The Origin and Development of kra- and ka- Words in Siamese Thai

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Introduction

In Siamese Thai there are over six hundred disyllabic words beginning with kra- and ka, for example /kraduuk/ 'bone', /kradaan/ 'board', /kathí?/ 'coconut milk'. Where did all these words come from? Are they cognate words? Are they loan-words from other languages, or are they new words formed in Siamese? Related literature and many linguists who have studied kra- and ka- words have shown that they come from many directions; as loan words (Banchob Bandhumedha 2526 : 9, 16: Gedney 1947), or as words changing from within the Thai language (Banchob Bandhumedha 2530:121-29), or as new formation words (Uppakitsilllapasan 2531:29-33; Sunan Anchaleenukul 2520). This research specially aims at investigating the origin and development of all the kra- and ka- words, documentary found in Siamese.

1. The origin of kra- and ka- words

765 kra- and ka- words were collected from dictionaries [1] since the Early Rattanakosin period. These data were analyzed in the following processes. First, they were compared with words in other Tai languages [2] to find whether they were cognate. It was found that those cognate of kra- and ka- words were monosyllabic. There were no cognate words beginning with kra- and ka-, except for those found in dialects in Thailand. Second, the remaining words were compared with words in other language families [3]. This stage led to the discovery of loan words. Finally, the words which did not belong to the 2 categories were investigated, using the dictionaries of the Rattanakosin periods, to find whether kra- and ka- words were lately formed.

It was found that of the 765 kra- and ka- words, 210 (27%) are loan words, 329 (43%) are new formation words, and 226 (30%) are anonymous.

1.1 Loan words

210 of the kra- and ka- words in Siamese are loan words, of which 102 were borrowed from Khmer, 72 from Pali-Sanskrit, and the remaining were from other languages; for instance:

Pali-Sanskrit		Siamese	
/kanaka/	>	/kanòk/	<กนก>
/kamala/	>	/kamon/	<กมล>
Khmer		**Siamese**	
/krɑhaay/	>	/krahǎaj/	<กระหาย>
/kɑɲcɔɔ/	>	/krachɔɔ/	<กระเชอ>
Malay		**Siamese**	
/kérobok/	>	/kraphɔ̂ɔk/	<กระพอก>
Tamil		**Thai**	
/kari/	>	/karìi/	<กะหรี่>

Table 1   Loan words

Source language	No.	%
Pali-Sanskrit	72	35
Malay	13	6
Khmer	102	48
Malay or Khmer	9	4
Khmer borrowed from Thai or Thai borrowed from Khmer	2	1
Other languages	12	6
Total	210	100

1.2 New formation words

As for the development of kra- and ka- words from the Early Rattanakosin dictionaries throughout the Present time, it is found that there are 329 words which could be traced its origin as new formation words. They were categorized into three groups :

1.2.1 Disyllabic forming words

1.2.2 Initial changing words

1.2.3 Partial reduplicating words

Table 2 New Formation words

	No.	%
Disyllabic forming words		
Cognate words	22	7
Siamese words		
Complex words	21	6
Pseudo-complex words	136	41
Initial changing words	78	24
Partial reduplicating words	72	22
Total	329	100

1.2.1 Disyllabic forming words

Kra- or ka- are added before monosyllabic words which are cognate or Siamese words, thus this group can be divided into 2 subgroups.

1.2.1.1 Kra- or ka- + cognate words

There are 22 cognate words; for instance, /kracɔ̂n/ <กระจ้อน>, /kraduùk/ <กระดูก>, /krabɔ̀ɔk/ <กระบอก>, /krarɔ̂ɔk/ <กระรอก> etc. An example of one word is: /kraduùk/ 'bone' <กระดูก>

Southwestern	Central	Northen
Ahom /ดูก/, /นุก/	Nung /duk⁶/	Tay /dok²/
Shan /lup⁷/ /luk²/	Lungchow /duk/ D₁S	Po-ai /nook/
Lue /(ka)-duuk²/	LeiPing /dok/	Saek /rɔɔk/
Black Tai /duk/	LungMing /nok³/	Wu-ming /ʔdok/
White Tai /dup²/		Chuang /duk³³/
Lao /kádùːk/		
Phu Thai /kaʔ³-duʔ⁵/		
Northen Thai dialect		
/kaduːk¹/		
Southern Thai dialect		
/doːk⁴/		

This example, shows that Lao, Lue, Phu Thai, and Thai dialects also use ka- words. However, these languages are spoken in Thailand, thus they may be influenced by Siamese Thai.

1.2.1.2 Kra- or ka- + Siamese words

There are 157 Siamese words, divided into 2 subgroups.

A) Complex words

Complex words are disyllabic words beginning with kra- or ka- having different meanings, or different word classes from a monosyllabic base. There are 21 words; for instance:

บิ /bì?/	verb, to break off (a small piece) with one's fingers, pinch off.
กระบิ /krabì?/	noun, a small piece of
ทุ่ม /thûm/	transitive verb, to throw down, hurl down
กระทุ่ม /krathûm/	intransitive verb, to paddle, splash.

B) Pseudo-complex words

Pseudo-complex words are disyllabic words having the same meaning as their monosyllabic base. There are 136 words; for instance:

จู้-กระจู้ /cûu-kracûu/	'a trap to catch eels with'
ผม-กระผม /phǒm-kraphǒm/	'I, me (masculine singular)'

1.2.2. Initial changing words

Some words whose first syllables are /kha-, pra-, ta-, tra-, sa-/ etc. are changed to /kra-/ or /ka-/ without changing the meaning. There are 78 words; for instance:

ขยิ้ม /khayìm/	>	กระหยิ้ม /krayìm/
สะเทือน /sathɯan/	>	กะเทือน /kathɯan/

1.2.3 Partial reduplicating words

Some kra- and ka- words may partially reduplicate themselves, thus forming new words. Though these new words have no meaning and cannot be used alone, they are always added to the original words and may be used as elaborate words; for instance:

กระทบกระเทียบ /krathóp krathîap/, /krathîap/ is a partially reduplicating word of /krathóp/, which has no meaning, and cannot be used alone.

1.3 Anonymous

The last group consists of 226 words. The source of these words is unknown, and most of them are either plant, animal, or article names; for instance;

plant names : /kracîaŋ/ กระเจี๊ยง, /krathɛ̂ŋ/ กระแท่ง, /krabàak/ กระบาก

fish names : /krasǒoŋ/ กระโสง, /krasùup/ กระสูบ, /kramaŋ/ กระมัง

materials : /krathaaj/ กระทาย, /krachúk/ กระชุก, /kratâm/ กระต๋ำ

Chart 1. Sources of kra- and ka- words

- New formation words 43%
- Loan word 27%
- Anonymous 30%
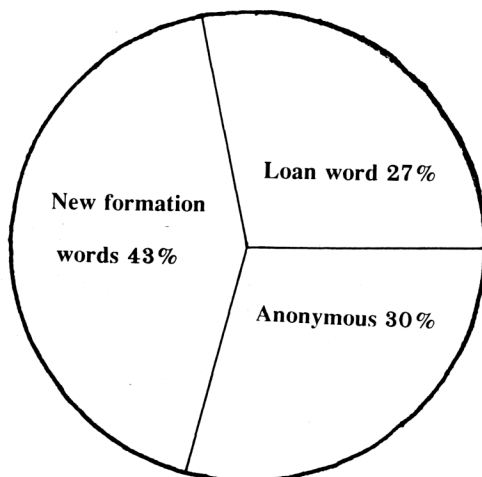
2. Development of the written forms of kra- and ka- words

To study the development of kra- and ka- words, data were collected from written sources from the Sukhothai period until present time (A.D.1219 - A.D. 1982) and divided into five periods : Sukhothai, Ayuddhaya, Early Rattanakosin, Middle Rattanakosin, and the Present time.

Of these five periods two types of sources were used. Primary sources were used for both the Sukhothai and Ayuddhaya periods due to the absence of a dictionary. The remaining three, Early Rattanakosin, Middle Rattanakosin and The Present time periods utilized data from several dictionaries.[4]

In studying the development of kra- and ka- words, two main problems were confronted: 1. There is little data from the Sukhothai and Ayuddhaya Periods, and the primary data used was related to either religious documents or transcripts by Thai kings. This made it difficult to find kra- and ka- words. 2. Each dictionary has a different scope, thus varying the total number of kra- and ka- words.

The development of kra- and ka- words consists of 2 facets:

1. Examination of the written form of kra- and ka- words in the 5 periods.

2. Comparison of the number and study of the development of kra- and ka- words.

2.1. Examination of the forms of kra- and ka- words

The oldest written forms of kra- and ka- words are <กร-> <ก-> <ก่->. They are found in the Sukhothai and Ayuddhaya periods. <ก่-> has disappeared since the Early Rattanakosin Period, and <กร-> since the Middle Rattanakosin Period. In the Present Period <กรซ-> <กซ-> <ก-> are used

Table 3. The written forms of kra- and ka- word

	ก	ก่	กร	กซ	กรซ
Sukhothai	✓	✓	✓	-	-
Ayuddhaya	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Early Rattanakosin	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
Middle Rattanakosin	✓	-	-	✓	✓
Present Time	✓	-	-	✓	✓

## 2.2 Comparison of the number and development of kra- and ka- words.

Only kra- and ka- words which are found throughout all the 5 periods are used and divided into 2 groups:

1) kra- and ka- words in the Sukhothai and Ayuddhaya periods consisting of 58 words.

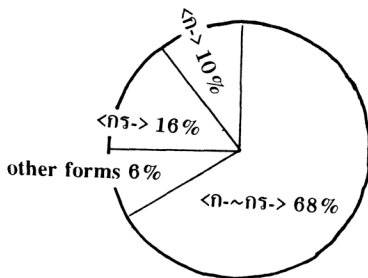2) kra- and ka- words in all 3 of the Rattanakosin periods consisting of 171 words.

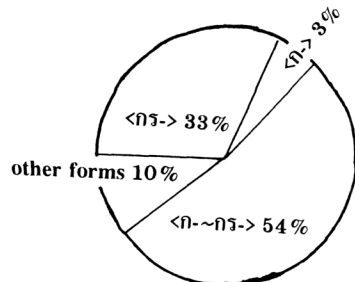**Chart 2 The development of the first 58 kra- and ka- words.**
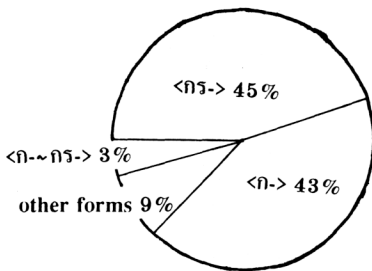
Sukhothai and Ayuddhaya period
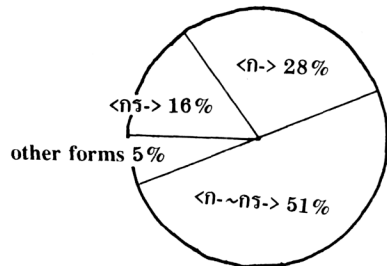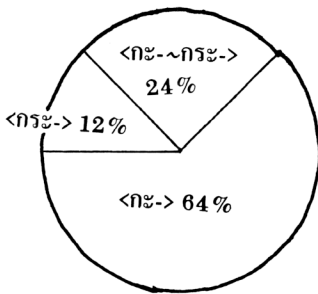
The Early Rattanakosin period
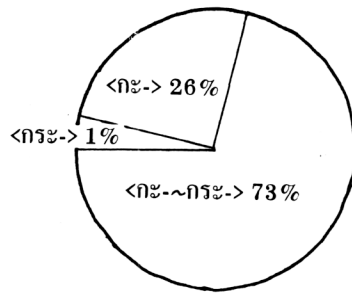
The Middle Rattanakosin period

The Present time

Of the 58 kra- and ka- words found in the Sukhothai and Ayuddhaya periods, only 39 are found in the Early Rattanakosin, 50 in the Middle Rattanakosin and 58 in the Present Time. The change in the frequency of occurrence of kra- and ka- words through the 5 periods can be clearly seen. It was found that the words beginning with <ก-> decreased from 25 words in Sukhothai and Ayuddhaya to 2 words in the Present Time. On the contrary, words which alternated between <กะ-~กระ-> increased from 2 words to 20 words in the Early Rattanakosin, to 34 words in the Middle Rattanakosin, and to 31 words in the Present time.
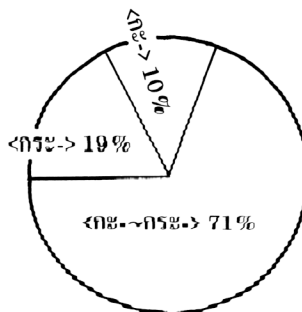
Chart 3 The development of the 171 kra- and ka- words.

The Early Rattanakosin period   The Middle Rattanakosin period

The Present time

There are 171 kra- and ka- words found in the 3 Rattanakosin periods. Again, the change in the frequency of occurrence of kra- and ka- words can be clearly seen. The words beginning with <กะ-> decreased from 109 words to 44 words in the Middle Rattanakosin, and to 18 words in the Present Time. On the contrary, words which alternated between <กะ-~กระ-> increased from 41 words to 125 words in the Middle Rattanakosin, and to 121 words in the Present Time. Words beginning with <กระ-> decreased form 21 words to only 2 words in the Middle Rattanakosin, and increased to 32 words in the Present Time.

From the two groups of data, words which are written as <กะ-> in the Early Rattanakosin changed to <กะ-~กระ-> in the Middle Rattanakosin and the Present Time. Words in the Middle Rattanakosin and the Present Time are mainly written as <กะ-~กระ->.

The examination of kra- and ka- words from the Sukhothai period to the Present time shows the development as follows :

1. Words beginning with <กระ-> have 2 patterns.

a) Kra- words are written as <กระ-> from the Sukhothai period until the Present time. i.e. กรลยก > กระเหลียก,   กรลึง > กระลึง

b) Kra- words changed to <กะ-> or <กระ-~กะ-> i.e. กระสุน > กะสุน, กระเช้า > กะเช้า~กระเช้า.

2. Most of the words beginning with <กะ-> are written as <กระ->, therefore there are many <กะ-~กระ-> i.e. กทง > กะทง~กระทง.

At present, words beginning with <กระ-~กะ-> may come from <กะ-> or <กระ->. I hypothesize that the cause of these changes are as follows:

1. The need for new words in poetry. I found that <กะ-> become <กระ-> in Mahachatkhamluang (มหาชาติคำหลวง) and Ramayana (รามเกียรติ์) which are poetry works. In Mahachatkhamluang I found 23 out of 39 <กระ-> words, and in Ramayana 67 out of 71 which are <กระ-> words.

2. Hypercorrection may force some speakers to change <กะ-> to <กระ-> because they believe that <กระ-> is more correct and sounds better than <กะ->

3. Cluster /r/ simplification, i.e. <กระ-> become <กะ->. This occurs because the speaker may delete the second consonant and leave only the first one.

3. Conclusion

From the examination of the origin of kra- and ka- words, it was found that they came from 2 main sources: first, Siamese Thai borrowed kra- and ka- words from other languages, and second, Siamese Thai formed their own kra- and ka- words by using 3 processes. Gedney (1989:122) states that Southeast Asia is one of the most complex areas in the world, thus languages which are genetically unrelated, for example, Thai and Mon-Khmer, or Thai and Tibeto-Burman, show similarities in grammatical structure or in the organization of the semantics of the lexicon. These similarities are clearly the result of convergence. In regards to kra- and ka- words, it may be said that after borrowing disyllabic words, Siamese formed disyllabic words beginning with kra- and ka- by itself. One reason is that Siamese is surrounded by polysyllabic languages, thus some monosyllabic words may change into disyllabic words. As can be seen in the case of kra- and ka- new formation words.

For the development of kra- and ka- words it was found that words which alternate between kra- or ka- in the present time, come from words which were used as kra- or ka- in the Early Rattanakosin Period. Today, kra- and ka- words do not have a specific pronounciation. Virtually any form of pronounciation is acceptable.

Notes

1. Dictionaries of the Rattanakosin period consist of :

1 พจนานุกรมภาษาสยาม (A Dictionary of the Siamese Language) : คัสแวล, เจ.และ เจ.เอช.แชนด์เลอร์ พ.ศ. 2389.

2 สัพะพะจะนะพาสาไท (Dictionarium Linguae Thai Sive Siamesis Interpretatione Latina. Gallica et Anglica): Pallegoix, D.J.B. ค.ศ.1854.

3 อักขราภิธานศรับท์ (Dictionary of the Siamese Language) : ปรัดเล, ดี.บี. พ.ศ. 2416.

4 พจนานุกรม เปนคำแปลศัพท์ภาษาไทยสำหรับเขียนคำใช้ให้ถูกต้องตัวสกด ร.ศ.120 : กรมศึกษาธิการ กระทรวงธรรมการ พ.ศ. 2445.

5 ปทานุกรม กรมตำรา : กระทรวงธรรมการ พ.ศ. 2470.

6 พจนานุกรมฉบับราชบัณฑิตยสถาน พ.ศ. 2525 : ราชบัณฑิตยสถาน พ.ศ. 2525.

2. Data from the Tai language family which had been studied and published before consisted of Northern Thai dialect, North-Eastern Thai dialect, Southern Thai dialect, Siamese, Lao, Phu Thai, Phuan, Lue, Shan, Black Tai, while Tai, Lungchow, LeiPing, LungMing, Po-ai, Ahom, Tay, Tho, Nung, T'ien-pao, Wu-ming, Dioi, Saek, and Tai-Phake.

3. Other language families consisted of Mon, Khmer, Nyah Kur, Malay, and Pali-Sanskrit.

4. The following data was used in studying the development of kra- and ka-words:

The Sukhothai Period

1 จารึกสมัยสุโขทัย : กรมศิลปากรจัดพิมพ์เนื่องในโอกาสฉลอง 700 ปีลายสือไทย พุทธศักราช 2526.

2 ดรรชนีค้นคำในจารึกสุโขทัย : อิชิอิ โยเนโอะและคณะ

The Ayuddhaya Period

1 จารึกสมัยอยุธยา : กรมศิลปากรจัดพิมพ์เผยแพร่ พุทธศักราช 2529

2 มหาชาติคำหลวง : วรรณกรรมสมัยอยุธยา เล่ม 1 กรมศิลปากรจัดพิมพ์เผยแพร่ พุทธศักราช 2529.

3 ประวัติโกษาปานและบันทึกการเดินทางไปฝรั่งเศส : คณะกรรมการพิจารณาและจัดพิมพ์เอกสารทางประวัติศาสตร์ สำนักเลขาธิการนายกรัฐมนตรี

4 ลิปิกรมไทยจีนสมัยราชวงศ์หมิง : เฉลิม ยงบุญเกิด.

The Early Rattanakosin Period

1 ประชุมกฎหมายไทย กฎหมายตรา 3 ดวง : โรงพิมพ์นิติสาสน์.

2 รามเกียรติ์ พระราชนิพนธ์ในรัชกาลที่ 1 : โรงพิมพ์คุรุสภา.

3 พจนานุกรมภาษาสยาม : คัสแวล, เจ.และเจ.เอช.แชนด์เลอร์ พ.ศ. 2389.

4. คำสอนคริสตังภาคต้น : โบสถ์ซังตาครูส ค.ศ. 1796.

The Middle Rattanakosin Period

1 สัพะพะจะนะพาสาไท : Pallegoix, D.J.B. ค.ศ.1854.

2 อักขราภิธานศรับท์ : ปรัดเล, ดี.บี. พ.ศ.2416.

3 พจนานุกรม เปนคำแปลศัพท์ภาษาไทยสำหรับเขียนคำใช้ให้ถูกต้องตัวสกด ร.ศ.120 : กรมศึกษาธิการ กระทรวงธรรมการ พ.ศ.2445

The Present Time

1 ปทานุกรม กรมตำรา : กระทรวงธรรมการ พ.ศ. 2470.

2 พจนานุกรมไทย-อังกฤษ : Mc.Farland, G.B.1941.

3 พจนานุกรมฉบับราชบัณฑิตยสถาน พ.ศ. 2525 : ราชบัณฑิตยสถาน พ.ศ. 2525.

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———— 2530. ลักษณะภาษาไทยและการใช้ภาษาไทย. กรุงเทพมหานคร : รุ่งเรือง สาสน์การพิมพ์.

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