

## Chapter 5

### The Characterization of People

#### 5.1. Introduction

After chronology and causality, the characterization of people is the third major constitutive element of a narrative text. Readers do not only have to know *when* things happen and *why* they happen but also *who* the participants are. In order to find out how people are characterized in "Si Phaendin", I looked at the introduction of Ploi's parents, brothers and sisters. Among them, I will pay special attention to Ploi's father and to Ploi's elder half-sister Oon. I will also look at Ploi's eldest son Un who has absorbed Western ideas and Western culture more intensely than others and thus is responsible for some major conflicts towards the end of the novel.

On the linguistic side, the first aspect to be examined is the order of introduction of Ploi's parents, brothers and sisters. I will then look at the characterization of people by the use of verbs. Thai does not use adjectives in the same way as Western languages do. There is even reason to doubt the existence of adjectives in Thai altogether. In any case, the verb in Thai takes over many of the functions of the adjective in Western languages in describing and characterizing people. In the final part of this chapter I will examine different terms of address and how they place everyone within a hierarchical system.

## 5.2. The Order of Introduction of Ploi's Family: Status and Seniority

The members of Ploi's immediate family are properly introduced by their names with the help of a hypothetical inquiry directed at the ten-year-old Ploi regarding the identity of her parents. As a dutiful child she gives the names of her father (พระยาพิพิธ [Phraya Phiphit]) and her mother (แฉ่ม [Chaem]):

ถ้าใครไปถามพลอยในขณะนั้นว่าใครเป็นบิดา พลอยก็จะตอบว่าชื่อพระยาพิพิธ ๕ มารดาชื่อแฉ่ม เป็นเอกภรรยาของพระยาพิพิธ ๕ แต่มิใช่ในฐานะคุณหญิง (15)

*(If anyone at that time would have asked who her father was, Ploi would answer "Phraya Phiphit, and my mother's name is Chaem." She was Phraya Phiphit's Major Wife but not in the official position of Khunying.)*

But instead of saying more about Ploi's mother, the narrator takes the opportunity to introduce Khunying เอี่ยม (Euam). She is higher in rank than Ploi's mother. Further information on Ploi's mother will be given later in accordance with her lower status compared to Khunying Euam and her three children. (Since Ploi's mother is introduced primarily by a description of the place she occupies within the household, I will deal with this description in chapter 6.5.1.)

[...] เพราะคุณหญิงท่านชื่อเอี่ยมเป็นคนอัมพวา ไม่ได้อยู่กับเจ้าคุณพ่อ แต่กลับไปอยู่บ้านเดิมของท่านเสียตั้งแต่ก่อนพลอยเกิด (15)

*([...] because the name of the Khunying was Euam who was from Amphawa. She was not staying with Chao Khun Father but had returned to her old home before Ploi had been born.)*

The narrator then goes on to introduce Ploi's brothers and sisters according to the status determined by the rank of their mothers and according to seniority among themselves. First, there are the three children of Khunying Euam: Ploi's eldest sister คุณอ่อน (*Khun Oon*), her elder brother คุณชิต (*Khun Chit*) and finally her elder sister คุณเชย (*Khun Choey*). They are introduced according to their age:

คงเหลืออยู่แต่บุตรของคุณหญิงอยู่ในบ้านสามคน คือ คุณอ่อน พี่สาวใหญ่  
อายุสิบเก้าปี คุณชิต พี่ชายคนรอง อายุสิบหกปี คุณเชย พี่สาวคนเล็กแก่  
กว่าพลอยสองปี (15)

*(They were Khun Oon, the big sister, who was 19 years old, elder brother Khun Chit, the next one in line, who was 16 and finally elder sister Khun Choey, the youngest of the three who was two years older than Ploi.)*

Then comes Ploi's older full brother พ่อเพิ่ม (*Pho Perm*), the only other child from Chao Khun Father's first minor wife Mae Chaem:

พลอยมีพี่ชายร่วมมารดาอีกคนหนึ่ง อายุแก่กว่าพลอยปีเศษ ชื่อ พ่อเพิ่ม (15)  
*(Ploi also had one elder brother of the same mother who was little more than one year older than she. His name was Pho Perm.)*

Finally, there is one younger sister who is a daughter from a minor wife of lesser status than Ploi's mother. Her name is ทวาน (*Wan*). Appropriately, she is mentioned last.

และมีน้องสาวคนละมารดาเกิดจากแม่แหวภรรยาเจ้าคุณพ่อคนรองแม่ลงไป ชื่อ  
ทวาน อ่อนกว่าพลอยสองปี (15 / 16)

(She also had a younger half sister whose mother was Mae Waeow, the next wife of Chao Khun Father down the line after Ploi's mother. Her name was Wan and she was two years younger than Ploi.)

### 5.3. The Prominence of Verbs: Characterization Through Action

#### 5.3.1. Linguistic Reasons for the Prominence of Verbs in Thai

In Thai, verbs are much more frequently used than qualifying words like adjectives. There are two linguistic reasons for this phenomenon. Firstly, there are no morphological differences between adjectives and verbs in Thai. In Western languages, differences between verbs and adjectives are indicated *morphologically* through the inflection of the verb and sometimes through the ending of the adjective (*-ful*, as for instance in *beautiful*, *useful*). Secondly, adjectives and verbs are distinguished in Western languages *syntactically* through their position in the sentence. Usually, adjectives can take three positions:

- (1) **attributive** (directly before noun):                      The useful book.
- (2) **predicative** (behind predicate [mostly to *be*]): The book is useful.
- (3) **postpositive** (directly behind noun):                      Something useful

Adjectives in postpositive position are generally considered as being reduced relative clauses. (GREENBAUM & QUIRK, 1993: 136) "*Something useful*" would actually be a short version of "*Something that is useful*". Thai language places words comparable to adjectives exclusively in **postpositive** position, i.e. right after the noun they are describing. This is exactly the same position the verb takes in Thai. The following two sentences show that there is no structural criterion whatsoever that would allow to put the words ดำ (black) and กิน (to eat) in different categories of words.

- (a) หมาดำ (the black dog / The dog [that] is black.)
- (b) หมากิน (The dog eats.)

Since Thai has no adjectives in *attributive* or *predicative* position, it is legitimate to claim that, in fact, Thai does not have any adjectives at all. (HAAS, 1960: xx) Instead, "potential adjectives" are categorized as verbs. The word "*green*", for instance, which is an adjective in English, is translated by Haas (1960) as "*to be green*". (ibid.: 68). Because of the lack of linguistic difference between verbs and adjectives, it would be more appropriate to call those Thai words that would be translated as adjectives into English as **qualifying verbs**.

The main function of adjectives in Western languages is to describe the qualities of things and the characteristics of people. Since the linguistic difference between adjectives and verbs in Thai is blurred and since there are no adjectives in attributive position, Thai verbs take over this describing function of the adjective in Western languages. As a result, action appears as the prominent category to assess and convey a person's character. At the same time, long descriptive passages, so typical for the European novel of the 19th century, containing elaborate and detailed descriptions of *individual* features of facial expressions and gestures, of emotions or of scenes of nature are rarely found in Thai narratives. There are, for instance, no descriptions of faces in "Si Phaendin". The reader doesn't know how Ploi, her father, her husband or her children look like. He doesn't know the color of their eyes, the complexion of their skins or any characteristic lines or other features of their faces. In Western narratives, such descriptions often have a metaphorical value. They do not only describe the outward appearance of a person but also hint at his character. Certain adjectives describing facial features have negative connotations. A *dark* complexion may hint at a dark character, *narrow eyes* or a *narrow* forehead may hint at a narrow heart or at unwholesome thoughts and *thin lips* may hint at an unjoyful character while adjectives such as *bright*, *broad*, *light* and *tall* usually have positive connotations. In Thai, positive and negative character is more often conveyed through positive or negative action and behavior.

### 5.3.2. The Initial Characterization of Ploi's Brothers and Sisters by Means of Verbs

After their formal introduction, a short characterization of Ploi's brothers and sisters is given. This characterization is important because it establishes an impression of these figures and shapes the reader's perception in a way that will not significantly change throughout the novel. First comes Choey. From the beginning, she is cast in a positive light. Her personality and age make her Ploi's ideal play- and soulmate:

พลอยคุ้นเคยกับคุณชายเป็นพิเศษ เพราะอายุรุ่นราวคราวเดียวกัน และคุณชาย  
เป็นเด็กชอบเล่นป่ายปีนไปในที่ต่าง ๆ ซึ่งถูกกับนิสัยของพลอย (16)

*(Ploi was especially close to Khun Choey because they were close in age and Khun Choey loved to roam and climb around in all kinds of places. And that fit Ploi's own behavior just right.)*

Choey's character is described here by what she likes to *do*. The following verbs are used: (เล่นป่ายปีนไปในที่ต่าง ๆ / [to roam and climb around in all kinds of places]). These activities usually denote an independent, vivacious, fun-loving and self-confident person. Later, the reader learns that Choey is also a warm-hearted, courageous and caring person. She weeps (น้ำตา [...] ร่วง [big tears [...] pour]) when she hears about Ploi's departure and she steals (แอบขโมย [stole]) some sweets from their fierce elder sister, Khun Oon, to give them to Ploi as a farewell present.

พอเห็นพลอยพยักหน้ารับคำ น้ำตาเม็ดโต ๆ ก็ร่วงจากนัยน์ตาของคุณชาย  
และไหลลงมากถูกแขนของพลอยหลายเม็ด " ไร้ แม่พลอย " คุณชายพูดเสียง  
เครือ "แม่พลอยไปเสียแล้วฉันจะเล่นกับใครล่ะ แม่พลอยอย่าลืมฉันนะ" [...] "นี่  
แม่พลอย ฉันให้... จันอบ ฉันแอบขโมยคุณอ่อนเธอมาจากบندق แม่พลอยเอา  
ไว้ไปกินกลางทางก็แล้วกัน" (23/24)

*(When she saw Ploi nodding her head in confirmation, big tears started to pour*



out of Khun Choey's eyes and run down onto Ploi's arm. "Why, Mae Ploi" Khun Choey said with a stricken voice, "with whom am I going to play when you are gone? Mae Ploi, please don't forget me!" [...] "Here, Mae Ploi ... chan'ub [sweets]. I stole them from Khun Oon upstairs. Mae Ploi, take them and just eat them when you are on your way.")

Khun Oon also is characterized by the use of verbs. Befitting her status as the highest ranking person after Chao Khun Father, she *lives* on the top floor. She *carries the keys* and *does* all the financial transactions of the household. Above all, Chao Khun Father *trusts* her. All this demands respect and deference from the other members of the household.

คุณอุ้นพี่สาวคนใหญ่นั้น พลอยเห็นว่าเป็นผู้ใหญ่ที่น่าเกรงขาม เพราะเธออยู่บน  
ตึกพร้อมกับเจ้าคุณพ่อ ในห้องใหญ่อีกห้องหนึ่งซึ่งเป็นห้องเก็บเครื่องเงินเครื่องทอง  
คุณอุ้นเป็นผู้ถือกุญแจแต่ผู้เดียว แม้แต่การจับจ่ายใช้สอยทุกอย่างในบ้าน คุณ  
อุ้นก็เป็นผู้ทำทั้งสิ้น เจ้าคุณพ่อท่านไว้ใจว่าเป็นลูกสาวใหญ่ (16)

(As for Khun Oon, her 'major' elder sister, Ploi thought of her as a grown up and mature person that deserved deference and respect because she was living on the top level of the building like Chao Khun father, albeit in another room that was also big and contained the silver and the gold [of the household]. Khun Oon was the one and only person to be in charge of the keys. And all the household's expenses were to be done by her alone. As his eldest daughter, she had the complete trust of Chao Khun Father.)

Nothing is said about the personal relationship between Khun Oon and Ploi or her other brothers and sisters. This absence, however, speaks for itself because it is an absence of actions. Obviously, Khun Oon does not roam and climb around like Choey nor

does she do anything else that would demonstrate any kind of positive attitude towards Ploi or the others. (At least for the time being. The reader later learns that Khun Oon acts positively towards her own full brother Chit.) The reason for the respect and deference Khun Oon earns from Ploi is therefore strictly due to her status and not to any charitable acts like generosity, helpfulness or compassion. This generally puts Khun Oon in a negative light. Later in the novel, she changes her behavior. (see 5.3.4.) It remains doubtful, however, if her change in behavior is also a change of character.

**Chit**, Oon's younger brother, is a bad person from the beginning. He even lacks the distinction of having important duties or enjoying the confidence of his father. Thus he is described and regarded with contempt despite his status as the son of the Khunying. To show the weakness and lowness of Chit's character, some of his contemptuous and ridiculous deeds are reported. He **dresses** in fancy clothes, **combs his hair** with oil and **puts** fashionable plasters on his temples. He **sneaks out** of the house into a boat at night **to go out** with the employees of his father and gets punished for **disappearing** for several days. In another case, he **lives** in the house of one of the employees and having a venereal disease .

คือคุณชิต ผู้ซึ่งเวลานั้นกำลังเป็นหนุ่มเต็มตัว อายุ ๑๖ บางทีพลอยเคยเห็นคุณชิตตอนเย็น ๆ นุ่งผ้าสีใส่เสื้อกระบอกแพรเลียน หวีผมใส่น้ำมันแปร์ ติดยา แก้วปวดหัวทั้งสองข้างตามธรรมเนียมหนุ่ม ๆ สมัยนั้น เดินไปเดินมาอยู่แล้วศาลาท่าน้ำ พอพลบค่ำ คุณชิตก็แอบลงเรือข้ามฟากไปเที่ยวกับทนายหนุ่ม ๆ ของเจ้าคุณพ่อ ครั้งหนึ่งพลอยจำได้ว่าคุณชิตหายไปหลายวัน แต่พอกลับมา ก็เกิดเรื่องใหญ่ เพราะเจ้าคุณพ่อท่านมัดมือเขียนที่หน้าตัก ทั้งคุณชิตและทนาย เสี่ยงร้องกันให้ลั่นบ้านไปหมด พลอยไปแอบดูอยู่หลังพุ่มต้นแก้วรอบตึกกับคุณเชย ผู้ซึ่งจิตใจที่พี่ชายถูกเขียนแล้วปรารถนากับพลอยว่าสมน้ำหน้า อีกครั้งหนึ่ง พลอยเห็นคุณชิตเจ็บผอมแห้ง นอนแบบอยู่ที่เรือนที่เธออยู่กับป่าวหนุ่ม ๆ รุน



เดียวกัน เห็นปาวตำยาตำให้กินเป็นหลายหม้อ คุณเขยแอบมากระซิบบอกพลอย ว่า "แม่พลอย ฉันทบออะไรให้ อย่าพูดไปนะ คุณชิตเป็นโรคบรูซ ชินพูดไป ฉันทโกรธจริง ๆ ด้วย"

*(As for) Khun Chit: with his 16 years he was a "full blown" young man. At times she [Ploi] had seen Khun Chit in the evenings - a colorful piece of cloth wrapped around his waist, a silk shirt falling down his shoulders, his hair meticulously combed with oil and pain-killing plasters attached to both of his temples as was the fashion at that time - walking back and forth at the sala of the landing pier. At dusk he would slip into a boat that would cross the canal and bring him to an outing with the young men who were working with his father. Ploi remembered that Khun Chit had once disappeared for several days. But when he came back, a big affair ensued because Chao Khun Father bound his and his buddy's hands and beat them in front of the house. The voices of Khun Chit and his father's employees could be heard screaming all over the house. Ploi had been watching from behind one of the Kaeow-bushes surrounding the house together with Choey who was pleased with the beating of her brother and consequently remarked towards Ploi: "Serves him right!" Another time, Ploi saw Khun Chit lying sick and worn out in the house where he stayed with the male employees of his age. The employees were cooking pots of herbal medicine. Choey had been watching them secretly and came back gossiping to Ploi: "Ploi, I'll tell you something! Don't spread it around! Khun Chit has a venereal disease. If you are going to talk about it, I'll be really angry.")*

Khun Chit's final karmic reward for his overall bad behavior is being completely paralyzed. (ฉีกฤทธิ์, 1980: 1469) He has reached a very low status, indeed, being unable to move and do anything.

Ploi's only full brother, Perm, is hardly characterized at all - maybe because the narrator takes it as a matter of course that full brothers and sisters feel close to each other. This would explain Khun Oon's support for her brother Chit and her disapproval of Khun Choey's decision to run away and marry without consulting her. The reader only learns about Perm that he is the only other person Ploi feels naturally close to besides Choey.

นอกจากพ่อเพิ่มพี่ร่วมท้อง พลอยคุ้นเคยกับคุณชายเป็นพิเศษ (16)

*(Besides her elder brother Perm from the same mother, Ploi was especially close to Khun Choey.)*

Still, there is a weakness in Perm's character. He *yields* to his brother Jit and has to *hide* his meetings with him from his mother because she will make a fuss about it.

พ่อเพิ่ม พี่ชายของพลอยนั้น ดูสวามิภักดิ์คุณชิตมากกว่าพี่น้องอื่นๆ แต่พ่อเพิ่ม ก็ต้องแอบไปมาหาสูมิให้แม่เห็น เพราะถ้าแม่รู้ว่าพ่อเพิ่มไปคบกับคุณชิตที่ไร เป็นเขียนเอาทุกที (17)

*(Perm, Ploi's full elder brother, was seen to be yielding more to Khun Chit than the other brothers and sisters but he had to go and see Khun Chit secretly and be careful that his mother wouldn't know about it because each and every time she would learn about his meetings with Chit, she would beat him.)*

Interestingly, this negative information is weakened a little bit by using a stylistic construction that reduces Perm's active involvement in Khun Chit's behavior. Perm is not described as actively seeking Khun Chit's company. He is only *seen* together with his bad brother (พี่ชายของพลอยนั้น ดูสวามิภักดิ์คุณชิต). Besides, Perm is not the instigator of forbidden behavior or the leader of bad activities. He is just giving in to his brother. Perm's direct *actions*, however, reveal his principal goodness and hint at his ability to fend off

Khun Chit's negative influence: He hides his meetings with Khun Chit from his mother. It shows that he is aware of who is right and who is wrong. The reader later learns that he *cries* a lot when Ploi and their mother are going to leave (like Choey but unlike Oon and Chit) and that his mother is deeply troubled that she has to leave him behind.

มีพ่อเพิ่มยืนกอดเสาร้องไห้กระซิก ๆ อยู่

(27/28)

(Perm was standing at the old landing pier, holding on to one [of its] pillar[s], sobbing )

Little sister *Wan* is not characterized at all. Her actions and behavior go unnoticed since she is too young to play a role in the story. Consequently, her character remains completely non-descript.<sup>1</sup>

It is conspicuous that no qualifying verbs are used to characterize Ploi's brothers and sisters. Khun Choey is not described with a phrase like เป็นคนร่าเริง (*was someone cheerful*), Khun Oon is not portrayed as คนร้าย (*a fierce person*) but as someone who is removed from others by her position and duties and tries to oppress those she considers intruders or rivals. Pho Perm is not เศร้าใจ (*sad*) but weeps. Ploi's brothers and sisters are all described by what they do.

### 5.3.3. The Passiveness of Chao Khun Father

Chao Khun Father is primarily characterized through his status. As พระยา (Phraya) and head of the family, he is passive most of the time and this in itself may be regarded as a positive quality. He is not interfering with the general course of karma by doing and deciding things, as Ploi's mother does by leaving and taking Ploi with her. This makes him appear at times as not being in control of his own private life. As the story proceeds he

<sup>1</sup> It actually remains a mystery why she is mentioned by name at all. If the author wanted the readership to know that Chao Khun Father had more children from minor wives, as was customary with high ranking and wealthy aristocrats, he could have done so in a general statement

becomes more and more dependent on his official wife's eldest daughter Oon. He is also unable to prevent Ploi and her mother, the woman he really loves or at least loves more than his official wife, from leaving his household. From a Western point of view, he seems to be caught in a conflict between his affection for Ploi's mother and his official position which requires him to marry a woman of an equally high status regardless of his personal feelings and also entitles him to take care of a number of minor wives. This situation may be at the root of his passivity. He cannot solve the principal conflict between official status and personal preferences. In this situation, the most virtuous thing to do is to stay out of the conflict and just watch things with equanimity and without getting involved. One of the few things Chao Khun father actually *does*, is playing Thai classical music and this seems to be the only relief from the permanent tension of his life and offers the only possibility to express his true feelings. At least, this can be concluded from the impression Ploi gets from listening to her father playing the xylophone:

เจ้าคุณพ่อจับไม้ระนาดขึ้นลองไล่ลูกดูก่อน แล้วก็ขยับกายให้เข้าที่ ยกไม้ระนาด  
ทั้งสองชูขึ้นจบเพียงหน้าผาก สองมือพนมระลึกถึงคุณครูอยู่ครู่หนึ่งแล้วก็เริ่มตี  
ครั้งนี้เป็นครั้งแรกในชีวิต ที่พลอยได้ยินเจ้าคุณพ่อเล่นดนตรี และเป็นครั้ง  
แรกที่ได้เคยเห็นเจ้าคุณพ่อเป็นตัวของท่านเองโดยสมบูรณ์ (186)

*(Chao Khun Father picked up the xylophonesticks, had a trial run of the scale, positioned himself properly, lifted both xylophonesticks up to his forehead, put the palms of his hands together [while holding the xylophonesticks] in a gesture of respect towards his teacher and then began to play. This was the first time, Ploi heard her father play music. And it was the first time, Ploi saw her father being completely himself.)*

Playing the xylophone is the only way for Chao Khun Father to express his true feelings. And at least Ploi understands them:

เสียงเพลงที่เจ้าคุณพ่อบรรเลงจากระนาดทำให้พลอยเศร้าใจในขั้นแรก เพราะดูเหมือนจะเป็นคำพรรณนาถึงความหลังที่ผ่านไปแล้วอย่างไม่มีวันคืนมาอีก ถ้อยคำที่เจ้าคุณพ่อพูดด้วยดนตรีนั้นเต็มไปด้วยความสงสัยเคลือบแคลงใจ บางตอนก็มีพ้อแล้วรำพันถึงความหลัง (186)

*(First, the music that Chao Khun Father extracted from the xylophone made Ploi sad, because it sounded like words describing the past that had been gone forever. The words, Chao Khun Father spoke with his music were full of doubts and questions and some sections were full of lamentations of the past.)*

But since the "language" of music, it is purely emotional. It cannot express *what* questions and *what* doubts Chao Khun Father *really* has about the past and which events are *really* aimed at with his lamentations. The reader can only guess. It is surprising for the Western reader that this musical event is Chao Khun Father's only possibility to express his emotions of sorrow and pain. He never talks about them. Neither does the narrator.

One prominent characteristic of Chao Khun Father is his fondness for children. Again, it is described in terms of behavior. At the beginning of the novel, the reader learns that Chao Khun Father enjoys hardly anything more than watching the children play, screaming and laughing along with them:

คนที่บรรเทาความตึงเครียดที่พลอยต้องได้รู้สึกไปด้วยก็คือ เจ้าคุณพ่อ เพราะเจ้าคุณพ่อท่านเป็นคนรักเด็กทุก ๆ คน ไม่ว่าจะเป็นลูกท่านหรือลูกใคร ๆ บางทีตอนเย็น ๆ เจ้าคุณพ่อท่านเรียกเด็ก ๆ ในบ้านให้มาวิ่งเล่นกันให้ท่านดูที่ลานหน้าตึก ใครจะส่งเสียงดังเท่าไรก็ได้ และคนที่ส่งเสียงดังที่สุดและหัวเราะดังที่สุดก็คือเจ้าคุณพ่อเอง (19)

*(The person who would relieve the tension that would inevitably arise in Ploi was none other than Chao Khun Father because father loved every child, no matter*



*whose child it was, his own or someone else's. Sometimes, in the evening, Chao Khun Father would call the children to see him in the house and then ask them to run and play on the lawn in front of the house. Everyone could scream and shout as loud as he wanted - and the person who screamed and laughed the loudest was none other than Chao Khun Father himself.)*

Later it is reported that it had long been planned to have Ploi educated at the court but that Chao Khun Father wished her to stay at home first because he wanted to have a child as his playing-companion.

[...] แม่เคยบอกว่า ถ้าพลอยโตขึ้นอีกสักหน่อยก็จะส่งตัวไปถวาย แม่เคยขออนุญาตเจ้าคุณพ่อแล้วในเรื่องนี้ ท่านก็ไม่ขัดข้อง [...] แต่แล้วท่านก็ขอผัดว่าอย่าเพิ่งส่งไป เพราะท่านไม่มีลูกเล็ก ๆ จะเล่นด้วย (21)

*(Mother had already long ago told her that when Ploi would be older she would be sent to the palace. Mother had asked for Chao Khun Father's permission in this case. Father had nothing against it. [..] but at that time he had asked for a postponement. "Don't send her right away because then there is no little one for me to play with".)*

And, of course, the last joy in his life is to see his newborn grandson Un. It helps him to recover temporarily from his illness.

เจ้าคุณพ่อเริ่มอาการดีขึ้นตั้งแต่วันนั้นมา ยาขนานที่ดีที่สุดก็คือตาอัน [...] อาการของเจ้าคุณพ่อดีขึ้นเป็นลำดับ จนหลวงโอสถซึ่งเป็นหมอประจำนิยน์กับคุณชายและพลอย ว่าอีกราว ๆ สิบวัน ท่านก็คงจะหายเป็นปกติ (623)

*(Chao Khun Father started to get better since the very same day. The most efficient medicine was Un. [...]). The state of Chao Khun Father's health improved*



*steadily until Luang Osoth, his principal doctor, assured Khun Choey and Ploi that Chao Khun Father would have completely recovered within about ten days.)*

#### 5.3.4. Khun Oon's Change of Character

Khun Oon is of particular interest because she is the only figure whose character changes drastically. For a long time she acts like a vicious person. But after receiving Ploi's help when she is in deep trouble, she becomes kind and friendly. Her change in character is brought upon by Ploi's compassion and is one of the rare moments of self-awareness in the whole novel:

คำพูดของพลอยที่รับปากว่า จะช่วยนั้นทำให้คุณอ่อนโลงอก แต่คำพูดที่แสดงความห่วงใยนั้น ดูเหมือนจะสะกิดความรู้สึกในใจบางอย่างของคุณอ่อน คุณอ่อนมองดูหน้าพลอยอย่างลังเล ไม่ทราบว่าจะทำอย่างไรดีกับคนที่ไม่ใช่โกธร และไม่มี ความพยายามทอฆาตคติอยู่ในสันดานเสียเลย หน้าตาคุณอ่อนเริ่มไหลริน ๆ แล้วก็เพิ่มปริมาณมากขึ้น จนในที่สุด คุณอ่อนก็ร้องไห้ สะอื้นให้พลอยได้เห็นเป็นครั้งแรก คำพูดของคุณอ่อนต่อไปเป็นคำพูดที่พลอยรู้สึกว่ามีมาจากหัวใจ เพราะคุณอ่อนกลับพูดอย่างธรรมดาที่เคยมาแต่ก่อน มิได้ยกย่องใช้คำว่า "คุณพลอย" อย่างในตอนแรก

"พีผิดไปแล้ว" คุณอ่อนเริ่มพูด "ผิดไปมากทีเดียว แม่พลอยยกโทษให้พีเสียเถิด แต่พีทำกับแม่พลอยมามาก ถึงแม่พลอยจะโกธรเคืองพีก็ไม่ว่าอะไร... ยอมรับผิดทุกอย่าง พีเป็นคนมีกรรม เห็นผิดเป็นชอบ เอาแต่ใจตัว กว่าจะได้คิดมันก็ช้าไป เมื่อครั้งพ่อแม้อยู่ พีก็ไม่รู้สึก เพราะบารมีท่านคุ้มครองไว้ ยิ่งพ่อแม่ตามใจ พี่น้องกลัวเกรงก็ยิ่งแต่จะเอาตามใจตัวใครเขายกยอปอขึ้นก็เชื่อถือคนนั้น[...] (740)

*(Ploi's promise to help gave Khun Oon a feeling of relief, but her words of sympathy seemed to have touched upon some hidden feelings within Khun Oon's heart. Khun Oon looked at Ploi with uncertainty, not knowing what to do with someone who did not hold on to his grudges and whose personality was void of*

*the desire for revenge. Khun Oon's tears started to roll slowly but then more and more tears were running down her face until she was sobbing in a way Ploi had never seen before. The words that followed came, as was Ploi's distinct feeling, directly from her heart because she reverted to talk to Ploi in a normal way as she used to do without addressing her with "Khun Ploi" ... as she had done in the beginning.*

*"I was very wrong", Khun Oon started, "very wrong indeed. Mae Ploi, please forgive me for all I have done to you. I can't blame you for being angry with me. I admit to everything I have done. I am a person with bad karma. When I saw something wrong, I liked it. I only had my own interests at heart. And when I got to think about it, it was too late anyhow. When father and mother were still alive, I wasn't aware of this at all because I was protected by father's authority. As long as my parents gave in to my wishes and the more my brothers and sisters stood in awe and diffidence towards me, I just had to have my own way. I just believed everything anyone who was flattering me made up."*

But this change of character and insight in one's own faults and weaknesses only relates to Oon's relationship with Ploi. Regarding Choey who was as much a victim of Oon's behavior as Ploi, Oon is not capable to realize and admit to her mistakes. Instead, she holds Choey responsible for their strained relationship because she did not treat her with the proper respect. It looks as if the same behavior which was wrong towards Ploi was right towards Choey. Although she ought to know better, Oon can only bring herself to reconciliation with Choey because Ploi pleads with her to do so. She explains the difference between her attitudes towards Ploi and Choey as follows:

“แม่พลอยเองก็คงเคยเกลียดฉันมามากแต่ก็ไม่เคยทำให้ฉันอับอายขายหน้า แม่พลอยทำตัวถูกตลอดมา ฉันจะดูว่าหรืออาชกรรมอย่างไรกับแม่พลอย คำน้อย

แม่พลอยก็มีได้เคยมาปรนเปรยได้เถียงให้ฉันเจ็บช้ำน้ำใจ เพราะแม่พลอยทำตัวดี ฉันจึงเห็นความดีของแม่พลอย [...] แต่คนที่เขากล่าวว่าตัวเขาเป็นพี่น้องในไส้ ฉันนั้นเสียอีก เขากลับลูแกโทสะเอาแต่ใจตัว นี่จะขึ้นเสียงทู่เถียงฉันอย่างไร เขาก็ทำได้ ไม่ไว้หน้า แต่เรื่องนั้นก็พอจะทำเนา ตอนที่เขาหนีตามผู้ชายไปนี่สิ ทำให้ฉันต้องอับอายขายหน้ามาก หน้าฉันคนเดียวก็ไม่ใช่ไรหรอก แต่มันเสียไปถึงพ่อแม่วงศ์ตระกูล ฉันจึงเสียใจหนักตั้งใจไว้ว่า ชาตินี้จะไม่ดูฝักกัน (798)

*("Mae Ploi herself had enough reason to detest me but she never caused me embarrassment and loss of face. Mae Ploi always behaved correctly. However critical and unjust I have been with her, she never said much. Mae Ploi never opened her mouth to argue with me and wear out my good will. Because she knows how to behave in a good way. And this is why I could recognize Ploi's goodness. [...]. But with the person who claims to be of the same blood as I am, the case is different. She came back to confess and ask forgiveness only for selfish reasons. When she could think of a way to raise her voice and argue with me, she would do so without sparing my feelings. But that story topped it all. When she ran away following that man she really made me lose my face. If it would have been only my face, I wouldn't mind. But she embarrassed her father and mother and the whole family. I was so thoroughly disappointed that I vowed that we wouldn't look at each other in this life any more.")*

This explanation shows that Khun Oon is still quite angry with her sister. It is surprising and somewhat unbelievable that she is going to forget all her grudges just because Ploi asks her to do so. The shortness of her words of forgiveness doesn't really make them sound very convincing and the reader cannot help wondering whether Khun Oon can really forget and forgive such intensely felt dislike.

“เมื่อแม่พลอยออกปากขอทั้งที ก็เอาเถิด ฉันจะอโหสิให้ ไม่ถือโกรธอีกต่อไป”  
(798/9)

(“Since Mae Ploi has asked for it, take it [my forgiveness]. I’ll forgive you. I won’t be angry with you anymore.”)

In the course of the story the reader can notice that Khun Oon does indeed not change completely. There are certain negative aspects of her character that remain the same. In the following passage one of these negative character traits is revealed, again in terms of behaviour. The word การกระทำ (*action, behaviour*) appears to be used here almost synonymously to the English *characteristic*. It is used to describe a behavioral pattern of Khun Oon that could also be defined as a character trait or a characteristic aspect of her personality.

พลอยสังเกตเห็นการกระทำของคุณอ่อนต่อไปก็รู้ด้วยความประหลาดใจอีกประการหนึ่งว่า คุณอ่อนนั้น จะต้องมีคนหนึ่งไว้เป็นที่รักสำหรับพะนอนตามใจจึงจะมีความสุข เมื่อยังอยู่ที่บ้านคลองบางหลวง คนที่คุณอ่อนตามใจจนเสีย คือคุณชิต แต่พอมาอยู่ที่บ้านเดียวกับพลอยได้ไม่นานนัก คุณอ่อนก็เริ่มยึดถือเอาประไพไปเป็นกรรมสิทธิ์ (800)

(Furtheron, Ploi noticed with astonishment another of Khun Oon's habits: Khun Oon needed to love someone so she could spoil him and that in turn would give her happiness. When she was still at the house at the Bang Luang Canal the person whose every wish she would fulfill was Khun Chit. But not long after she came to stay with Ploi, Khun Oon started to make Praphai her favorite.)

### 5.3.5. The Unpleasantness of Khun Un

The portrait of Un, Ploi's own first son, is a good example for characterization in terms of behaviour. Negative actions and behavioral patterns are attributed to him from the very beginning and serve as examples as the three following passages show.

ส่วนดาอัน ลูกหัวบิของพลอยนั้นเสียอีก กลับ**มีนิสัยดื้อ** เวลาโกรธหรือโมโหก็แสดงอาการรุนแรงได้มาก ๆ ทำให้พลอยต้องหนักใจ (685)

(As for Un, Ploi's first-borne child, he **behaved stubbornly**. When he was angry, he would **show his bad mood openly and in a strong manner** which caused Ploi a lot of worries.)

ส่วนดาอันนั้น เป็นคนชอบของของคนอื่น ถ้าของอย่างใดที่มีเหมือนกันหมด ดาอันก็มักจะไม่สนใจ แต่ถ้าใครมีสิ่งใดที่ดาอันไม่มี ดาอันก็อยากได้สิ่งนั้นขึ้นมาทันที (685)

(As for Un, he **liked things that belonged to others**. When everyone had the same, Un would not show much interest in what was his, but if someone had something different then Un **would want to have it immediately**.)

ดาอันทำให้พลอยต้องไม่สบายใจอยู่บ่อย ๆ เพราะ**นิสัยที่อยากมีอะไรแต่คนเดียว**นั้น ทำให้พลอยอดถึงคุณอันไม่ได้ และบางครั้งบางเวลาอยู่ด้วยกันกับพลอย พร้อมกับพี่น้องอื่น ดาอันก็มักจะแสดงกิริยาถือกันคนอื่น อยากจะผูกขาดความรักความสนิทสนมของมารดาแต่ผู้เดียว ทำให้พลอยต้องดุดาอันทั้ง ๆ ที่ไม่อยากจะทำ (712)

(Un caused Ploi to worry quite a lot because his **personality of wanting everything for himself** made it impossible for Ploi not to be reminded of Khun Oon. Sometimes, when he was together with Ploi and his siblings, he had the

*habit of fighting off his siblings in an effort to occupy his mother's love all for himself. In these cases, Ploi had to reprimand him quite severely which she really didn't like to do.)*

No wonder, the Chinese soothsayer foresees conflicts between Un and his brothers:

“เสียอย่างเดียว อีจะต้องโศกกับพี่น้อง แต่ไม่นาน โศกแล้วก็ถึงสาย” (714)

*(The only bad thing about him is that he will be at odds with his brothers and sisters. But this will not last long. His anger will pass and they can get over it.)*

#### 5.4. Characterization through the Position in the Hierarchy of Society: Terms of Address

The Thai language provides much more terms of address than Western languages. A term of address is defined as “a word or words used by a speaker to direct his speech to the person he is talking to.” (TINGSABADH & PRASITHRATHSINT, 1989: 137) The authors distinguish six categories of terms that can be used as terms of address. (ibid.: 138) They are

1. Pronominal terms like ท่าน (*you* [deferential]), คุณ (*you* [polite])<sup>2</sup>
2. Kinship terms like แม่ (*mother*), พ่อ (*father*), ป้า (*aunt* [father's / mother's elder sister]), อ้า (*aunt / uncle* [father's / mother's younger brother / sister])
3. Ranks like เสด็จ (*Sadech / Princess* [daughter of a king borne from a commoner]), พระยา (*second highest rank of conferred nobility*, HAAS, 1960: 359), คุณหญิง (*Khunying*), ทูลวง (*royal title, conferred title for government official*, HAAS, 1960: 571)

<sup>2</sup> A pronominal term here is not only a personal pronoun but “a word or phrase which refers more specifically to the hearer and which does not designate the hearer's kinship, rank, title or occupation [...]” (TINGSABADH & PRASITHRATHSINT, 1989: 138)



4. Titels/occupations like หมอ (Doctor), อาจารย์ (teacher)<sup>3</sup>
5. Names like พลอย (Ploi), ช้อย (Choi) or สาย (Sai)
6. Expressive phrases like ที่รัก (beloved) in แม่ที่รักของลูก (*my beloved mother*)

In most cases, the actual terms of address are combinations of two or more of these categories. Tingsabadh & Prasithrathsint (1989: 138-140) have given the whole variety of possible combinations and their appropriate order. In "Si Phaendin", combinations of pronominal terms, kinship terms, names and ranks are frequently used.

1. Pronominal terms and names:

คุณ + อุ่น in คุณอุ่น (*Khun Oon*) or แม่ + พลอย in แม่พลอย (*Mae Ploi*). The kinship terms แม่ (*mother*) or พ่อ (*father*) used in combination with a name change semantically from referring to family relationship to an expression conveying an attitude of familiarity as opposed to the more distant คุณ. They should therefore be classified as pronominal terms. (see footnote 2, also TINGSABADH & PRASITHRATHSINT, 1989: 138)

2. Pronominal terms and ranks:

คุณ + หลวง in คุณหลวง (*Khun Luang*)

3. Pronominal terms and kinship terms:

คุณ + อา in คุณอา (*Khun Aa*)

4. Kinship terms and names:

ป้า + สาย in ป้าสาย (*Aunt Sai*),

5. Titles and names:

พระยา + พิพิธ in พระยาพิพิธ (*Phraya Phiphid*),

<sup>3</sup>Title/occupation is understood as "a formal appellation attached to a person by virtue of office, attainment or occupation [...]." (TINGSABADH & PRASITHRATHSINT, 1989: 138) as opposed to rank which is conferred upon a person.

Terms of address locate a person within the social hierarchy. Their use is not accidental but a social requirement. A term of seniority like พี่ (literally *elder brother or sister*), used in front of the name or without the name, cannot be left out or replaced at free will. A change in terms of address always implicates a change in the relationship between the speaker and the addressee. Any inappropriate change is a violation of social norms. The Thai language forces its speakers to make a choice between the different terms of address and makes it thus impossible to conceive of a person as not being in a hierarchical position in relation to others.

Pronominal terms, names, kinship terms and ranks are predominantly used as terms of address in "Si Phaendin". They will be presented here in this order. I found neither titles and occupations nor expressive phrases as terms of address. Of course people's occupations are mentioned as for instance the occupation of Khun Choey's husband Luang Osoth but he is never addressed by it. Instead, he is addressed by his rank หลวง (Luang). A possible explanation is that the use of titles and occupations as terms of address is a practice of modern times since they take the place of discontinued ranks like พระยา or หลวง. The example of an expressive phrase given above, แม่ที่รักของลูก (*my beloved mother*), is taken from the novel but the actual term of address here is แม่ (*mother*). Traditionally, feelings of affection for another person are as rarely stated directly and publicly as negative emotions like anger or hatred. It is therefore not surprising that "Si Phaendin" contains no expressive phrases as terms of address. The emotionally closest relationship in the novel is that between Ploi and her son Oot. The nature of this relationship forbids the use of overtly expressive terms of address.

#### 5.4.1. The Use of Pronominal Terms as Terms of Address

##### 5.4.1.1. Terms of Address for Royalty or Aristocracy

Thai people address each other according to their different positions in the social hierarchy. Traditionally, people of lower status do not address a person of higher status but wait for being addressed. As a child, Ploi never addresses her father. When she takes leave from him at the beginning of the story, she silently prostrates herself and obediently waits for her father's advice. Since he doesn't start to speak, the meeting ends in complete silence. (คึกฤทธิ์, 1980: 27) Sadech, Ploi's and her mother's royal benefactress and the person with the highest social status among the participants of the novel, is also never directly addressed by her subordinates. There is, however, one instance where a messenger from another royal consort needs to deliver an inquiry and has to address her. The messenger uses "Sadech" as a term of address. Since it is also the royal word for "to go", the following wordgame ensues:

"สวดมนต์เย็นบนพระที่นั่งบ่ายวันนี้มังคะ เสด็จให้มาทูลถามเสด็จว่าจะเสด็จหรือไม่เสด็จ ถ้าเสด็จจะเสด็จ เสด็จจะเสด็จด้วย" (61)

*("The afternoon prayers will be held today at the main palace. Sadech [royal consort 1] sent me to ask Sadech [i.e. you, or royal consort 2] if Sadech [i.e. you, or royal consort 2] is going or not. If Sadech [i.e. you, or royal consort 2] is going, Sadech [royal consort 1] will be going, too.")*

Pronouns are structured hierarchically. The English pronoun "you" will appear in Thai as **เธอ** among friends, brothers and sisters, **คุณ** in polite conversation and **ท่าน** while addressing a person in a position of high respect. There are only very few cases where pronouns alone are used as terms of address in "Si Phaendin". Once, at a garden party,

Ploi's daughter Prapai introduces a guest from the high aristocracy to her mother. The pronoun ท่าน (you) appropriately conveys the guest's high social status:

“ท่านยังไม่ทรงรู้จักคุณแม่ .. คุณแม่คะ นี่ท่านชายน้อย” (1136)

*“You don't know my mother yet .. Mother, please, this is Than Chai Noi.”*

#### 5.4.1.2. Terms of Address Among Ploi's Family

The pronoun คุณ (Khun) can be used in combination with a name in the same way as the terms แม่ (Mae) and พ่อ (Pho). They are used to convey different status among the children of the different wives of a high ranking official like Ploi's father. “Khun” is the proper address for the children of the Khunying while “Mae” is the address for the daughters and “Pho” for the sons of a minor wife:

วันหนึ่ง พลอยถามแม่ถึงเรื่องพี่น้องเหล่านี้ว่า ทำไมคนจึงเรียกลูกเจ้าคุณพ่อว่า คุณอ่อน คุณชิต คุณเชย แล้วทำไมจึงเรียกลูกอื่นว่า พ่อเพิ่ม แม่พลอย แม่หวาน แม่มองหน้าพลอยครู่หนึ่งแล้วหัวเราะ ตอบว่า “เพราะพวกเอ็งมันลูกเมียน้อย นั่นท่านลูกคุณหญิงก็ต้องเป็นคุณไปหมด เขาไม่เรียกว่าอีพลอยก็ดีถมไปแล้ว” (17)

*(One day, Ploi asked her mother the following about her brothers and sisters: “Why are some children of Chao Khun Father adressed “Khun” like Khun Oon, Khun Chit, Khun Choey while the other children are called “Pho” or “Mae”, like Pho Perm, Mae Ploi, Mae Wan?” Ploi's mother watches her daughter's face for a moment and then laughingly replied: “Because you people are the children of a Minor Wife! Those others are the children of a Khunying and will always be adressed “Khun”. Just be grateful that they don't call you “Ee” Ploi!”*

แม่ (*Mae*) as a term of address characterizes Ploi's status from the very beginning. It is used throughout the story by people higher in birth and seniority than herself, as for instance her husband Prem and her elder sister Choey. In both cases, Ploi reciprocates with the more respectful title คุณ (*Khun*):

คุณเขยก็แลดูตาพลอย แล้วก็หัวเราะพูดว่า " เป็นยังไรแม่พลอย ฉันที้ก็เป็นน้องสาวที่ดีคนหนึ่งเทวนะ" "นั่นนะซีคุณเขย" พลอยหัวเราะตอบ (799)

*(Khun Choey looked at Ploi's eyes and then laughed, saying: "How about that, Mae Ploi, I am a good younger sister [to Khun Oon] once more." "Exactly, Khun Choey", Ploi laughed back.)*

วันหนึ่งคุณเปรมพูดขึ้นว่า " แม่พลอย ฉันทเห็นว่าต่อไปนี้แม่พลอยเลิกนุ่งผ้าเสียทีก็จะดี " "แล้วกันคุณเปรม" พลอยร้องเสียงหลง "ทำไมพูดอย่างนั้นล่ะ [...] (835 / 836)

*(One day, Khun Prem said "Mae Ploi, I think from now on, may be it would be better if you [Mae Ploi] stop putting on your clothes [i.e. the jongraben]." - "Well, that does it, Khun Prem!" Ploi shouted angrily, "Why do you say such a thing [...]?"*

คุณ (*Khun*) is also used if one is anxious to behave faultlessly and make sure that the proper respect is conveyed. Thus, when Khun Oon needs Ploi's help, she changes from the use of the first name (without the pronominal term แม่ [*Mae*]) to "Khun Ploi".

คุณอ่อนเหลียวมาดูพลอย แล้วยิ้มด้วยเป็นครั้งแรกในชีวิต พูดขึ้นว่า "คุณพลอย พี่ไม่ได้พบเสียนาน คิดถึงอยู่เสมอสบายดีหรือ?" "สบายดีเจ้าค่ะ" พลอยตอบตะกุกตะกักเหมือนกับเมื่อยังเป็นเด็ก ใจหนึ่งก็ตั้งข้อสังเกตไว้ว่า คุณอ่อนเป็นพี่น้องคนแรกที่เรียกตนว่า "คุณพลอย" (736)

(Khun Oon turned around and looked at Ploi and smiled for the first time at her. She started: "**Khun Ploi**, I haven't met you for such a long time. I always thought about you. Are you doing well?" "I am fine" stuttered Ploi as she had done when she was still a child but she noticed that Khun Oon was the first of her brothers and sisters to address her "**Khun Ploi**.")

As soon as Khun Oon is sure of Ploi's sincerity and support, she switches back to the appropriate "Mae Ploi":

คำพูดของคุณอ่อนต่อไปเป็นคำพูดที่พลอยรู้สึกว่ามีมาจากหัวใจ เพราะคุณอ่อนกลับพูดอย่างธรรมดาที่เคยมาแต่ก่อน มิได้ยั้งยั้งใช้คำว่า "คุณพลอย" อย่างในตอนแรก "ผิดไปแล้ว" คุณอ่อนเริ่มพูด "ผิดไปมากทีเดียว แม่พลอยยกโทษให้พี่เสียเถิด แต่พี่ทำกับแม่พลอยมามาก" (740)

(The words that followed came, as was Ploi's distinct feeling, directly from her heart because she reverted to talk to Ploi in a normal way as she used to do without addressing her with "**Khun Ploi**" as she had done in the beginning. "I was very wrong", Khun Oon started, "very wrong indeed. **Mae Ploi**, please forgive me for all I have done to you [**Mae Ploi**].")

The use of the proper terms of address can also be overcorrect and serve as a subtle way to emphasize one's emotional distance from the addressee and one's wish to keep one's distance.

แม่มักจะใช้ถ้อยคำที่สุภาพเป็นพิเศษกับคุณอ่อนเสมอ เป็นต้นว่า "**คุณใหญ่**" เรียกตัวเองว่า "**คิมิน**" อย่างชัดถ้อยชัดคำ และใช้คำเจ้าคะเจ้าคา ตลอดจนกิริยาที่นอบน้อมนั้นอย่างเฉียบขาดเยือกเย็นปราศจากความรู้สึก (18)



(Mother always used words of extreme politeness towards Khun Oon, beginning with "Khun Yay" and calling herself "Dichan" always pronouncing them meticulously. She also always put "Chao Kha" and "Chao Khaa" at the end of her speech to the point that her insistence on this correctness put a chilling spell on their relationship.)

The lowest term of address is อี (Ee) in front of the name. Choi for instance calls her dog อีต่าง (Ee-dang). The corresponding single pronoun is เอ็ง (you).

"อีต่าง ! เอ็งคิดถึงข้าบ้างไหม ?" ช้อยถาม แล้วก็ตรงเข้ากอดสุนัขนั้นอย่างปราศจากความรังเกียจ (162)

("Ee-dang ! Did you miss me once in a while?" Choi asked and then entered and embraced the dog without any trace of revulsion.) [The dog has a skin disease.]

Pronouns are usually not used alone as terms of address in "Si Phaendin". This does not mean, however, that the participants of the process of communication feel indifferent towards the socially differentiating function of them. When Pibulsongkram tried to replace the many different pronouns by one equalizing set analogous to the English I - you, his efforts were rejected. Pibulsongkram introduced ฉัน (I) as a general first person pronoun and ท่าน (you) as a general second person pronoun. Ploi's brother Perm and her son Oot make fun of this by conducting a mock conversation in the required new style:

ดาอีอดก็จะทักขึ้นว่า "สวัสดีจะ ท่าน !" "สวัสดีจะ" พ่อเพิ่มตอบอย่างรื่นเริง "ท่านสบายดีหรือจะ" "สบายดีจะ" ดาอีอดตอบ "ท่านมาแต่วันเกี่ยวจะ จะ วันนี้" "ฉันคิดถึงท่านนี้จะ ฉันก็เลยรีบมา" พ่อเพิ่มว่า (1353)

(Oot started with "Sawasdi cha, [you]!" "Sawasdi cha" Perm would answer quite amused. "Is everything all right with you?" "Quite all right" Oot answered "You

are here so early today!" "I missed you and so I just hurried to come here." Perm said.)

Normally, Oot would call his uncle Perm คุณลุง (*Khun uncle*) while Perm would call Oot พ่ออ้อด (*Pho Oot*).

"แล้วเพื่อส่งไปท่านก็ยังไม่รับ คุณลุงจะอย่างไร?" ต้าอ้อดชักด้วยความสนุก  
"ไม่เป็นไรหรอกพ่ออ้อด" พ่อเพิ่มพูดอย่างใจเย็น (976)

("So if we send them [girls] and he still rejects them, what do you do then, uncle?"

Oot asked tongue in cheek. "Don't worry, Oot!" said Perm calmly.)

#### 5.4.2. The Use of Names as Terms of Address

The use of a person's first name without any additional term of address conveys a relationship of closeness that is only found within the family or close friends. It usually does not convey equality, however. Normally, the first name can be used only by a person of superior status. Ploi's mother, for instance, calls her daughter simply by her name:

"พลอย" เสียงแม่เรียกขณะที่เรือกำลังพายหน้าออกจากคลองบางหลวง มุ่ง  
ตรงไปยังท่าพระ "พลอยจำคำแม่ไว้ให้ดี (13)

("Ploi", her mother shouted as the boat sailed forward, leaving the Bang Luang Canal and heading straight towards the Tha Phra Landing Pier. "Ploi, always remember what your mother is going to tell you!")

Khun Sai calls her niece in the same way, just by her name:

"หัวเราะอะไรซ้อย?" คุณสายถามขึ้น (230)

("Why are you laughing, Choi?" Khun Sai asked.)

Khun Sai and Ploi's mother in turn are called by Sadech, their royal benefactress, by their first names only:

“นั่นสายพาใครขึ้นมา ?” เสียงสตรีผู้หนึ่งถามขึ้น [...] แต่ก่อนที่คุณสายจะทูลตอบ เสด็จรับสั่งขึ้นมาทันทีว่า “แซมไมไชรึนั้น ?” (52/53)

(“Whom are you taking up here, Sai?” a female voice asked [...] but before Khun Sai could give an answer, Sadech went on saying: “It is **Chaem**, right?”)

Servants are generally called by their names as, for instance, Ploi's and her mother's servant Phid:

คุณเชยก้มลงเปิดกระเป๋าหมากหยิบเงินส่งให้พิศ สองบาท แล้วบอกว่า “เอาพิศเอาไปซื้ออะไรเล่นไป นาน ๆ พบกันที” (263)

(Khun Choei bent over to open her betelnut box. She took money out and gave **Phid** two baht. “Here **Phid**, buy yourself something - it is not often that we meet each other”.)

Name or nickname is also used by an elder sibling towards his younger brother or sister. Khun Oon calls Ploi by her real name while Un calls his brother Oot by his nickname:

“พลอย” เสียงคุณอ่อนเรียกออกมาจากในห้อง “มานี่!” (27)

(“Ploi”, Khun Oon called from within her room, “Come here!”)

“พุทไร้อี๊ด ทำไมเป็นคนอย่างนี้” ตาอ่อนพูดอย่างหัวเสีย (1245)

(“Give me a break, Oot! What is it with you?” Un asked in exasperation.)

There is only one case in the novel where the use of the first name conveys equality in status. Ploi and her close girlfriend Choi address each other by their names only, expressing a feeling of intimacy and trust.

“พลอยเห็นอะไรอย่างที่ฉันเห็นหรือเปล่า?” “เห็นอะไรช้อย?” (583)

(“Ploi, do you see what I see?” - “What do you see, Choi?”)

When Ploi and Choi meet for the first time, it is not easy for Ploi to determine the proper term of address towards Choi. Afraid of coming across as impolite, she addresses Choi first as **Mae** Choi. Seeing that Choi finds this ridiculous, she even reaches a step higher and calls her **Khun** Choi - which leaves Choi completely in hysterics. Only then do they settle with their first names as terms of address.

ช้อยเดินนำหน้าออกไปนอกตำหนัก พลอยก็รีบสาวเท้าเดินตามไปติด ๆ เดินไป  
ได้สักหน่อยช้อยก็หันมาถามว่า “ปวดมากไหม ? ” “ ไม่เท่าไรนักดอกแม่ช้อย ”  
“อย่ามาอวดดีเรียกฉันว่าแม่ช้อย !” [...] “ ค่ะ --- คุณช้อย ” ช้อยหัวเราะลั่นถนนที่  
เดินอยู่ แล้วร้องว่า “เด็กบ้า! ใครเขาไปใช้ให้เรียกว่าคุณ เรียกฉันว่าช้อย  
เฉย ๆ ก็แล้วกัน

(73) (Choi led the way out of the palace. Ploi quickly got her shoes on and followed her. After they had walked a little while, Choi turned around and asked: “Is it very urgent?” “Not too much, **Mae Choi**.” “ Don’t be pretentious and call me **Mae Choi!**” “Alright - - - **Khun Chol**.” Choi burst out laughing in the middle of the road and then screamed: “Are you crazy? Who would call anyone **Khun!** Just call me **Chol**, that’ll just do it.”)

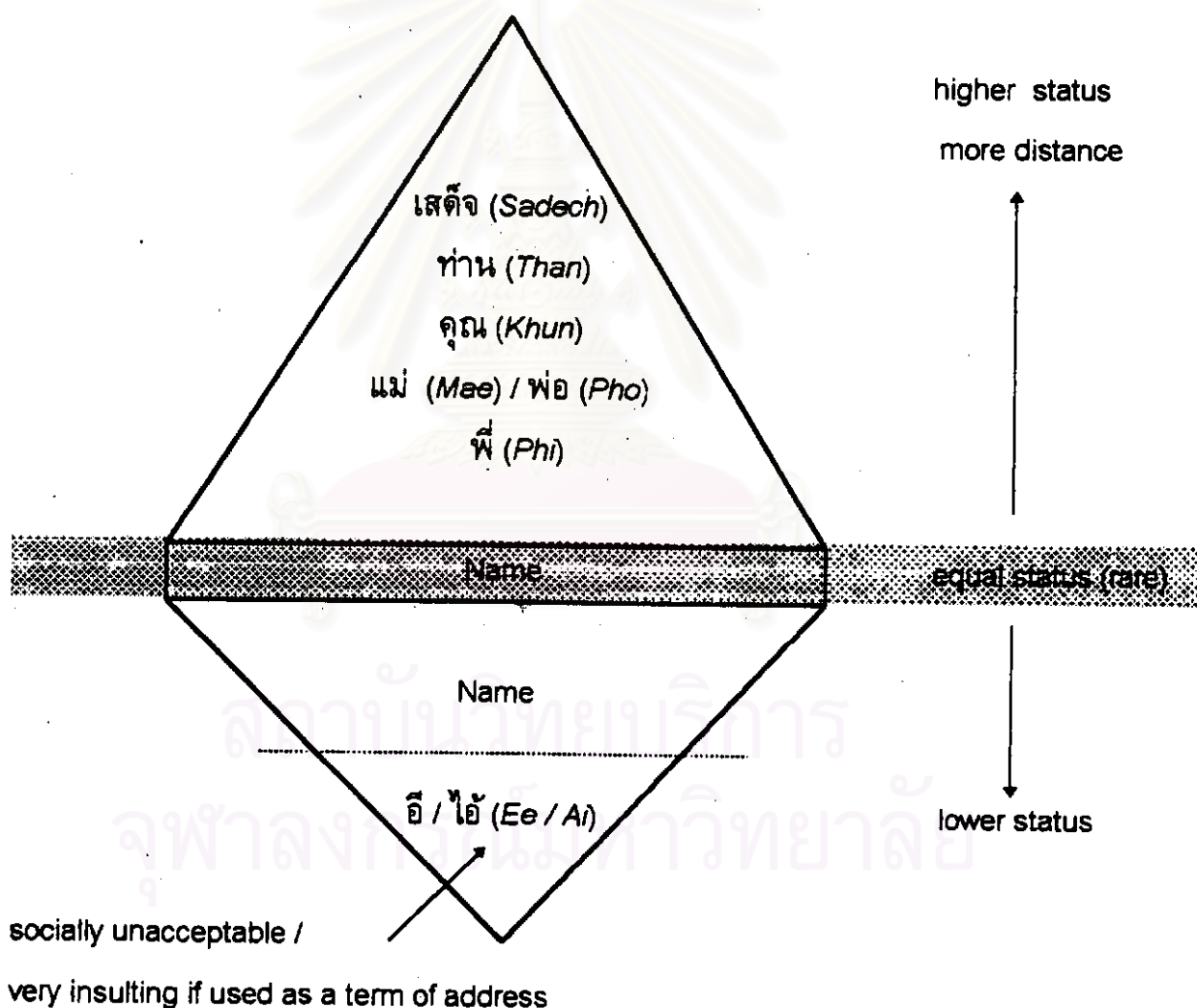
Interestingly, the narrator calls Ploi by her first name only like a father or an elder brother throughout the whole novel. Doing so, he comes across like an intimate and trusted

member of Ploi's family. An atmosphere of closeness is evoked that draws the reader into the story and almost makes him feel like a member of Ploi's family himself.

Chart 5:

Hierarchy of Terms of Address in "Si Phaendin"

According to the Use of Pronominal Terms, Names and Kinship Terms



### 5.4.3. The Use of Kinship Terms as Terms of Address

The Thai language has a complex array of kinship terms. (อมรภา 2533) The most common ones like แม่ (mother), พ่อ (father), ลุง (uncle), ป้า (aunt) or อา (*younger brother of father*) are often used as terms of address among the members of Ploi's own family. Members of the older generation are respectfully called by placing คุณ in front of the kinship term. Ploi is called คุณแม่ (*Khun Mae*) by her children and Perm คุณลุง (*Khun Lung*) by his nephew Oot. The younger of Ploi's children call their elder siblings พี่. Un asks his elder brother Oan for instance:

“พี่อ้น นายทหารทางอยุธยาเขาว่าอย่างไรกันบ้าง ?” (1034)  
 (“[Elder brother] Oan, what are the soldiers in Ayuthaya up to?”)

Interestingly, Ploi herself never addresses her own elder brothers and sisters with the kinship term พี่. As a child, she calls her elder full brother พ่อเพิ่ม (*Pho Perm*):

“เออพ่อเพิ่ม” พลอยถามขึ้น “คุณเข้สบายดีหรือ ?” (180)  
 (“ Ehh..., Pho Perm “ Ploi started asking, “Is Khun Choey doing fine?”)

Although Ploi is not directly related to Khun Sai, she considers her a member of the family because she takes care of her during her years in the palace. Since Ploi finds herself in exactly the same position as her friend Choi here who is a niece of Khun Sai, Ploi addresses Khun Sai appropriately as aunt.

“อ้าว จริง ๆ นะคะคุณป้า” พลอยยืนยัน (465)  
 (“But this is really true, Khun aunt!” Ploi insisted.)



#### 5.4.4. The Use of Ranks as Terms of Address

The title หลวง (Luang), denoting a high-ranking official, is frequently used in "Si Phaendin". Ploi's brother Perm, Choey's husband Osoth and Choi's father carry it. When Perm gets promoted, Ploi stops calling him พ่อเพิ่ม (*Pho Perm*) and addresses him as คุณหลวง (*Khun Luang*):

พลอยตอบแทนตาอ้อดว่า "อ้อดเขากำลังพูด เรื่องเขาจะไปทำงานต่อที่ปักขีไฉนะ คุณหลวง" "ดีแล้ว ดีแล้ว ปล่อยเขาไปเถิดแม่พลอย" พ่อเพิ่มว่า (1360)  
 (Ploi answered for Oot: "Oot was saying that he was going to continue working in the South, *Khun Luang*." "Good, good, let him go Mae Ploi!" *Pho Perm* answered.)

#### 5.5. Conclusion

The characterization of people is clearly influenced by linguistic possibilities. The absence of adjectives underlines the importance of verbs. Consequently, people tend to be characterized by their actions. Thai terms of address, which are only part of a much more complex system of reference and self-reference, are hierarchically structured. They leave hardly any room for an equal relationship between people. The speaker constantly has to evaluate his own social position in relation to others. This sounds stifling than it really is. There are two hierarchical principles, seniority and status, and in most cases they are self-evident and easily recognizable.