

Kulata Pitucklimskul 2007: The Relationship between Names and Religious Beliefs of Thai People. Master of Arts (Applied Linguistics) Major Field: Applied Linguistics, Department of Linguistics. Thesis Advisor: Assistant Professor M.L. Jaralvilai Charunrochana, Ph.D. 135 pages.

The purposes of this study were to compare the meaning, the language and auspiciousness of the letters in names used in indicating the belief in auspiciousness among Thai Buddhists, Thai Muslims and Thai Christians. The data were collected from Thai Buddhists, Thai Muslims and Thai Christians in Bangkok and vicinity in religious places and organizations. Each group of subject consists of 300 persons, making 900 people in total. The percentage and Chi-square was used to analyze the questionnaires collected.

In this study, it was found that the majority of names of Thai Buddhists, Thai Muslims and Thai Christians were unrelated with religion. Thai Buddhists and Thai Muslims whose names were related with their religion were second in popularity. In contrast, Thai Christians whose names were related with other religions were third in popularity. Considering only 'related with their religion', it was found that names of Thai Buddhists were the most popular in conveying the belief in social values. Names of Thai Muslims and Thai Christians were the most popular in giving the names of saints, gods and disciples. The difference in the meaning of persons' names among the three groups correlates with the hypothesis: The meaning of names among Thai Buddhists, Thai Muslims and Thai Christians differ in people's names. In analyzing the languages used in the three groups, it was found that Pali and/or Sankrit were the most popular. Arabic is the most popularly used among Thai Muslim names. The difference in using languages of persons' names among the 3 groups correlates with the hypothesis: Thai Buddhists, Thai Muslims and Thai Christians differ in the languages used in each persons' names. In analyzing the auspiciousness of the letter used in a persons' names, it was found that inauspicious letters were found among Thai Buddhists, Thai Muslims and Thai Christians less than the auspicious ones. This finding was in contrast with the hypothesis: Thai Buddhists persons' names reflected the belief in the inauspiciousness more than these of Thai Muslims and Thai Christians.

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