

THE TONES OF TRAAAT DIALECT

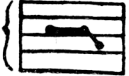
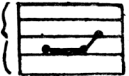
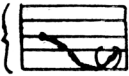
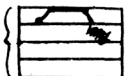
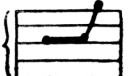
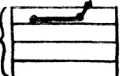
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§0. The following is an auditory, non-instrumental study of the tone of the local Thai speech of Traat province. More specifically it deals with the speech of two informants native to Traat province, whose pronunciation was informally verified as typical by listening to the speech of a number of Traat residents. The transcription and tape recording was done in April 1971, in the provincial capital of Traat. The first informant was Mr. Ing Sam-ma (อิง สัมมา), a fruit grower who now resides in Ban Plai Klong, Tambol Wang Krachaeh, Amphoe Meuang, Traat Province. He was born and grew up in Koh Khwaang village, in Tambol Huai Raeng, Amphoe Meuang, Traat Province. He is 53 years old. The other informant was his wife, Mrs. Chamras Sam-ma (née Ying Yai), who has lived all her life in Ban Plai Klong, where her husband now resides. Slight differences in pronunciation between the two informants were apparent, and are apparent in the recording, and the informants were aware of them. Nevertheless the two idiolects were similar enough to be described together as in the present paper.

Traat speech is a central Thai dialect which seems to be very close to Bangkok speech, differing from it in a few items of vocabulary and in the phonetic realization of the tones and some of the vowel and consonant phonemes. The liquid phonemes, /l/, /r/ are generally confused and are dropped from consonant clusters.

§1. The tones of Traat correspond etymologically one to one with those of Bangkok, but the phonetic realizations of the tones differ somewhat from Bangkok, as we have said, and are in fact very similar to Bangkok of sixty years ago (see below) and to Brown's (1965 at p. 85) reconstruction of the tonal shapes in the speech of 17th century Ayutthaya. Traat differs however from this reconstruction and from Brown's description of present-day Bangkok speech and U Thong speech in possessing in live syllables a sixth tone. This sixth tone corresponds to the plain high tone which Noss (1964, at p. 17) has observed in Bangkok—an observation which is not accepted by Brown and others. The tone in question in Traat is high and non-glottalized, which is also how Noss describes the Bangkok sixth tone, and accords with my own observation of this tone in Bangkok.

The six tones which occur with long syllables are as follows :

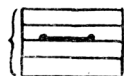
- (1) /—/ upper mid tone with a slight fall at the end, corresponds to Bangkok
 “mid” tone เสียงสามัญ e.g. /kaā/ กา ‘a crow’,¹ /khaā/ คา ‘stuck’.
- (2) /—/ lower mid tone with a slight rise at the end : corresponds to Bangkok
 “low” tone, เสียงเอก : e.g. /sīi/ สี่ ‘four’, /kīi/ กี่ ‘how many’ /pææt/ แปด ‘eight’, /bāāp/ บาป ‘sin’.
- (3) /—/ lower falling tone with creaky ending and occasional slight rise at
 the end: corresponds to Bangkok “falling” tone, เสียงโท : e.g. /phwō/ พ่อ ‘father’ /maak/ มาก ‘much’, /khāw/ เข้า ‘to enter’, /dāj/ ได้ ‘to be able’.
- (4) /—/ higher falling tone with slight rise at beginning with creaky ending :
 corresponds to Bangkok normal “high” tone (i.e. with glottal constriction at the ending) เสียงตรี e.g. /maa/ ม้า ‘horse’.
- (5) /’/ mid rising tone : corresponds to Bangkok “rising” tone เสียงจัตวา e.g.
 /sōwŋ/ สอง ‘two’
- (6) /—/ high tone with an optional slight rise at the end : corresponds to the
 Bangkok special high tone without glottal constriction as in the colloquial pronunciation of the post-verbal particles /māj/ ใหม่, [rǎw] เลี้ยว and the pronouns /khāw/ เขา, /chān/ ฉันทน์ : e.g. /sāj/ ไซ ‘a fish trap’, /khāw/, เขา, 3 person pronoun, /chōət/ ‘a business shirt’.

For the tones of “live” syllables, two minimal sextets and one near-minimal sextet were found : /sāj, sāj, sāj, sāj, sāj, sāj/ (ไซ ‘banyan tree’, ใส่ ‘to put’, ใส่ ‘intestines’, ไซ ‘to probe with beak or snout’, ใส่ ‘clear’, ไซ ‘a fish trap’ respectively), /khāw, khāw, khāw, khāw, khāw, khāw/ (the first syllable of เคารพ /khāwrōp/ ‘to respect’, เข่า ‘knee’, เข้า ‘to enter’, เข่า from นกเข่าแมว /nōk khāw mēəw/ ‘a kind of bird’, เขา ‘horn’, เขา 3rd person pronoun, in formal speech pronounced /khāw/) respectively), /māj, māj, māj, māj, māj, māj/ (ไมล์ ‘mile’, ใหม่ ‘new’, ไหม้ ‘to burn’, ไม้ ‘wood’, ไหม ‘silkworm’, ไหม question particle (in formal speech pronounced /māj/) respectively).

1) Vowels and consonants are transcribed in the system of Haas (1964), except that syllable-final, unreleased [p̚, t̚, k̚] are transcribed /p, t, k/.

In addition there are two tones occurring in short “dead” syllables :

- (1) /./ short mid tone; corresponds to Bangkok “low” tone in short “dead”



syllables : e.g. /sip/ สิบ ‘ten’, /cət/ เจ็ด ‘seven’.

- (2) /-/ short high tone; corresponds to Bangkok “high” tone in short “dead”
syllables : e.g. /phōp/ พบ ‘to meet’, /cəʔ/ เจ็ด ‘to meet’

Two interesting points to note by way of comparison with Bangkok are :

(1) the two high tones of Bangkok, whose status as two separate entities is disputed, are clearly separated in Traat, as a high falling creaky and a plain high tone.

(2) There are differences between the tones of Bangkok as described by Dr. Cornelius Bradley² and Daniel Jones,³ and the Bangkok tones of today as described by Abramson (1962) and Henderson (1964). These concern principally the high glottalized tone (เสียงตรี siang tree) and the falling glottalized tone (เสียงโท siang tho). The corresponding tones of Traat seem to agree quite closely with Bangkok speech of sixty years ago. It is precisely the loss of the fall in the high glottalized tone in Bangkok which has blurred its separation from the plain high tone.

(3) There are three distinct pitch levels in dead syllables, represented for example in ascending order of pitch level by the words /pǝet/ แปด ‘eight’, /sip/ สิบ ‘ten’, and /phōp/ พบ ‘to meet’ respectively.

	0 (live no tone mark)	1 (live mai ek)	3 (long dead)	2 (live mai tho)	4 (short dead)
H (high initials)	 ๓๓	 ๓๓	 ๓๓	 ๓๓	 ๓๓
M (mid initials)	 ๓๓	 ๓๓	 ๓๓	 ๓๓	 ๓๓
L (low initials)	 ๓๓	 ๓๓	 ๓๓	 ๓๓	 ๓๓

Fig. 1

In fig. 1 we show how the fifteen etymological tone classes which must be set up in comparative Thai dialect studies are represented in Traat.

2) Reproduced in McFarland (1944, at p. x.)

3) See Henderson (1964).