

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

The Corpus and Informants.

The sampling group of informants consisted of persons who had stayed various lengths of time in Thailand. Some of the informants had had formal instruction in Thai, and some had not. The longest length of stay was 10 years and the shortest was three months. It turned out that out of the corpus of 250 Thai words and expressions (shown in the appendix), the following were known to all the informants:-

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| 1. farang | / faràng / | ฝรั่ง |
| 2. stang | / sàtang / | สตางค์ |
| 3. baht | / bàet / | บาท |
| 4. klong | / khlɔ̀ng / | คลอง |
| 5. wat | / wát / | วัด |
| 6. samlor | / sǎam.lɔ̀ / | สามล้อ |
| 7. soi | / soɔy / | ซอย |
| 8. Loi Kratong | / loɔy kràthong / | ลอยกระทง |
| 9. Sarit Tanarat | / sàrit thanəráat / | สตรีศรี นครินทร์ |
| 10. Phibul Songkram | / phibun sǒngkhraam / | พืบุลสงคราม |
| 11. Chulalongkorn | / cùlaalongkɔ̀rn / | จุฬาลงกรณ์ |
| 12. Phumiphol | / phuumíphɔ̀ / | ภูมิพล |
| 13. Sirikit | / sirikit / | สิริกิติ์ |
| 14. Wat Po | / wát phoo / | วัดโพธิ์ |
| 15. Wat Arun | / wét à run / | วัดอรุณ |

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| 16. Don Muang | / dɔ̃n miang / | ดอนเมือง |
| 17. Erawan | / eɔ̃raawan / | เอราวัณ |
| 18. Lumpini | / lɔ̃w phi nii / | ลุมพินี |
| 19. Chalermkhate | / chàlɔ̃əm khèet / | เฉลิมเขต |
| 20. Chalermkrung | / chàlɔ̃əm krung / | เฉลิมกรุง |
| 21. Chalermthai | / chàlɔ̃əm thay / | เฉลิมไทย |
| 22. Bangkok | / baangkapi / | บางกอก |
| 23. Sukhumvit | / sùkhúmvit / | สุขุมวิท |
| 24. Geysorn | / keesɔ̃n / | เกษร |
| 25. Suriwong | / suriwong / | สุรวงศ์ |
| 26. Silom | / sɪlɔ̃m / | สีลม |
| 27. Hua Hin | / hua hin / | หัวหิน |
| 28. Bangsaen | / baang sɔ̃n / | บางแสน |
| 29. Pataya | / phathayaa / | พญา |
| 30. Thonburi | / thonburi / | ธนบุรี |
| 31. Chiangmai | / chiangmai / | เชียงใหม่ |
| 32. Lampang | / lampaang / | ลำปาง |
| 33. Nueng | / nɪng / | นุ่ง |
| 34. Song | / sɔ̃ng / | สอง |
| 35. Sam | / sɔ̃m / | สาม |
| 36. Si | / si / | สี่ |
| 37. Ha | / haa / | ห้า |
| 38. Hok | / hòk / | หก |
| 39. Chet | / cèt / | เจ็ด |
| 40. Paet | / pɔ̃t / | แปด |
| 41. Kaw | / kɔ̃w / | เก้า |

| | | |
|---------------|---|--------|
| 42. sip | / s ^h ip / | สีบ |
| 43. yisip | / y ^h i s ^h ip / | ยีสบ |
| 44. chingchok | / c ^h ingc ^h ok / | จิงจก |
| 45. ma | / m ^h aa / | พนา |
| 46. sawatdi | / s ^h aw ^h at dii / | สวตดี |
| 47. khopkhun | / kh ^h o ^h p khun / | ทอปปุณ |

No word in the list was unknown to all the informants taken as a whole group.

Phonological Analysis

With a few exceptions (which were due to non-linguistic factors e.g. interruptions, outside noises etc.) the following phonemes were pronounced with only slight divergences from the usual Thai phonetic patterns and are therefore not included in this study:

| <u>Labial & Labiodental</u> | <u>Dental & Alveolar</u> | <u>Palatal</u> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| / b- / | / d- / / l- / | / y / |
| / f- / | / s- / | |
| / m / | / n / | |

As can be expected, the phonemes that were pronounced differently from the Thai phonetic patterns are those phonemes that do not occur in the sound system of English and French. The analysis of these phonemes is presented here on both the phonemic and phonetic level.

Phonemic LevelThai phonemic contrasts which do not occur in English and French.

| | |
|--------|---------|
| / p- / | / ph- / |
| / t- / | / th- / |
| / k- / | / kh- / |
| / c- / | / ch- / |

In Thai the aspiration of voiceless stops /ph, th, kh / is phonemic, while in English aspiration is only an allophonic feature of the phonemes / p, t, k /.⁹ In French the phonemes / p, t, k / are nearly always unaspirated.¹⁰

The Thai voiceless affricates / ch, c / contrast with each other by means of aspiration but the contrast between the English / ch and j / which are often substituted for Thai / ch, c / lies in "the quality of being voiceless and voiced; not aspirated and unaspirated"¹¹ No contrast of these palatal affricates occurs in French.

With these differences among the three languages it is obvious that the Thai phonemes /p, ph-/, /t-, th-/, /k-, kh- / will cause different problems for the English and French speakers. The findings from the data will be shown in the following tables:

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⁹Kruatrachue, p. 93

¹⁰Robert L. Politzer, Teaching French: An Introduction to Applied Linguistics, (New York, Ginn and Company, 1960) p. 48

¹¹Kruatrachue, p. 94

TABLE 1 THE PRODUCTION OF THE INITIAL VOICELESS STOPS
BY THE ENGLISH INFORMANTS.

| Phonemes | Satisfactory | | Unsatisfactory | |
|----------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| | No. of Occurences | Percentage | No. of Occurences | Percentage |
| / ph- / | 393 | 93.35 | 28 | 6.65 |
| / p- / | 173 | 88.72 | 22 | 11.28 |
| / th- / | 357 | 95.20 | 18 | 4.80 |
| / t- / | 106. | 79.70 | 27 | 20.30 |
| / kh- / | 408 | 98.79 | 5 | 1.21 |
| / k- / | 242 | 86.43 | 38 | 13.57 |

TABLE 2 THE PRODUCTION OF THE INITIAL VOICELESS STOPS BY
THE FRENCH INFORMANTS.

| Phonemes | Satisfactory | | Unsatisfactory | |
|----------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| | No. of Occurences | Percentage | No. of Occurences | Percentage |
| / ph- / | 198 | 52.24 | 181 | 47.76 |
| / p- / | 169 | 96.57 | 6 | 3.43 |
| / th- / | 200 | 57.81 | 146 | 42.19 |
| / t- / | 108 | 90.75 | 11 | 9.25 |
| / kh- / | 309 | 75.55 | 100 | 24.45 |
| / k- / | 254 | 95.13 | 13 | 4.57 |

Table 1 shows that the English produced fewer unsatisfactory productions of the initial aspirated stops since these phonemes also occur in English in the same position. Higher frequency of unsatisfactory production of initial unaspirated stops was made because in English non-aspiration of these phonemes will occur only /p, t, k/ in initial consonant clusters. Consequently the English informants substituted the aspirated stops for the Thai unaspirated stops.

On the other hand table 2 shows that the frequency of unsatisfactory production of the French group in pronouncing the aspirated stops was higher than in pronouncing the unaspirated ones since there is no aspiration for these phonemes in French. All of the unsatisfactory /p-, t-, k- / were the substitutes of the unaspirated /ph-, th-, kh- /.

However the percentages of the satisfactory aspirated stops produced by the English group and of the unaspirated stops produced by the French one are not one hundred though such phonemes are not problems in their own languages. This is due to the problem of the transcription of Thai words into Roman alphabets. For example, "p" is used to substitute phoneme /p- / in some words and also /ph- / in other words. This confuses the English and French speakers in recognizing whether it is aspirated or not when they read the transcription. Nonetheless this analysis shows that there is a definite tendency for English-speakers to substitute aspirated stops in place of unaspirated stops, and for Frenchspeakers to do the opposite.

This could lead to difficulty in pronouncing words such as /phâasîn / and /nâm plaa / as was pointed out in the introduction.

It should be noticed that although the English speakers tended to substitute aspirated stops for unaspirated stops in initial position, the tendency of the French speakers to reverse the process was much stronger, for example, 47.76 % of the French speakers produced an unsatisfactory / ph- / compared with only 11.23 % of the English speakers who produced an unsatisfactory / p- /. It was not within the scope of the thesis to investigate the reasons for this type of phenomena but it may be surmised that since aspiration in initial position is almost totally absent in the French stop system whilst present as an allophonic variation in English, that the English - speakers had less difficulty in handling the phonemic contrast between aspirated and unaspirated stops in Thai. This is an interesting example of how allophones can help non-native speakers to hear phonemic contrast which are not present in their own languages.

TABLE 3 COMPARISON OF THE FINAL VOICELESS STOPS PRODUCED
BY THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH GROUP.

| Phonemes | Satisfactory Production | | Unsatisfactory Production | |
|----------------|-------------------------|------------|---------------------------|------------|
| | No. of Occurrence | Percentage | No. of Occurrence | Percentage |
| [-p] | 83 | 95.4 | 4 | 4.6 |
| English [-t] | 274 | 87.26 | 40 | 12.76 |
| [-k] | 93 | 91.18 | 9 | 8.82 |
| [+p] | 62 | 80.52 | 15 | 19.48 |
| French [-t] | 163 | 57.60 | 120 | 42.40 |
| [-k] | 55 | 51.89 | 51 | 48.11 |

The voiceless stops also cause a problem in final position since they are always unaspirated and unreleased in Thai. Table 3 shows that the French speakers produced larger number of unsatisfactory final stops than the English speakers because they tend to release the final stops as in French. As regards the English speakers, though aspiration is not phonemic for them they did not find it difficult to unaspirate the final stops because this follows the usual English pattern this table shows that the English informants usually made a satisfactory production of the Thai final stops since the percentage of the number of unsatisfactory occurrences was very low.

TABLE 4 COMPARISON OF THE PRODUCTION OF THE AFFRICATES
BETWEEN THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH GROUP.

| Phonemes | Satisfactory | | Unsatisfactory | | Substitution |
|---------------|--------------|-------|----------------|-------|------------------|
| | No. of Occ. | Perc. | No. of Occ. | Perc. | |
| English /ch-/ | 250 | 97.20 | 7 | 2.27 | /c/ |
| /c- / | 164 | 76.99 | 49 | 23.01 | /ch/ |
| French /ch-/ | 110 | 48.67 | 116 | 51.33 | /sh/, /zh/ |
| /c- / | 67 | 38.50 | 107 | 61.50 | /ch/, /sh/, /zh/ |

The percentage of the number of unsatisfactory occurrence of the affricates presented in table 4 shows that the phonemes /c/ and /ch/ are real problems for the French speakers since these phonemes do not occur in French. The French informants tend to equate the Thai contrasts /ch, c/ with the fricatives /sh, zh/ in French. The problem of the English group is only the substitution of /ch/ for

/c/. However, although the English affricates /ch, j/ are not the same phonetically as the Thai /ch, c/, they do not cause a serious problem, on the phonemic level at least.

Thai phonemes which do not occur in English and French

Serious problems will occur with those phonemes that do not occur in the sound system of the native language^o of the informants.

A. Phonemes which do not occur in either English or French:

Vowels: / * /

Tones: All tonemes

Phonemic contrasts which do not occur in either English or French: All contrasts of vowel length.

B. phonemes which are restricted in their distribution in both English and French:

/ ng /

/ ng / does not occur initially in either English or French.

C. Thai Phonemes which do not occur in French:

Consonants: / h- /, / r- /, / w- /, [r]

Thai vowels are paired by contrast in length e.g. / a / - / aa /, / u / - / uu / but these kinds of pairs do not occur in French and English. In English the two sets of vowels are different from each other not by length only but by the quality of being glided. However, on the phonemic level those English glided vowels can be accepted as substitutions for the Thai long vowels.

The high central vowel / i / does not occur in either English or French. This means that the phoneme / i / constitutes a problem

for English and French speakers not only when it occurs alone but also in combination with other vowels e.g. /ɪ/-/ii/, /a/-/aa/.

TABLE 5 COMPARISON OF THE PRODUCTION OF THE VOWEL PHONEMES /i, ii, iiə/ BY THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH INFORMANTS.

| Phonemes | Satisfactory | | Unsatisfactory | | Type and Number of Substitutions |
|----------|--------------|------------|----------------|------------|---|
| | No. of Occ. | Percentage | No. of Occ. | Percentage | |
| English | /ɪ / 28 | 73.68 | 10 | 26.32 | /u/ - 10 |
| | /ii / 31 | 75.61 | 10 | 24.39 | /uu/-6, /uə /-1 /u/-1, /ə/-2, /ɪ /-1. |
| | /iia/ 21 | 63.64 | 12 | 36.36 | /ua/-10, / /-2 |
| French | /ɪ / 17 | 47.22 | 19 | 52.78 | /y/-12, /u/-3 /œ/-1, /ə /-3 |
| | /ii/ 13 | 39.4 | 20 | 60.60 | /y/-12, /uu/-3 /wə/-3, /ə/-1 /ɪ /-1. |
| | /iia/ 9 | 32.14 | 19 | 67.86 | /ya/-17, /ua/-2 |

NOTE: The combination /ɪa/ did not occur in the corpus.

Since the High central vowel /ɨ/ does not occur in English, table 5 shows that the English informants tended to substitute /u/ for the high central vowel /ɨ/ as well as to confuse the long contrast /i:/ and the diphthong /ia/ with /uu/ and /ua/ respectively.

As regards the French speakers, they tended to substitute the high front rounded /y/ for the high central /ɨ/. The high back /u/ and the mid central /œ/ and /ə/ were also sometimes substituted for /ɨ/. The French high front rounded /y/ was also mostly substituted for the Thai /i:/ since there is no contrast of vowel length in French. In the same way the /ya/ or /ua/ were substituted for /ia/.

It can be noted from table 5 that the production of the front central vowels /i, i:/, ia/ of the English informants was better than the French since the percentage of the unsatisfactory production made by the English was lower than the French.

Consonants

The velar nasal /ng/ which occurs both initially and finally in Thai does not occur phonemically in French and occurs only in final position in English. It can be assumed that the initial /ng-/ is a problem for both English and French speakers while the final /-ng/ is a problem only for the French.

It should be noted here that there is no word with initial /ng-/ in the corpus to show the production of this problem phoneme.

TABLE 6 THE PRODUCTION OF THE FINAL /-ng/ BY THE FRENCH INFORMANTS.

| Phonemes | Satisfactory | | Unsatisfactory | | Substitution | No. of Occ. |
|----------|--------------|-------|----------------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| | No. of Occ. | Perc. | No. of Occ. | Perc. | | |
| /-ng / | 514 | 88.93 | 64 | 11.07 | -ngk | 35 |
| | | | | | -n | 23 |
| | | | | | -ng | 6 |

From table 6 it is noticeable that though /ng/ does not occur phonemically in French, the percentage of the satisfactory production was rather high. This lies in the fact that the French vowel phonemes /ɛ /, / a /, / ɔ / and /œ/ can occur also in nasalized form: /ẽ / as in vin, /ã / as in an, /õ / as in on, and /œ̃ / as in un. On the phonemic level, it was no trouble for the French speakers to pronounce final Thai /a, aa /, /ɛ, œ /, /ɔ, ɔ / with final /-ng/ as in the words /cangwat /-จังกวัด , /baangkàpì /- บางกะปิ , /pháang /พ่าง , /sǎng /- ส่าง though they are not phonetically the same as the French /ã /, /ẽ / and /õ /. Most of the unsatisfactory productions of /-ng / result when /-ng / follows other vowels such as in the words: /phrúng náí /-พรงน้ำ , /lúang /- ลuang , /pháuyǐng /- พวยิ่ง etc.

The french speakers tended to add the released velar stop / k / after the velar nasal /-ng / or substitute the dental nasal /-n /.

A few produced a syllabic η followed by g - / ηg /

Other consonants that do not occur in French and constitute problems for the French speakers are: / w -/, / h -/. The production of / r -/ will be treated on the phonetic level since it is not a serious problem in the phonemic level.

TABLE 7 THE PRODUCTION OF THE INITIAL / h - / AND / w -/ BY THE FRENCH INFORMANTS.

| Phonemes | Satisfactory | | Unsatisfactory | | Substitution |
|-----------|--------------|------------|----------------|------------|--------------|
| | No. of Occ. | Percentage | No. of Occ. | Percentage | |
| / h - / | 85 | 77.27 | 25 | 22.73 | zero |
| / w - / | 133 | 46.02 | 156 | 53.98 | v |

Many of the French speakers did not pronounce / h - / as this phoneme does not occur in French. So such words as / $h\hat{a}a$ /- $\eta\eta$ / $h\hat{o}k$ /- $\eta\eta$ / $h\hat{a}a\eta$ $\hat{c}\hat{o}t$ /- $\eta\eta\eta\eta\eta$ were pronounced as / $\hat{a}a$ /, / $\hat{e}k$ / and / $\hat{a}a\eta$ $\hat{c}\hat{o}t$ / etc. However the percentage of the satisfactory production (77.27 %) was rather high. This may lie in the influence of English because all of the French informants could speak English.

The initial bilabial / w - / does not occur in French so the French informants had a tendency to substitute the labio - dental fricative / v - / for it.

TONE

Thai is also different from English and French by the fact that it is a tone language while English and French are characterized as intonation languages. In Thai, as in other tone languages, "tones are integral parts of the words themselves"¹². The five Thai tones are: mid tone, low tone / \ / falling tone / ^ /, high tone / ' / and rising tone / v /.

Speakers of English and French find it difficult to hear and produce these tones since this system of lexical contrast through pitch phonemes is totally absent in their languages, moreover the variety of pitch in their own intonation systems tends to blur the lexical pitch contrasts. Table 8 will show the production of each tone by the informants.

Table 8 shows that the production of all tones by the French and English speakers are unsatisfactory because of the stated reason. It can be seen that there is a considerable confusion of tones with each other.

¹² Kenneth L. Pike, Tone Languages (Ann Arbor University of Michigan Press, 1948) p. 18

TABLE 8 TYPE AND QUANTITY OF TONEMIC SUBSTITUTION BY ENGLISH
AND FRENCH INFORMANTS.

| Possible Total of Correct tonemes | | Tonemes actually produced and Percentage of Occurrence | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| <u>English</u> | | | | | | |
| mid | / / | / / / \ / | / ^ / | / ' / | / v / | |
| | 2396 | 1701 | 116 | 139 | 284 | 147 |
| | | 71.37% | 4.84% | 5.80% | 11.85% | 6.13% |
| low | / \ / | / \ / / / | / ^ / | / ' / | / v / | |
| | 1285 | 984 | 64 | 40 | 176 | 21 |
| | | 76.57% | 4.98% | 3.11% | 13.69% | 1.63% |
| falling | / ^ / | / ^ / / / | / \ / | / ' / | / v / | |
| | 588 | 419 | 2 | 59 | 78 | 30 |
| | | 71.25% | .34% | 10.00% | 13.26% | 5.10% |
| high | / ' / | / ^ / / / | / \ / | / ^ / | / v / | |
| | 894 | 643 | 51 | 149 | 33 | 18 |
| | | 71.92% | 5.704% | 16.66% | 3.69% | 2.01% |
| rising | / v / | / v / / / | / \ / | / ^ / | / ' / | |
| | 705 | 432 | 23 | 101 | 30 | 119 |
| | | 61.27% | 3.26% | 14.32% | 4.25% | 16.87% |
| <u>French</u> | | | | | | |
| mid | / / | / / / \ / | / ^ / | / ' / | / v / | |
| | 2313 | 1286 | 147 | 117 | 365 | 398 |
| | | 55.59% | 6.35% | 5.06% | 15.78% | 17.21% |

| Possible Total of Correct tones | | tones actually produced and Percentage of Occurrence | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|--|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| low | / \ / | / \ / | / / | / ^ / | / ' / | / v / |
| | 1287 | 858 | 48 | 38 | 295 | 48 |
| | | 66.66% | 3.73% | 2.95% | 22.92% | 3.73% |
| falling | / ^ / | / ^ / | / / | / \ / | / ' / | / v / |
| | 559 | 332 | 6 | 98 | 78 | 45 |
| | | 59.39% | 1.07% | 17.53% | 13.95% | 8.05% |
| high | / ' / | / ' / | / / | / \ / | / ^ / | / v / |
| | 855 | 555 | 49 | 177 | 32 | 42 |
| | | 64.90% | 5.73% | 20.70% | 3.74% | 4.94% |
| rising | / v / | / v / | / / | / \ / | / ^ / | / ' / |
| | 675 | 269 | 29 | 149 | 43 | 185 |
| | | 39.85% | 4.29% | 22.07% | 6.37% | 27.40% |

Phonetic Level

Some of the phonemes produced by the English and French speakers though corresponding on a purely phonemic level to Thai phonemes are phonetically so different that they can be classified

as problems for purposes of language teaching. Notable examples of this that should be mentioned here are the English glided vowels [iⁱ], [eⁱ], [o^u] and [u^u] and the French uvular / R /.

The glided vowels / i /, / e /, / o /, / u / are often substituted for the Thai long vowels / ii /, / ee / oo / and / uu / respectively. These pairs of English and Thai vowels: / i-ii /, / e-ee /, / o-oo /, / u-uu / are comparable. The English vowels / i, e, o, u / are tense, slightly diphthongized or glides and fairly long but the Thai / ii, ee, oo, uu / have a very pronounce length.

The difference between the / r / in Thai and the French / R / lies in the fact that Thai / r / is alveolar but French / R / is uvular. The French informants had a tendency to substitute their velar / R / for the Thai alveolar / r- / as shown in table 9

TABLE 9 THE PRODUCTION OF THE ALVEOLAR / r- / BY THE FRENCH INFORMANTS.

| Phonemes | Satisfactory | | Unsatisfactory | | Substitution |
|----------|--------------|------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
| | No. of Occ. | Percentage | No. of Occ. | Percentage | |
| / r- / | 426 | 57.57 | 314 | 42.43 | R- 41.62 % l- .81 % |

It is interesting to note here that there are a few words that / r- / was substituted by / l- /. This occurs also with some of the English informants. This problem is, in fact, not a problem of substituting a difficult phoneme by a closest one because / r / is not a problem in English. This substitution occurs by means of imitating the production of the native Thai speakers themselves. The fact is that / r- / is a problem for many Thai speakers especially the uneducated people. They nearly always substitute / l- /. Most of the English and French speakers who do not have formal instruction of Thai learn many Thai words by imitating their servants who tend to substitute / l- / for / r- /. So such words or expressions as / mǎy rúu /- ไม้รุ้ว / mǎy pen ray /- ไม้เป้นไร , / rɔɔy /- ร้อย etc. were found produced as / mǎy lúu /, / mǎy pen lay / and / lɔɔy / by some of the informants.

From the data obtained by the informants other problems at the phonetic level are not serious in teaching Thai to French and English speakers since the substitutions of these phonemes do not constitute distinctive features and were well intelligible in Thai.