrow\) kaan-phakhphê ‘rest’
    * khwaam-phakhphê

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3 In this study, adjectives in Thai are considered to be a sub-class of verbs called “adjectival verbs”, because syntactically they behave like verbs.
Nominalization and categorization of verbs in Thai

In addition, some verbs are found to occur with both kaan- and khwaam-; for example:

15. rūprōm  ‘to hurry’  →  kaan-rūprōm  ‘hurry’
   →  khwaam-rūprōm  ‘hurry’
16. klomkliin  ‘to assimilate’  →  kaan-kломkliin  ‘assimilation’
   →  khwaam-kломkliin  ‘assimilation’
17. riūammii  ‘to cooperate’  →  kaan-riūammii  ‘cooperation’
   →  khwaam-riūammii  ‘cooperation’
18. klīkwanwāy  ‘to move’  →  kaan-klīkwanwāy  ‘movement’
   →  khwaam-klīkwanwāy  ‘movement’
19. chuāyīkā  ‘to assist’  →  kaan-chuāyīkā  ‘assistance’
   →  khwaam-chuāyīkā  ‘assistance’
20. anukhrā  ‘to subsidize’  →  kaan-anukhrā  ‘subsidy, subsidization’
   →  khwaam-anukhrā  ‘subsidy, subsidization’
21. taay  ‘to die, to be dead’  →  kaan-taay  ‘dying, death’
   →  khwaam-taay  ‘dying, death’
22. BUT kākkrā  ‘to be born’  →  kaan-kākkrā  ‘birth’
   →  *khwaam-kākkrā  ‘birth’

The examples above show irregularities in deriving abstract nouns from verbs in Thai. However, those irregularities may be superficial, and there may be some explanations for their occurrences. This study aims to provide such explanations. The above-mentioned suggestions given by Morev (2004) serve as hypotheses on the difference between the two nominalizers with reference to verbal categories in Thai.

Therefore, this study attempts to find out which types of verbs are nominalized by kaan- and which by khwaam- and in what ways they are differentiated.

The data on which the analysis is based are 5,600 verbs in Thai, which consist of kaan-/khwaam- nominalized verbs found in a two-million-word corpus of current Thai, and verbs taken from the Royal Institute Dictionary of Standard Thai (1999).

2. The frequencies of three patterns of nominalization in Thai

Based on an analysis of the frequency of the occurrences of verbs with kaan-, khwaam-, or both kaan- and khwaam- in the data, it can be summarized that abstract nominalization in Thai can be divided into three patterns, and that the kaan- pattern is the most frequent. Next is the khwaam- pattern, and the kaan-/khwaam- pattern is the least frequent (see Table 1). The result confirms the findings in Prasithrathsint (1997) that kaan- is the most general nominalizer in present-day Thai.

Table 1: The frequencies of the three patterns of nominalization in Thai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patterns of nominalization</th>
<th>Frequency (percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kaan-</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khwaam-</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaan-/khwaam-</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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3. Three categories of verbs in Thai
An analysis of each of the nominalized verbs in the data and its syntactic-semantic environments enabled me to divide the verbs into three categories according to their occurrences in each of the nominalization patterns mentioned in Section 2. The three categories of verbs are labeled here as **perceptible**, **imperceptible**, and **balanced** verbs.

3.1 Perceptible verbs
Perceptible verbs occur with *kaar*- only. They represent concepts that are easy to understand or characterize. They may be action or non-action verbs, and their meanings are perceivable due to certain common features or standards shared by native speakers.

**Examples:**

23. *kën* ‘to bend’ → *kaar-kën*; *khwaam-kën*
24. *klàaw* ‘to state’ → *kaar-klàaw*; *khwaam-klàaw*
25. *k intéressant* ‘to be born’ → *kaar-k intéressant*; *khwaam-k intéressant*
26. *kin* ‘to eat’ → *kaar-kin*; *khwaam-kin*
27. *khàay* ‘to sell’ → *kaar-khàay*; *khwaam-khàay*
28. *khuy* ‘to talk’ → *kaar-khuy*; *khwaam-khuy*
29. *khamaooy* ‘to steal’ → *kaar-khamaooy*; *khwaam-khamaooy*
30. *khjòphkhun* ‘to thank’ → *kaar-khjòphkhun*; *khwaam-khjòphkhun*
31. *caàkaan* ‘to manage’ → *kaar-caàkaan*; *khwaam-caàkaan*
32. *khàavruàm* ‘to participate’ → *kaar-khàavruàm*; *khwaam-khàavruàm*
33. *khonphòp* ‘to discover’ → *kaar-khonphòp*; *khwaam-khonphòp*
34. *nèìam* ‘to introduce’ → *kaar-nèìam*; *khwaam-nèìam*
35. *paàriùup* ‘to reform’ → *kaar-paàriùup*; *khwaam-paàriùup*
36. *àhìbaay* ‘to explain’ → *kaar-àhìbaay*; *khwaam-àhìbaay*
37. *àphìpraay* ‘to discuss’ → *kaar-àphìpraay*; *khwaam-àphìpraay*
38. *hùar* ‘to laugh’ → *kaar-hùar*; *khwaam-hùar*
39. *hàay* ‘to give’ → *kaar-hàay*; *khwaam-hàay*
40. *yùt* ‘to stop’ → *kaar-yùt*; *khwaam-yùt*
41. *hàaycay* ‘to breathe’ → *kaar-hàaycay*; *khwaam-hàaycay*
42. *sànyaa* ‘to promise’ → *kaar-sànyaa*; *khwaam-sànyaa*
43. *sànsòm* ‘to praise’ → *kaar-sànsòm*; *khwaam-sànsòm*
45. *sògsòm* ‘to promote’ → *kaar-sògsòm*; *khwaam-sògsòm*
46. *ànuùyàat* ‘to permit’ → *kaar-ànuùyàat*; *khwaam-ànuùyàat*

As can be seen from examples 23-46 and also examples 7-14 in section 1, the concepts represented by the verbs are discernible no matter whether they are associated with physical or mental activities. In terms of syntactic characteristics, they can be transitive or intransitive. In terms of semantic features, they can be verbs of activity, process, bodily sensation, transitional event, etc.

3.2 Imperceptible verbs
Imperceptible verbs occur with *khwaam*- only. In contrast with perceptible verbs, imperceptible verbs represent concepts that are difficult to understand or characterize.
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Their meanings may vary among native speakers. In accordance with Morev’s observations, these verbs denote values, feelings, qualities and properties.

Examples:

47. klom ‘to be round’ → khwaam-klom; *kaan-klom
48. klaā ‘to be brave’ → khwaam-klaā; *kaan-klaā
49. kwāāg ‘to be wide’ → khwaam-kwāāg; *kaan-kwāāg
50. sīā ‘to be high, tall’ → khwaam-sīā; *kaan-sīā
51. sādaā ‘to be convenient’ → khwaam-sādaā; *kaan-sādaā
52. khayaān ‘to be diligent’ → khwaam-khayaān; *kaan-khayaān
53. khoōm ‘to be bitter’ → khwaam-khoōm; *kaan-khoōm
54. campen ‘to be necessary’ → khwaam-campen; *kaan-campen
55. cuucī ‘to be fussy’ → khwaam-cuucī; *kaan-cuucī
56. chalaāt ‘to be intelligent’ → khwaam-chalaāt; *kaan-chalaāt
57. pōō ‘to be stupid’ → khwaam-pōō; *kaan-pōō
58. rew ‘to be quick’ → khwaam-rew; *kaan-rew
59. riāp ‘to be smooth’ → khwaam-riāp; *kaan-riāp
60. riāp pāāy ‘to be simple’ → khwaam-riāp pāāy; *kaan-riāp pāāy
61. meētaa ‘to be kind’ → khwaam-meētaa; *kaan-meētaa
62. māncay ‘to be confident’ → khwaam-māncay; *kaan-māncay
63. ruīpriā ‘to prosper’ → khwaam-ruīpriā; *kaan-ruīpriā
64. caydam ‘to be merciless’ → khwaam-caydam; *kaan-caydam
65. cays ‘to be easily scared’ → khwaam-cays; *kaan-cays
66. cayō ‘to be soft-hearted’ → khwaam-cayō; *kaan-cayō
67. cayhā ‘to be shocked’ → khwaam-cayhā; *kaan-cayhā
68. khāim ‘to be solemn’ → khwaam-khāim; *kaan-khāim

Examples 47-68 show that imperceptible verbs in Thai tend to be adjectival verbs, which are rendered in English by adjectives. Syntactically, they are intransitive verbs. Semantically, they are verbs of quality. Their meanings are not easy to discern because their semantic components seem to vary among speakers. However, the degree of quality represented by khwaam- nominals derived from an imperceptible verb can be measured by certain values or standards and perceived as a volume or amount. Thus, when one says khōw mii khwaam-campen (he has necessity) or khōw mii khwaam- meētaa (he has kindness), it means something like ‘he has/possesses an amount of necessity’ and ‘he has/possesses an amount of kindness.’ This is evaluated or judged by the speaker’s own values.

3.3 Balanced verbs

Verbs of the third category are the most problematic; they are ambivalent as to their ability to occur with either kaan- or khwaam-. They are labeled here as “balanced verbs”, which seem to have characteristics of both perceptible and imperceptible verbs. Actually, the fact that this category exists seems to strengthen the belief that kaan- and khwaam- have certain inherent meanings. Examples of balanced verbs are 15-22 above and the following examples (69-90).
69. kratīrīlōn ‘to be enthusiastic’
70. klomkliān ‘to assimilate’
71. klua ‘to be afraid’
72. krōot ‘to be angry’
73. khāwcaiy ‘to understand’
74. khoikooŋ ‘to cheat’
75. khāawwāŋ ‘to expect’
76. rak ‘to love’
77. ġiŋap ‘to be silent’
78. carzōntāŋtōo ‘to grow’
79. chūmān ‘to be sure’
80. taay ‘to die, to be dead’
81. thūntua ‘to be modest’
82. thaarrun ‘to be cruel’
83. napthī ‘to respect’
84. pramāat ‘to be careless’
85. plānpleeg ‘to change’
86. thūāthoay ‘to challenge’
87. maw ‘to be drunk’
88. sōncay ‘to be interested’
89. phāphēe ‘to be generous’
90. dōum ‘to boast’

The following sentences show some balanced verbs in context. It will be interesting to see that the nominals with kaan- and those with khwaam- have different meanings.

91. taay ‘to die, to be dead’

- kaan-taay yāaŋ-sagyōp pen thū-prūātthāndō khōŋ thūk khon
dying like-peace be place-desire of every person
‘Peaceful dying is desirable to everyone.’ (Here kaan-taay means the act of dying.)

- chōn dāay khāw kaan-taay khōŋ khāw lēēw
I get news death of he already
‘I have heard the news of his death.’ (kaan-taay refers to an objective incident in life.)

- khwaam-taay pen sīŋ nāa-klua
death be thing fearful
‘Death is a fearful thing.’ (The speaker means ‘the body of death’)

92. klua ‘to be afraid’

- kaan-klua phū pen sīŋ thū athībaay dāay yāak
fear ghost be thing that explain can difficult
Nominalization and categorization of verbs in Thai

‘Fear of ghosts is something difficult to explain.’ (generally speaking)

- thuk khon mii khwaam-klua kəm sər
  every person have fear before taking an exam
‘Everyone has fear (an amount of fear) before taking an exam.’

93. krōt ‘to be angry’

- kaan-kroōt aat tham-hāy khun kēe rew
  Getting angry may cause you to be old fast
‘Being angry may cause you to get old fast.’ (generally speaking)

- chān kamlaŋ phayaayaam rāŋjāy khwaam-krōt
  I PRO try stop anger
‘I am trying to stop my anger.’ (specific meaning)

94. khāwcay ‘to understand’

- kaan-khāwcay phuu-ظروف pen siŋ campen
  understanding others be thing necessary
‘Understanding others is a necessity.’ (general meaning)

- khōp khun sāmpaŋ khwaam-khāwcay
  thank you for understanding
‘Thank you for understanding.’ (specific meaning)

95. khoōkooŋ ‘to cheat’

- kaan-khōkooŋ tham-hāy khāw tīt-khuk
  cheating cause him imprisoned
‘Cheating caused him to be imprisoned.’ (an act of cheating)

- khwaam-khōkooŋ pen laksanā dēn khōŋ khāw
  cheating be characteristic prominent of he
‘Cheating is a prominent characteristic of his.’ (the quality of cheating)

96. khāatwaŋ ‘to expect’

- kaan-khāatwaŋ aāt tham-hāy khun phītvāŋ
  expectation may cause you be disappointed
‘Expectation may cause you to be disappointed.’ (general meaning)

- chān mii khwaam-khāatwaŋ sūŋ kiaw-kēp qaan khōŋ khāw
  I have expectation high about work of he
‘I have high expectation about his work.’ (specific meaning)
97. rak ‘to love’

- kaan-rak khon-im than-häy raw mii khwaam-sük
  loving others cause we have happiness
  ‘Loving others makes us happy.’ (general meaning)

- dëk thū kāat khwaam-rak mak mii pahnāa
  child that lack love tend to have problem
  ‘A child who needs love tends to have problems.’ (amount of love)

4. Conclusion
In the preceding pages I have attempted to show how kaan- and khwaam- nominalizers are different in their inherent meanings and their distribution with verbs. It is found that verbs in Thai can be divided into three categories according to their ability of occurring with kaan- or khwaam-; i.e., perceptible verbs, imperceptible verbs and balanced verbs.

Perceptible verbs are the majority of verbs in Thai. They are either transitive or intransitive, action or non-action, physical or mental. They are different from imperceptible verbs in that they represent concepts that are more perceivable and do not designate a quality or a property of a person or a thing. When they are nominalized they tend to be more objective, more scientific and less specific than imperceptible verbs, which, in contrast, are less objective in terms of the perceived concepts, less scientific, more personal and more specific. Also, nominals with khwaam- tend to signify an amount or volume of a certain quality, which is mostly value-oriented. In addition, imperceptible verbs are normally adjectival verbs, which equal adjectives in English.
References