



# Variationist study in Lanna Thai: the mixture of Northern Thai dialects' linguistic features with standard Thai dialect by local community radio anchors

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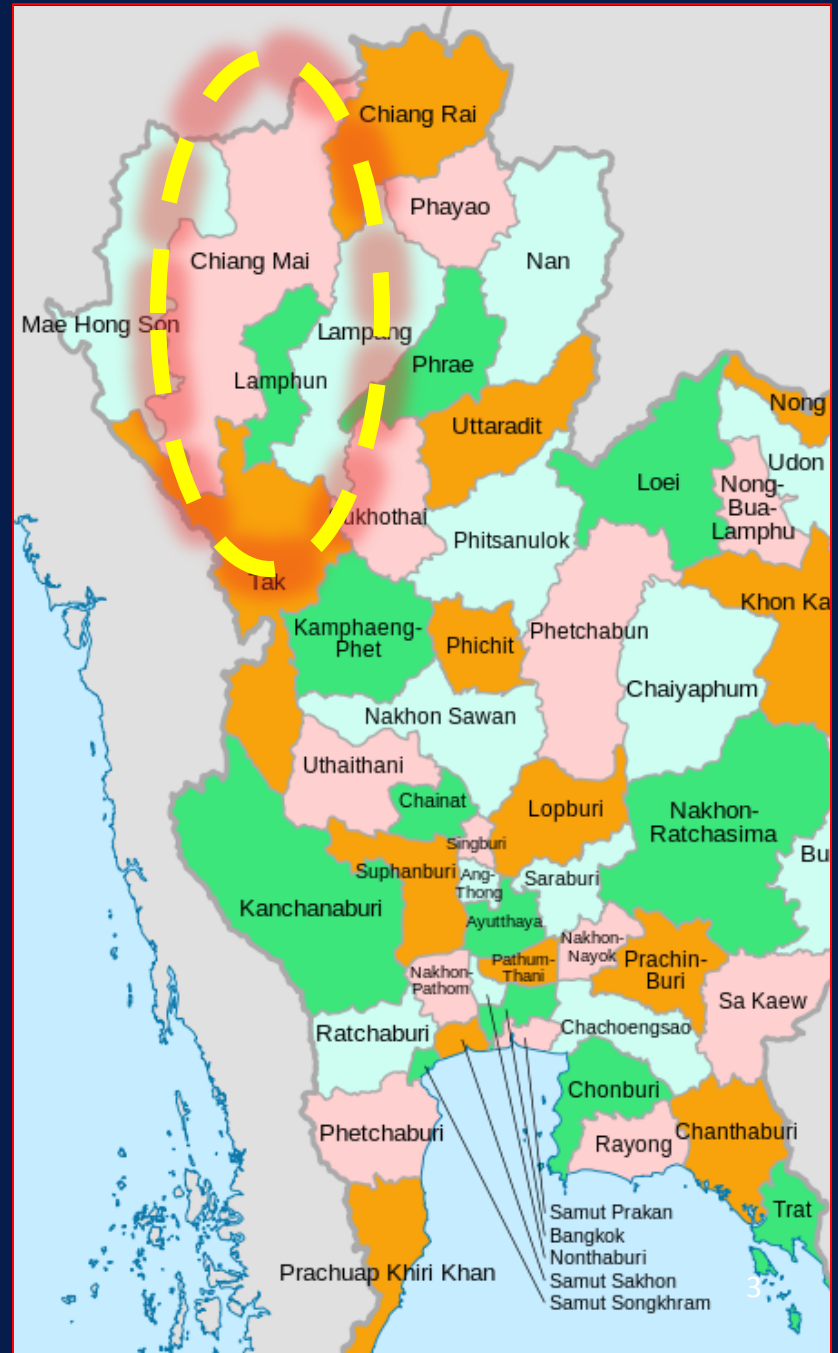




# 1. Introduction

## Lanna Thai (NT) and its linguistic diversity

- Lanna, a former kingdom for at least 700 years.
- Comprising various ethnic groups.
- According to the monolingual policy in King Rama 6<sup>th</sup> period in 1921 and the state decree in 1939 by Field Marshal Pibulsonggram, attrition of many regional dialects started to appear.
- Standard Thai dialect are widely used and mixed by the younger NT generation speakers.
- We will focus on the linguistic situation and the variation of two major dialects in **this Lanna or Northern Thai dialects (NT): Yong of Lamphun** province and **(Kam)Muang of Chiang Mai** province taken from conservative local radio anchors.



# Examples of some observed tokens and their variations from the NT anchors in Lamphun and Chiang Mai provinces

Thai orthography	transcriptions	Meaning
เฮา เรา เลา	/haw-raw-law/	first or second pronominal
เฮือน เรือน เลือน	/hwan-rwan-lwan/	resident
ครับ คلاب คับ	/kràb-klab-kàb/	male polite final particle
หรือ หลือ	/rǔ̌: - lǔ̌:/	or/ whether...or
บ่(เอา)	/bò: ʔaw/	not (take)
ม่(เอา)	/mâi ʔaw/	not (take)

# Yong vs. Muang vs. BKK Thai dialect

These dialects belongs to Tai-Kadai family, Southwestern Thai, East Central group

	Yong	(Kam)Muang	BKK Thai
Language family and its sub-group	Northwest , Lue group	Chiang Saeng, Yuan?	Chiang Saeng or BKK Thai
Most found (Salient)	NT provinces, Lamphun	NT provinces, Chiang Mai	Provinces in the Central part, Bangkok
Cluster	2	2 (the same as Yong)	11
Diphthong	Not found	6 (short and long ones)	6 (including Muang dialect)
Tone	6	6 (different from Yong)	5
Some Conditions of vowels	Some sets of vowels can be in complementary distribution with Muang dialect's vowels	N/A	N/A

## 2. Problems of the study

- Several local radio broadcasts/ anchors in Northern Thailand (NT) (Yong-Lamphun province and Maung-Chiang Mai province) have attempted to conserve their linguistic heritage by using their local dialects.
- However, they involve switching or mixing with their local dialects (Yong or Maung) with various linguistic features adopted from Bangkok Thai dialect.
- If we take a look on various level of linguistic variables (phonological and grammatical levels), we will be able to see the whole system of NT linguistic variation.



# Problems of the study

- 1) What are the causes/factors of change of NT radio anchors (Yong & Muang) conforming to BKK Thai vernacular?
- 2) Who is the leader of linguistic change once we compare various linguistic factors across demographical factors in NT anchors?



## 3. Objectives of the study

1) To investigate the distribution of the variation of (r), (Cr) and (negators) across three social variables based on the radio anchors:

[1] Ethnicity by geographical origins

[2] Gender

[3] Type of the contexts/formality.

2) To compare the correlation across various linguistic variables (their variants) with social variables (their sub-social variables) in order to find the leader of the linguistic change.





# Linguistic/ Dependent variables

1) (r) = [r-1], [l], [h]

[r-1] included alveolar trilled [r] and tapped (r) presenting the prestige variants of BKK Thai.

2) (Cr) = [Cr], [Cl], [Cø]

3) (negators) = [bor], [mai]

# Yong vs. Muang vs. Bangkok Thai's phonology (Categorically)

	Yong	Maung	BKK Thai
/r/	✗	✗	✓
/l/	✓	✓	✓
/h/	✓	✓	✗ (In fact, it does exist in BKK Thai but it is not found in this condition)
/Cr/	✗	✗	✓
/Cl/	✗	✗	✓
/Cø/	✓	✓	✓
mai	✗	✗	✓
bor	✓	✓	✗ (*only found in the literary and Thai literatures) also, 'mi', 'pàj' and 'hòn' (Pittayaporn et al., 2011)



# Social/ Independent variables

## 1) Ethnicity by geographical origin

- Yong (NT-Lamphun province)
- Muang (NT-Chaing Mai province)

## 2) Gender

- Male
- Female

## 3) Types of contexts/ Formality:

- Formal context
- Informal context



# 4. Hypotheses (on the social factor basis)

## 1. Ethnicity by geographical origin:

Yong might use [r-1] and [Cr] and [mai] more than Muang.

## 2. Gender:

Female might use [r-1] and [Cr] and [mai] more than Male.

## 3. Type of context/ Formality:

In the formal context, [r-1] and [Cr] and [mai] might be employed more than informal context.

## 4. Multivariate analysis and the leader of change:

Female, Yong, in the formal context, might become a leader of a linguistic change (to conform their vernaculars to BKK Thai dialect phonological and grammatical system).



# 5. Reviews

- Literatures and related works
- Labov (2001; 2006)
- Trudgill (1986)
- Chamber (2003)
- Bebee (1974)
- Bell (1997)
- Pittayaporn et al. (2011)
- Macaulay (2005)
- Etc.



## 6. Methodology

- **Data:** Connected speeches, around 10-15 mins per speaker
- **Participants:** 2 ethnicities X 2 genders X 2 types of the context = 8 people
- **Source of data:** digitally recorded from internet radio and local radio channels (FM) claimed to be Yong people from Lamphun province and Muang people from Chiang Mai province
- **Age:** over 35 years old

# Examples from the anchors' speech

## Ex.1 Kongkoi ghost-in

วิ่งเร็วขนาดไหน มันก็ปัดันอย่าฝึกองกอย

wiŋ rɛw khànàt nǎi man kô: bô? tan ñâ: pǎi: koŋkoj

“No matter how fast he could run, he cannot run as fast as the Kongkoi ghost.”

## Ex. 2 Yong-Ineloquent hungry-In

เพลง อยากเป็นคนฮักบ่อยากเป็นจู้

phɛŋ ñàk pǎn khon hâk bô? ñàk pen cú:

“With a song, (I) want to be your lover, not your secret lover/ mistress.”

# Examples from the anchors' speech

## Ex.3 Phra Inthorn-For

เอาจันเดือดร้อน ฮ้อน\*ใหม่

ʔaw con dʉət rón hón\* mâi

“Make yourself in trouble a great deal.”

## Ex.4 Yong-smoked orange-For

ยับยั้งเซลล์มะเร็งและเล็องของโลกเบาหวาน

ñâpñáŋ sel mâ leŋ lê? luáŋ khǎŋ lôk bauwǎn

“To restrain the cancer cells spreading, and diabetes.”





# Statistics and analyses

- 1) Raw score & Percentage (%)
- 2) Making a corpus: per 1,000 words and their total wordcounts (Macaulay, 2005)
- 3) Chi-square test (correlation and significant different) through R-for Statistics

# Wordcount in the corpus

total = 17,864 words

Social factor	Sub-social factor	Total word counts
Ethnicity	Yong	9,463
	Maung	8,398
Gender	Male	7,165
	Female	10,695
Formality	Formal	9,069
	Informal	8,765



# 7. Findings

# Raw score

variables	code	Muang				Yong			
		Female		Male		Male		Female	
		Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal
		Female- Water conference	Kongkoi ghost	Phraya Tilokaraja	Male- Kalamasutra	Phra Inthorn	Yong- Ineloquent hungry	Yong- smoked orange	Yong- superads
(r)	[r-1]	15	29	0	5	9	0	43	33
	[l]	21	18	<u>43</u>	16	44	16	62	56
	[h]	35	6	20	39	53	17	19	<u>16</u>
	sum	71	53	63	60	106	33	124	<u>105</u>
(Cr)	[Cr]	<u>24</u>	23	0	<u>12</u>	6	1	7	<u>13</u>
	[Cl]	5	7	1	4	0	0	14	6
	[Cø]	47	12	54	50	25	31	5	16
	sum	76	42	55	66	31	32	26	35
(negator)	[bor]	5	34	15	25	24	12	7	4
	[mai]	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0
	sum	5	34	15	25	24	12	16	4

# Percentage (%)

code	Muang				Yong			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal
	Phraya Tilokaraja	Male- kalamasutra	Female-Water conference	Kongkoi ghost	Phra Inthorn	Yong-Ineloquent hungry	Yong-smoked orange	Yong-superads
[r-1]	0	8.33	21.12	54.71	8.49	0	34.67	31.42
[l]	68.25	26.66	29.57	33.96	41.5	48.48	50	53.33
[h]	31.74	65	49.29	11.32	50	51.51	15.32	15.23
[Cr]	0	18.18	31.57	54.76	19.35	3.12	26.92	37.14
[Cl]	1.81	6.06	6.57	16.66	0	0	53.84	17.14
[Cø]	98.18	75.75	61.84	28.57	80.64	96.87	19.23	45.71
[bor]	100	100	100	100	100	100	43.75	100
[mai]	0	0	0	0	0	0	56.25	0

# Per 1,000 words

code	Muang				Yong			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal
word counts (sum = 17,861)	1,719	1,744	1,863	3,072	2,784	918	2,730	3,031
Approx. Time (mins)	10	10	9	16.3	16	7	16	14
	Phraya Tilokaraja	Male-Kalamasutra	Female-Water conference	Kongkoi ghost	Phra Inthorn	Yong-Ineloquent hungry	Yong-smoked orange	Yong-superads
[r-1]	0	2.9	8.1	9.5	3.2	0	15.8	10.9
[l]	25	9.2	11.3	5.9	15.8	17.4	22.7	18.5
[h]	11.6	22.4	18.8	2	19	18.5	7	5.3
[Cr]	0	6.9	12.9	7.5	2.2	1.1	2.6	4.3
<b>[CI]</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>2</b>
[Cø]	31.4	28.7	25.2	3.9	9	33.8	1.8	5.3
[bor]	8.7	14.3	2.7	11.1	8.6	13.1	2.6	1.3
[mai]	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.3	0



# Some glances

- The [r-1] and [l] found a great deal.
- Lots of [Cø] are used (negotiated form).
- The [Cl] is less used, and surprisingly [Cr] is heavily used.

# Chi-square test: Ethnicity

Social variables	Ethnicity			Chi-square test
	Yong	VS.	Muang	
[r-1]	✓	>	✓	X-squared = 5.4211, df = 1, p-value = 0.0199
[l]	✓	>	✓	X-squared = 14.3774, df = 1, p-value = 0.0001496
[h]	✓	NOT SIG	✓	X-squared = 0.1868, df = 1, p-value = 0.6656
[Cr]	✓	<	✓	X-squared = 15.1505, df = 1, p-value = 9.927e-05
[Cl]	✓	NOT SIG	✓	X-squared = 0, df = 1, p-value = 1
[Cø]	✓	<	✓	X-squared = 40.6572, df = 1, p-value = 1.814e-10
[bor]	✓	<	✓	X-squared = 12.8442, df = 1, p-value = 0.0003385
[mai]	✓	>	✗	X-squared = 6.2075, df = 1, p-value = 0.01272



# Chi-square test: Gender

Social variables	Gender			
Variants	Male	VS.	Female	Chi-square test
[r-1]	✓	<	✓	X-squared = 6.2075, df = 1, p-value = 0.01272
[l]	✓	NOT SIG	✓	X-squared = 0.8958, df = 1, p-value = 0.3439
[h]	✓	>	✓	X-squared = 42.8576, df = 1, p-value = 5.887e-11
[Cr]	✓	<	✓	X-squared = 10.8442, df = 1, p-value = 0.000991
[Cl]	✓	<	✓	X-squared = 9.8036, df = 1, p-value = 0.001742
[Cø]	✓	>	✓	X-squared = 68.1884, df = 1, p-value < 2.2e-16
[bor]	✓	>	✓	X-squared = 18.8042, df = 1, p-value = 1.448e-05
[mai]	✗	<	✓	X-squared = 4.4729, df = 1, p-value = 0.03444

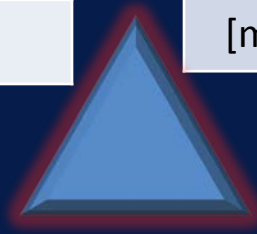
# Chi-square test: Type of context

Social variables	Type of contexts			
Variants	Formal	VS.	Informal	Chi-square test
[r-1]	✓	NOT SIG	✓	X-squared = 0.0121, df = 1, p-value = 0.9125
[l]	✓	>	✓	X-squared = 12.1237, df = 1, p-value = 0.0004978
[h]	✓	>	✓	X-squared = 9.5511, df = 1, p-value = 0.001998
[Cr]	✓	NOT SIG	✓	X-squared = 1.7974, df = 1, p-value = 0.18
[Cl]	✓	NOT SIG	✓	X-squared = 0.0504, df = 1, p-value = 0.8223
[Cø]	✓	NOT SIG	✓	X-squared = 1.174, df = 1, p-value = 0.2786
[bor]	✓	>	✓	X-squared = 5.7295, df = 1, p-value = 0.01668
[mai]	✓	>	✗	X-squared = 6.8388, df = 1, p-value = 0.00892

# Multivariate analysis

Ethnicity				
Yong		Muang		not SIG
[r-1]		[Cr]		[h]
[l]		[Cø]		[Cl]
[mai]		[bor]		

Gender				
Female		Male		not SIG
[r-1]		[h]		[l]
[Cr]		[Cø]		
[Cl]		[bor]		
[mai]				



Type of Context/ formality				
Formal		Informal		not SIG
[l]				[r-1]
[h]				[Cr]
[bor]				[Cl]
[mai]				[Cø]

# Summary of the multivariate analysis

<u>Conforming to BKK</u> <u>Thai dialect</u>	Gender	Type of the context	Ethnicity
[r-1]			
[Cr]	female	formal	Yong
[Cl]	all requirement	found only [mai] and lack of the rest	most required ones found but lacking of [Cr] plus [l]
[mai]			

<u>Conform to Yong</u> <u>and Muang dialect</u>	Gender	Type of the context	Ethnicity
[h]	male	formal	Muang
[bor]	all requirement plus [Cø]	all plus extra [l], [h] and [mai]	have [bor] but lack of [h]
		[mai] could be deleted since it is the subset of male?	

Negotiated/default  
forms found almost  
three dialects

[l],[Cø]



# Findings by social factors

## 1) Ethnicity by geographical origin:

Yong might use [r-1] and [Cr] and [Mai] more than Muang.

ANSWER: (Partially correct. Yong is found to use less [Cr] and plus [l].)

## 2) Gender:

Female might use [r-1] and [Cr] and [Mai] more than Male.

ANSWER: (Correct. Females use all of them and plus [Cl].)

## 3) Type of context/ Formality:

In formal contexts, [r-1] and [Cr] and [mai] might be employed more than in informal contexts.

ANSWER: (Partially correct, merely [mai] are found in formal contexts more than the informal ones.)

# Findings by social factors (Cont.)

## 4) Multivariate analysis and the leader of change:

4.1) **ANSWER:** partially correct. Female, Yong, (only [mai] in the formal context – outlier?), might become a leader of this focused linguistic change in terms of conforming their vernaculars to BKK Thai by referring to [r], [Cr] and [mai] variants as the markers of BKK Thai.

4.2) **Male** in both groups are **more categorical** when we refer to [h] and bor variants.



# Other Findings

5) [l] is found a great deal. This results might come from that NT dialects having borrowed many novel concepts from BKK Thai dialect. NTs convert these new concepts of /r/ of BKK Thai tokens into /l or h/ of NT dialects.

(BKK Thai features are localised by NT speakers.)

6) Negator **bor** is still the categorical form used by the NT people and **mai** is still performed by the outlier (female-yong-formal).

7) **Relation between the [r] and [Cr]:** we might assume that [r] and [Cr] have a correlation in **females**.

# Other Findings (cont.)

8) In most formal contexts, both dialects seem to conserve most of their linguistic features (once we excluded the oddball).

Type of Context/ formality				
Formal		Informal		not SIG
[l]				[r-1]
[h]				[Cr]
[bor]				[Cl]
[mai]				[Cø]

From an outlier!?!





# 8. Discussion

## 1) Female as a leader of linguistic change

1.1) Females might treat **language as the fashion**, use the new and more **prestige forms** and are sensitive to the **stigmatised forms** as the **gender's paradox** (Labov, 2001: 292-3). Thus they are the leader of linguistic change.

1.2) Female anchors become more mixed and more concerned about the audiences of radio broadcast than that of males. They are more aware of being broadcasted and make it becomes mutual intelligible. They mixed their NT dialects with BKK Thai dialect a lot. Thus, this might be in accordance with the theories of **linguistic accommodation** (Trudgill, 1986) and/or **audience-design model of style shifting** (Bell, 1997).

# 1) Female as a leader (Cont.)

1.3) Hyper correction usages (Labov, 1972:126) are found.

- Quantitatively, 26.19%, [r] for (r): tapped [ɾ] to prolonged trilled [r\*]
- Qualitatively, [r] trilled for (l) (not focused here).

# Qualitative Hypercorrection (l) to [r]\*

## Ex. 5 Kongkoi ghost-in

ยืนเปลือย\*กาย

กัน an **pruaj\*** kai

“To stand naked”

ด้วยความอาลัย\*รัก

dûaj khwam ʔa: **rai\*** rāk

“to grief over the loss of someone”

## Ex. 6 Yong-smoked orange-For

ปลอด\*จากมะเร็งนี่ มะเร็งนี่เฮา

**prò:t\*** càk má leŋ ní: ma leŋ ní: haw

“To be free from cancer, we should ...”



## 2) Males are more conservative or retain covert prestige forms

[h], [bor]

more conservative, more categorical use and more covert prestige realisation (Labov, 2001)

### 3) Dialect contact: mixing?

3.1) Only (r) distribution of Yong NT changes to BKK Thai more than Muang's counterpart by looking at [r]'s distribution which is found a lot. (NT conforms to BKK Thai?).

3.2) [CI] of (Cr) is rarely used. It might be in the process of borrowing in NT rather than pass through the same process of change like [I] in (r) in BKK Thai. (NT does not conform to BKK Thai?).

# Points to ponder from (3.1) & (3.2)

Thus, the system of (r) of [r-1] and (Cr) of [Cl] distribution across multi-social variables are still fuzzy and contradict each other - it seem to be mixed. We need to test more about how NT dialects are changing.

Emergence of a new dialect formation?

(As a **Koiné**? Test children –  
next research! 😊)

Or

Convergence of NT dialects to BKK Thai?  
(As a **Dialect levelling**? Test adults)



#### 4) Negators behave differently, using by more conscious, 'bor' is very strong.

- [bor] is very consistently used by NT people.
- [mai] is only found in an outlier who might perform in accordance with the BKK Thai dialect.
- Thus, the characteristic and the distribution of variation of negators are different from phonological features. They might be employed by during more conscious rather than less conscious speech, like phonological features.
- Grammatical variables, have traditionally been viewed as features which mark social differences more dramatically than phonological ones. (Chambers 2003: 57 cited in Tagliamonte, 2005: 205).

# 9. Conclusions

- 1) Female -Yong might become a leader of linguistic change to adapt to BKK Thai dialect. They perform hypercorrection in both ways.
- 2) Males are more conservative.
- 3) At some point, the system of (r) of [r-1] (conform to BKK) and (Cr) of [Cl] (reject BKK) distribution across multi-social variables contradict each other. It seem to be mixed. it might be the other process as either **koineization** or **dialect levelling**.
- 4) Negator, [bor] is still the categorical form used by the NT people in general and [mai] is merely performed by the outlier. This might be because grammatical categories might be determined or selected to performed more consciously rather than phonological features.



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That's cool!  
You know.

