

## MALAY LOANWORDS IN THAI

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Speakers of Thai and Malay have been in contact for centuries. It was written in the first Thai inscription made in the Sukhothai period that the Thais had power over the whole Malay peninsula in the reign of king Ramkhamhaeng, the fourth king of Sukhothai. This claim has not yet been proven, since not enough supporting evidence has been found. However, in the chronicle of the Yuen dynasty of China, it was written that in 1295, a Siamese ambassador and a Malay ambassador arrived at the Chinese court at the same time, whereby the Chinese emperor asked the Siamese not to attack the Malays any more (Phumisak 1983:154). In 1455, the Thai king of Ayutthaya sent an army to attack Malacca, but the Thais failed to conquer the city. The mission was repeated in 1509 with the same result. In 1601 Malacca fell into the power of the Portuguese (Anamwat 1985:172).

It is not clear when the upper part of the Malay peninsula, which consists of Kedah, Pattani, Kelantan, and Terengganu, became dependent states of Thailand, but the fact that the Thai armies were sent to Malacca, a southern state on the peninsula, indicates that those northern states had come under Thai power at least since the 15th century.

In the 17th century Pattani became a big and important port, and had trade with India, China, and Japan. Kelantan was at that time under the power of Pattani. Whenever the Thais were weak, Pattani declared independence, and whenever the Thais became strong, Pattani became a Thai dependent state again. It was recorded in a British report that king Narai (late Ayutthaya period) offered Pattani to the British as a gift of friendship. Also in a report of the French ambassador to king Narai's court, it was mentioned that Pattani and Kedah were Thai dependent states. Therefore it can be assumed that these Malay states were under the Thai power for the whole Ayutthaya period (Anamwat 1985:173). When Ayutthaya was captured and destroyed by the Burmese in 1767, all the Thai dependent states, including those in the Malay peninsula, declared independence. Only a few months later, the Thais managed

to drive the Burmese away and establish a new capital at Thonburi. In 1782 the capital was moved to Bangkok, the present capital city of Thailand, and a new dynasty called Chakri was established. In the reign of king Rama III of the Chakri dynasty, Thailand managed to gain back almost all the dependent states it had during the Ayutthaya period, including the four Malay states. In 1909 Thailand gave Kedah, Kelantan, and Terengganu to Britain, in exchange for the relinquishing of some territorial privileges Britain had in Thailand (Witthayarat 1988:130).

The long-term relationship between the Thais and the Malays resulted in the existence today of over a million Malay speakers in Thailand. They reside mostly in the four southernmost provinces along the Malaysian border, with pockets of speakers in eleven other southern and central Thai provinces (Amon 1987). As the people have become part of the population of Thailand, the Malay language has also become part of the Thai language. This paper is a study of Malay loanwords in Thai, in which the Malay dialects are determined when possible. The data is taken from the Dictionary of Words With the Same Pronunciation and Meaning in Thai and Malay, compiled by Khun Silapagamphiset in 1986, and also from my own observation.

The data in the dictionary will be divided in this paper into six categories: 1) Vocabulary which appear in Inao, an epos of the late Ayutthaya period with Malay origin; 2) Vocabulary used in southern Thailand; 3) Vocabulary used in standard Thai; 4) Islamic religious terminology; 5) Indic loanwords; and 6) Other items not included in any of the above categories.

## **I. Vocabulary from Inao**

The first version of Inao was written in late Ayutthaya period (i.e. the 18th century) by two princesses who had a Malay maid. The maid told them a folk story, known in Java as Panji. The story, which is about a Javanese king of the 10th century, so impressed the princesses, that they wrote a Thai version. This version was rewritten by king Rama I and II respectively. In every version, a great number of Malay words are used side by side with Thai words. For example:

- (1) O waa siadaai duang yiwaa  
Oh! I lost my loved one

ngaam muan naangfaa krayaangan  
She's as beautiful as an angel in heaven

The words /**yiwaa**/ and /**krayaangan**/ in the poem have the same meaning as **jiwa** and **keyangan** in Malay. Note that the tone of the final syllable of both words are rising. The Malay word **jiwa** is a Sanskrit loanword. In Thai, the Sanskrit loanword for 'life, soul' is also /**chiiwaa**/ ( Sanskrit j becomes **ch** in Thai). Therefore /**yiwaa**/ and /**chiiwaa**/ should be considered as doublets, one borrowed directly from Sanskrit, the other via Malay. As for /**krayaangan**/, it is obvious that the word was borrowed from the Malay **keyangan** (ke+yang+an), because the common words for heaven in Thai are /**faa**/ and /**sawan**/. The first word is a native Thai word and the latter is a Sanskrit loan. Moreover, the canonical shape of **krayaangan** does not correspond to that of Thai, which is basically a monosyllabic isolating language.

Using such criteria, a number of Malay loan words are found . For example:

Thai		Malay	
ayii	'royal pron.'	aji	'2 pers. sg.'
krit	'kris'	keris	'kris'
tunaangan	'engagement'	tunang-tunangan	'fiance'
bungaa	'flower'	bunga	'flower'
burong	'bird'	burung	'bird'
bulan	'moon'	bulan	'moon, month'
bEElaa	'join another in death'	bela	'join another in death'
yayii	'dear woman'	yayi	'younger sibling, wife'
mangummangaraa	'walk'	mengembara	'to wander blindly, (meng+kembara)'
taman	'garden'	taman	'garden'
asmaraa	'love'	asmara	'love'

Although these words are found in literature written about two hundred years ago, most of them are still used in standard Thai. However, they are used mostly in poetic language. The only word found used in everyday language is **mangummangaraa**.

Apart from these words, there are also a great number of Malay words that appear in Inao, but are not considered Malay loans in Thai because they are not used anywhere else. Examples of these words are:

Thai		Malay	
kunung	'mountain'	gunong	
asanyaa	'origin'	asalnya	'origin (Gen.)'
tulaa	'calamity brought on by a curse or breaking a taboo'	tulah	
tammangong	'an officer'	temenggung	
kalanaa	'wanderer'	kelana	

An interesting feature of these Malay loans is their tonalization. Whenever the Malay word ends with a vowel or a sonorant, the Thai version will bear a rising tone at the same (final) syllable. At this point, it is not possible to explain this phenomenon, since more research on middle Thai phonology, as well as old Malay phonology, is needed. However, it may be hypothesized that in middle Thai, loanwords tended to have a universal rising tone at word final position. The tendency is different in modern Thai where loanwords can have either mid, low, falling or high tone. Examples of such word are: /widi?oo/, /?imphOt/, /kompyut@@/, and /maikrooweef/ from the English video, import, computer, and microwave. From this hypothesis, it can be further assumed that the period each borrowing took place can be roughly determined by the tone of the word in question.

As far as dialect study is concerned, not enough information is available, since these words were borrowed into written Thai. When the story was told by the Malay maid, it is possible that careful literary speech, not a dialect variant, was involved when each Malay word was used.

## II. Words Used in Southern Thailand

There are a number of lexical items that exist only in the southern Thai dialect, and have similar pronunciations and meanings as some Malay words. Examples of those words are:

Thai		Malay	
chanchii	'to promise; to make appointment'	janji	'promise'
paanan	'pandan flower'	pandan	'pandanus'
phrat	'wind or rain from the west'	barat	'west'
phratyaa	'wind from the	barat daya	'south-west'

?aasin	'tax'	hasil	'produce; tax'
tiimaa	'utensil used to take water from a pond'	timba	'small bucket'
buuduu	'fermented fish'	budu	'fermented fish'
?abang	'older one'	?abang	'older one'
koole	'a kind of curry'	gulai	'a kind of curry'
yaamuu	'guava'	jambu	'fruit'
sungai	'river'	sungai	'river'
wan	a title for muslim persons	wan	a title of persons

In this list, the words in the two languages are almost identical and therefore can't be anything but 'cognates' (not in the traditional genetic sense, but in the sense that they have the same origin). It is probable that the Thai words borrowed from the Malay, because of the facts that they are disyllabic and occur in many non-northern Malay dialects as well as other Austronesian languages. In addition, they are used only in the area of Thailand where the density of Malay speakers is high. Some interesting features are found in the list. First of all, for some words in the list, the Malay dialect they are borrowed from can be determined. The Thai paanan and tiimaa are different from the standard Malay exactly the way Pattani Malay is, that is the voiced stop that is preceded by a homorganic nasal in the medial cluster are deleted.

To determine the period the borrowing took place, two criteria can be applied. First, the rising tone of the final syllable indicates that they are older loanwords, and can be dated back to late Ayutthaya or early Bangkok period. The second criteria is the maintenance of final /n/ in /paanan/ and final /aa/ in /tiimaa/.

In accordance with some phonological process in Kelantan/Pattani Malay, final nasals which are preceded by /a/ always get deleted after the /a/ changes to /e/. Another vowel change occurs in syllable final position where final /a/ becomes /o/. If /pandan/ and /timba/ were recently borrowed from Pattani Malay into Thai, the Thai version, according to the phonological process mentioned above, would be \*/panee/ and \*/timoo/. If they were borrowed from standard Malay, they would not have any change.

Another interesting feature found in the list is the change of initial /b/ in Malay to initial /ph/ in the

Thai 'cognate'. This indicates that the loan words may have been borrowed before the initial voiced stop became voiceless aspirated stop in Thai. This process took place in the Middle Thai period which was shortly before the Bangkok period (late 18th cent.) Modern loanwords in Thai can have voiced initial stops, for example /buk/, /bOn/, /duan/ from the English to **book**, **ball**, and to **dual**. As for the word /kOOLE/, the Malay dialect could be determined until the issue was discussed with a native Malay speaker, who informed me that the pronunciation was the same as that of Kelantan Malay. Therefore, /kOOLE/ can be concluded to be borrowed from the Kelantan dialect.

### III. Words Used in Standard Thai

There are a number of words in standard Thai that have the similar pronunciation and meaning to Malay words. For example:

Thai		Malay
kudang	'big storage'	gudang 'big storage'
tabe?	'to pay respect'	tabik 'greeting fr.inferior'
pate?	'a kind of sarong'	batik 'batik'
phatthyyaa	'a southwest wind'	barat daya 'southwest'
phuuket	'name of an island in the south'	bukit 'mountain'
satuun	'name of a province in the south'	sentul 'a kind of fruit'
sate?	'a kind of food'	sate 'a kind of food'
salat	'pirate'	selat 'strait'
saakhuu	'tapioca'	sagu 'tapioca'
mangkhut	'mangosteen'	manggis 'mangos-teen'
tolong	'help'	tolong 'help'
thurian	'durian'	durian
yawii	'the Malay language'	jawi 'Malayo- Arabic characters'

These words are considered Malay loanwords in Thai because of their Austronesian origin, as well as their canonical shape and their specific use as proper names. Some words don't have meaning in Thai at all such as **Phuuket** and **Satuun**, which are the names of two provinces in the south of Thailand where a large number of ethnic Malays reside. It is possible that the island of Phuuket

got its name from the Malay **bukit** because the island looks like a big mountain in the sea. As for **satuun**, it may be the case that there are a lot of fruit trees called in Malay **sentul** there.

The Thai word **salat** and the Malay word **selat** have quite different meanings. However, an etymology is given in Khun Silapagamphiset's dictionary that 'Most of the pirates in the south of Thailand came from Malacca Strait, therefore they were called **salat**' (pp.156-7)'

No dialectical features are found in these Malay loanwords; therefore it can be assumed that they were borrowed from standard Malay. As for the period of borrowing, Phuuket and Patthaya show signs of earlier borrowing, because the Malay /b/ and /d/ undergo devoicing and aspiration. (It is true, though, that the final syllable in Phatthaya doesn't have rising tone. All the others may be borrowed recently in the Bangkok period.

#### IV. Islamic Religious Terms

Since the Malay speakers in Thailand are Muslim, there are some Islamic terms that got borrowed into standard Thai and southern Thai dialects. They are, for example:

	Thai	Malay
p00s00	'religious fasting'	puasa
pOn0'	'Islamic school'	pondok 'a hut where Islam is taught'
masayit	'mosque'	masjit
sunat	'circumcision'	sunat
surau	'small mosque'	surau
kooraan	'the Koran'	koran

The Thai word /p00s00/ and /pOn0?/ show signs of having been borrowed from Kelantan/Pattani Malay. The others may be from standard Malay. The tones indicate that they are of recent loans.

#### V. Indic Loans

Most of the Indic loanwords which occur both in Thai and in Malay and are listed in the above-mentioned dictionary have to be ruled out as candidates for Malay loanwords in Thai, because they were borrowed directly from Sanskrit or Pali. Although it is true that Thai may have borrowed some of those Indic words through Malay, it is too complicated to conduct a study at this point, since there are a number of factors involved such as

ancient history, religion, and other sources of the borrowing such as the Mon and Khmer languages which also play an important role in Thai semantics. Nevertheless, it is sometimes possible to determine that they were borrowed from Malay, such as the case of the word *yiwa* mentioned above.

## VI. Others

There are a great number of other words in Thai and Malay that have similar pronunciations and meanings, and are good candidates for borrowing. Unfortunately it is impossible at this point to determine the direction of borrowing since no distinctive features of both languages are shown clearly. A detailed study of Thai and Malay historical linguistics is still needed. Examples of such words are:

	Thai	Malay
kong	'the rib of a boat'	kong
khan	'small bowl'	kan
krong	'cage, prison'	kurong
ngong	'puzzled'	chengong
lap	'fall asleep'	lelap

Criteria that may be applied for the time being are Austronesian or Tai cognates, the canonical shape of the words, and the area in which they are used. In Wilkinson's dictionary, 1959, **kong** and **kan** are listed as used in Kelantan and Kedah respectively. Therefore, they may be Thai loanwords.

To summarize, because of the long-term contact between Thais and Malays, a number of Malay words have become a part of the Thai lexicon. The existence of a million Malay speakers in southern Thailand is also one of the most important factors of the borrowing. Many Malay loanwords in Thai are in semantic areas such as botany, weather, food and religion.



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