

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF KAM (DONG) PHONOLOGY IN
RONGSHUI**



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HUI HE 5836005 LCLG/M

M.A. (LINGUISTICS)

THESIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: SOMSONG BURUSPHAT, Ph.D.,
WEERA OSTAPIRAT, Ph.D., SUJARITLAK DEEPADUNG, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

Kam is a language with various vernaculars, among which, there are distinctive features. This study aims to explore phonological comparisons among four vernaculars of Kam spoken in Rongshui County. More specifically, phonological comparison compared distinctions in term of consonants, vowels and tones of the four vernaculars by using comparative methods and analyzing the distinctive features from historical aspects (Thurgood, 1988 & Ostapirat, 2006).

The results of data analysis reveal that: the four vernaculars are, in general, similar, but still different from each other in key ways. i) Xiakan has preglottalized initials which result in a special tone split. Dongtou has retained voiceless nasals which are not found in the other three. ii) Kam of Rongshui has fewer tone numbers than the standard Kam. Hecun has a tone split by aspiration in tone category A, which is not present in the other vernaculars.

KEY WORDS: KAM (DONG)/ PHONOLOGY/ COMPARATIVE / RONGSHUI

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