

Research Title : **The Characteristics of Thai Words of Mon Origin**

Researcher : **Miss Vadhana Purakasikara**

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Abstract

This research study investigates Thai words of Mon origin. A search through a Mon-English dictionary for Mon words sharing salient phonological and semantic similarity to Thai words results in a compilation of 697 words. Comparative analyses at the phonological, orthographical and semantic levels of each word belonging to the Mon-Khmer family yields 173 related words used in the three languages--Mon, Khmer and Thai. These Words constitute a list of Thai words of Mon origin borrowed through Khmer.

Thai people adopt Mon words in both spoken and written language. Spoken words display exact or similar pronunciation as the original. Written words are transformed, resulting in change of pronunciation as influenced by prevailing Thai orthographical rules, with an addition of tonal markers. These include common words of general usage, reduplicative words consisting of Mon and Thai words of equivalent meaning, compound words, and fixed expressions such as idioms, royal words and literary words and set phrases.

Etymological study of Mon words is helpful in determining the origin of Thai words. Compilation of Mon-Thai word lists should prove valuable to future research on Thai loan words of Mon origin.