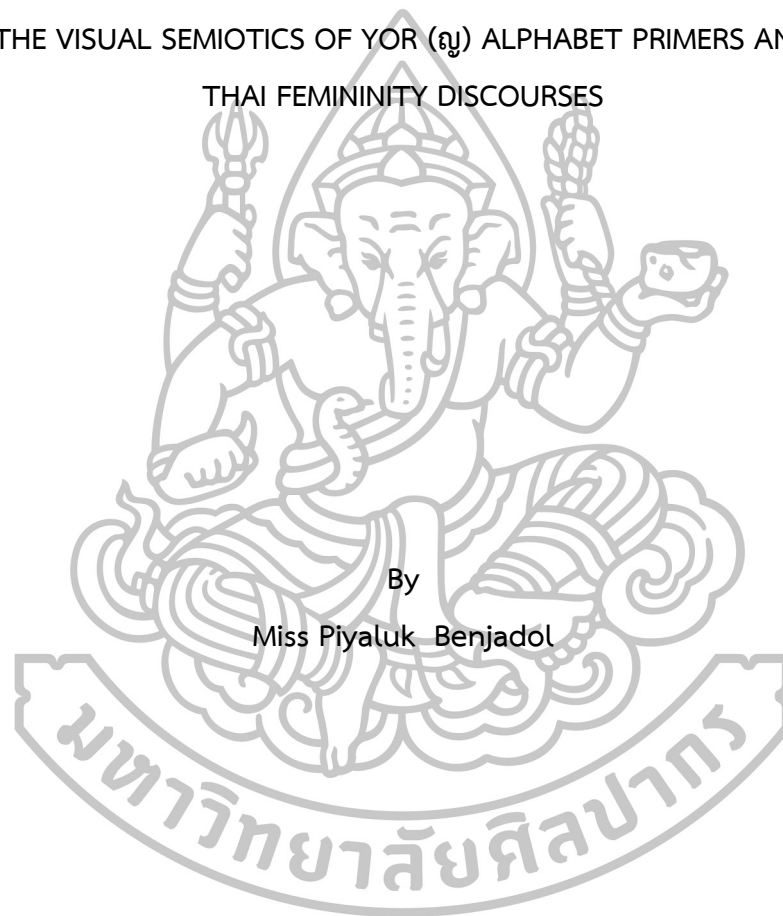




THE VISUAL SEMIOTICS OF YOR (ย) ALPHABET PRIMERS AND  
THAI FEMININITY DISCOURSES



By  
Miss Piyaluk Benjadol

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy Program in Design Arts

International Program

Graduate School, Silpakorn University

Academic Year 2015

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The Graduate School, Silpakorn University has approved and accredited the Thesis title of “The Visual Semiotics of Yor (ย) Alphabet Primers and Thai Femininity Discourses” submitted by Miss. Piyaluk Benjadol as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Design Arts

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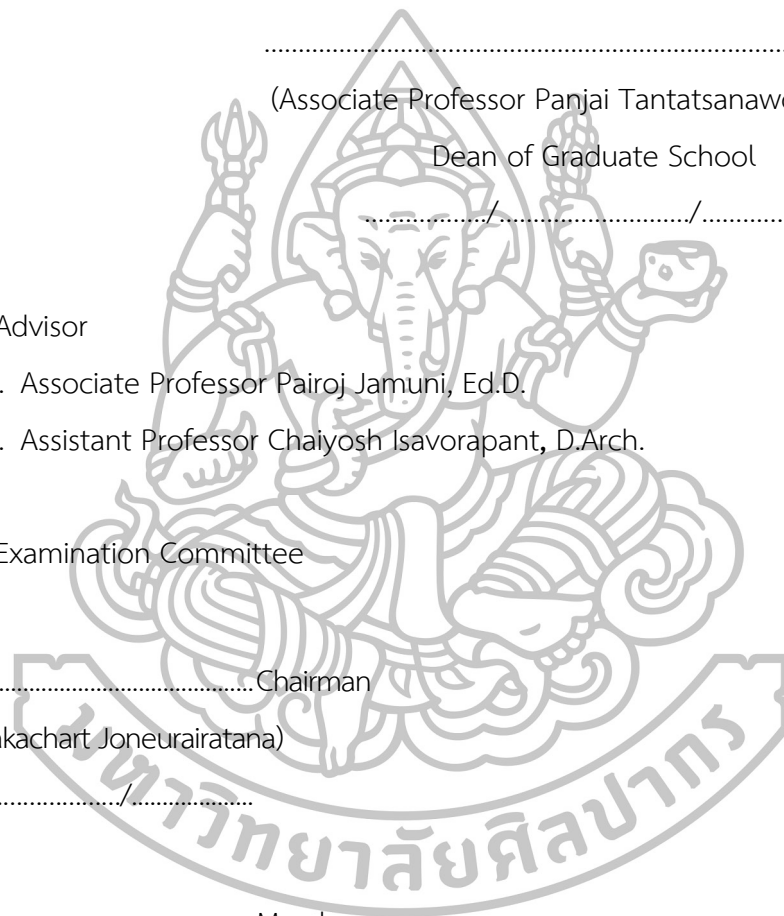
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This research focuses on the significations of visual languages and gender issues in children's books within the Thai context. Analysis of thirty-one Yor (ย) alphabet primers published between 1899 and 2012 reveal the connotative meanings of the letter Yor (ย) its rhymes and illustrations. Advertisements, book covers, and newspapers are contextually investigated in order to find intertextual relations with the connotations discovered. Visual semiotics and critical discourse analysis approaches are mixed and employed as inquiring tools.

The five research findings: beauty ideologies, roles as a mother and housewife, visual trope of a parasol, literacy, and women in the workforce, disclose Thai femininity discourses and ideologies in response to power relations within patriarchal society. The semiosis and outcome of this inquiry explicate that the conventional way of learning the alphabet character Yor (ย) has 'fixed' social ideologies about women, and emphasizes gender biases in Thai society. The synthesis of these findings leads to designs with a 'reform' concept, where conventional ways of learning the Yor (ย) alphabet character are 'denaturalized' by replacing Ying (meaning woman) with non-gender words. Three 'Yor (ย) Alphabet: A Learning Reform' tools: a template, a box set of cards and an interactive set, are designed as prototypes.

This dissertation is considered a 'dialogue' or the results of 'integration' connecting ideas, theories, and experiences that occurred during the inquiry process. During the conceptualization, investigation, and interpretation, actions of identifying, analyzing, discussing, interpreting, and finally, designing, are integrated with the 'total experience' of being a 'woman.' As a result, my reflections on a way of learning an alphabet bridged graphic design and gender issues, and are of benefit to designers and educators conscious of design responsibility in relation to cultural and social contexts.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1. Significance of the problem

From previous research conducted on the subject of Thai schoolbooks, especially those used in elementary schools, most textual analyses focus on the contents and their political and social issues. Many renowned academic researchers critically discussed the issues of civic duties, nations and nationalism, cultural dominances, etc., but there is a lack of studies on visual languages and their cultural meanings in Thai schoolbooks. Thus, this study focuses on visual semiotics analyses and interpretations of Thai alphabet primers and the limitations of learning the Yor (ย) alphabet character in correlation with meanings related to Thai femininity discourses and ideologies.

Thirty-one Yor (ย) alphabet pages from Thai alphabet readers and other forms, such as posters, learning cards, and cigarette collectible cards, dating from between 1899/2442 and 2012/2555, are collected in chronological order. In order to reveal the network of the intertextuality of meanings decoded from these main visual resources, other graphic design prints such as movie posters, advertisements, news photographs, etc. are contextually analyzed as well.

This research utilizes qualitative methodologies and focuses on the mixed-method of visual semiotics and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) frameworks applying to the visual methodologies. Specific methods for decoding visual languages on Yor (ย) alphabet primers are designed and applied to the main visual resources for this study. Findings from the decoding process are connotative meanings that are related to Thai femininity discourses. ‘The absences’ of women representations in those resources are uncovered and critically discussed as well.

The results of this study are mainly focused on the research paper that discusses the semiosis of Yor (ย) alphabet primers and its relation to Thai femininity

discourses. Another part of the outcome is a prototyped set of Yor (ญ) Alphabet Learning Reform tools. These learning reform tools are designed to intervene the Yor (ญ) alphabet character's conventional learning materials that have been reproducing stereotypes and social ideologies about Thai women since the first accompaniment with the word 'Pooying' (ผู้หญิง) (meaning woman) a hundred and fifteen years ago. The new Yor (ญ) alphabet learning reform, with no relation to stereotypes and ideologies about women, conforms to the UNESCO's EFA (Education for All) Dakar Goals (2000) that calls for "Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015". (Blumberg, 2007: 3)

## 2. Aim of the research

2.1 To investigate the historical context of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers dating from between 1899 and 2012 (B.E. 2442 and 2555).

2.2 To analyze the semiotic relationship of signs in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers in order to decode their connotative meanings related to gender issues.

2.3 To interpret the connotative meanings in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and reveal the intertextuality with other gender-related graphic design artifacts.

2.4 To discuss the semiosis of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and create Yor (ญ) alphabet learning reform tools.

## 3. Hypothesis of the research

3.1 Social ideologies and discourses about Thai women are embedded in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers through the signs and their connotative meanings in both images and texts.

3.2 Beauty characteristics are the most preferable characteristics of Thai women, which are culturally constructed and encoded in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers.

3.3 There are intertextual relations between Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and other gender-related graphic design artifacts, which socially and culturally constructed Thai femininity discourses and ideologies.







Table 1 Gantt chart of the research study (continue)

Year	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
semester	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
13. Presenting in Granshan 2015 International Typographic Conference, U. of Reading, U.K. (24 July, 2015)										
14. Writing dissertation (Process of interpreting)										
14. Final oral presentation and editing dissertation.										

Remark: (A) is the first semester; (B) is the second semester

5.2 The main visual resources of this research are thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet pages derived from Thai alphabet books, posters and learning cards, dating from between 1899/2442 and 2012/2555.

5.3 The secondary visual resources of this research are various graphic design artifacts related to the connotations of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, such as advertisements, news photographs, book covers, movie posters, etc.

5.4 All design implementations are presented as the prototypes of the Yor (ญ) Alphabet: A Learning Reform.

5.5 Due to the limited resources of out-of-print Thai alphabet primers published before 1969/2512, the actual sizes and details of the publications cannot be itemized in Appendix A.

## 6. Methodology of the research

The methodology utilized in this research is a qualitative methodology focusing on the visual semiotic process and interpretation. The connotative meanings in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers are decoded and revealed. In order to discuss the

cultural and social ideologies found in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, the mixed-method between visual semiotics and critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework is developed as the analytical tools and interpretation. Historical and contextual research is used to investigate Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and their contexts, from the first one published in 1899/2442 to the most recent one published in 2012/2555 when this research commenced. Thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, as the main visual resources of this study, are collected and aligned in a chronological timeline. Next, the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs among them are investigated and analyzed in the form of tables. This method is used to find the similarities and differences among the syntagms in all thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers. Hence, the implicit meaning potentials of signs are discovered.

The semiotic process of decoding uncovers cultural and social ideologies about Thai women embedded in the Yor (ญ) alphabet primers. Simultaneously, by searching for ‘the absences,’ what is hidden in plain sight or the ‘naturalized’ gender discourses are disclosed. Additionally, other graphic design artifacts that are contextually related to the discovered connotative meanings are compared and decoded. When connecting these cultural and social meanings of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and other graphic design artifacts, the intertextual relations or the network of meanings of Thai femininity discourses are revealed. The design implementations as the secondary research outcome are created to ‘denaturalize’ the gender discourses in Yor (ญ) alphabet learning.

## 7. Research outcome

This research-based practice focuses on the written paper, which is the main outcome of the semiotic process of analyses and interpretation. Furthermore, the design implementations at the final stage of the research procession are accomplished as prototypes, and not completely developed as a design-led research. They exemplify the design possibilities and propose the concept of designing Yor (ญ) alphabet learning reform tools with no relations to gender stereotypes and discourses.

7.1 A research paper with critical discussions on how the semiosis of representations of women, gender stereotypes, and social ideologies about Thai women are encoded in the visual languages, both words and images, of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers since their first accompaniment with the word ‘Ying’ in 1899/2442 up until present. The intertextual relations between the connotations of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers with other graphic design artifacts are revealed. (80%)

7.2 Three Yor (ญ) alphabet learning reform tools designed as prototypes and implemented under the concept of eliminating gender stereotypes and discourses. (20%)

## 8. Defined terminology

8.1 ‘The beginning of the National Economic Development in Thailand’ refers to the period when the first six-year National Economic Development Plan (แผนพัฒนาเศรษฐกิจและสังคมแห่งชาติ ฉบับที่ 1) was implemented in Thailand, starting in 1961/2504.

8.2 ‘The Digital Age in Thailand’ refers to the period when the first set of Thai digital fonts by Dear Book (DB) Company were created and released to the public in 1987/2530.

## 9. Summary

This research aims to address a critical discussion of how visual languages in pre-school Yor (ญ) alphabet primers dating from between 1899 and 2012 are encoded with Thai femininity discourses. Visual methodologies, visual semiotics, and critical discourse analysis frameworks are mixed and used as the analytical and interpretative tools. Used as the main visual semiotic resources, verbal codes accompanying the letter Yor (ญ) and their visual representations are thoroughly analyzed to find syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs among thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers. The implicit meaning potentials or connotations disclose Thai femininity discourses related to beauty, role and status, and patriarchy. To manifest the complex network of these ideologies, other printed media such as advertisements, book covers, newspapers, movie posters, and news photographs are

contextually investigated as secondary resources. The discovered pattern of representations in various visual resources reveals the ‘intertextuality’ of femininity discourses in ‘Yor’ (ญ) alphabet primers and other graphic design artifacts. Cultural discourses about Thai women are repeatedly and perpetually disseminated in Thai society under the power relations amongst social participants involved, including the authors, publishers, schools, teachers, the Ministry of Education, etc. As a result, this dissertation helps to extend visual language studies and visual semiotics related to gender issues in graphic design research. Designers, curators, or journalists in related fields can use this research as an example of how to reveal the ‘naturalized’ ideologies hidden in our society. Moreover, the design implementations of the Yor (ญ) Alphabet: A Learning Reform demonstrate how learning materials can be designed with non-gender or non-sexist approaches to help generate gender equality in education.



## Chapter 2

### Literature reviews and related studies

In this chapter, critical discussions of the theories, approaches, and arguments are structured by the search vocabularies: ‘semiology, gender issues, and children’s books,’ and the three main search topics that are relevant to this research. The literature review’s search topics are organized by two methods, (1) methodological organization and (2) thematic organization. Both of them are partly arranged in chronological order as well. Firstly, the methodological organization addresses the concepts of semiology and its ‘modern or updated’ approaches adapted into the field of art and design, especially graphic communication design. Two sources of research in graphic communication design that utilize semiotics and visual rhetoric as the analytical tools and interpretations are probed. One of them is related to the subtopics of visual literacy and vernacular aesthetics by analyzing the Pakistani cinemas’ Lollywood billboards. Another study considers that the semiotics framework could be reversely used in the process of designing, or in semiotics’ term, ‘encoding,’ by applying this approach to the students’ experimental project of designing Macbeth posters.

Secondly, by using thematic organization, there are two topics that are relevant to this research. The first one is about ideologies regarding women in the Thai context and the second one considers gender biases in children’s books. The first topic reflects the Thai society where the confrontation between conventional ideologies and ‘modern’ ones influenced by Western ideologies and Thai feminist movements still exist. The conventional ideologies are represented by the stereotypes of the housewife and mother’s roles coinciding with the characteristics of beautiful and well-mannered women. The second topic regarding the gender biases in children’s books is comparably discussed at both local and international levels. Similar gender biases in textbooks and curricula are identified and described in

many studies across the world by scholars and activists. At present, according to the world organization UNESCO, these issues call for ‘change’ and ‘second-generation’ studies and actions.

The following are the three search topics used for the literature review:

1. Semiotics in graphic communication design
2. Women ideologies in the Thai context
3. Gender biases in children’s books

These three search topics lead to the intellectual framework and link to the scope of this research, which is: visual semiotics, Thai femininity discourses, and Yor (ญ) alphabet primers (see figure 1).

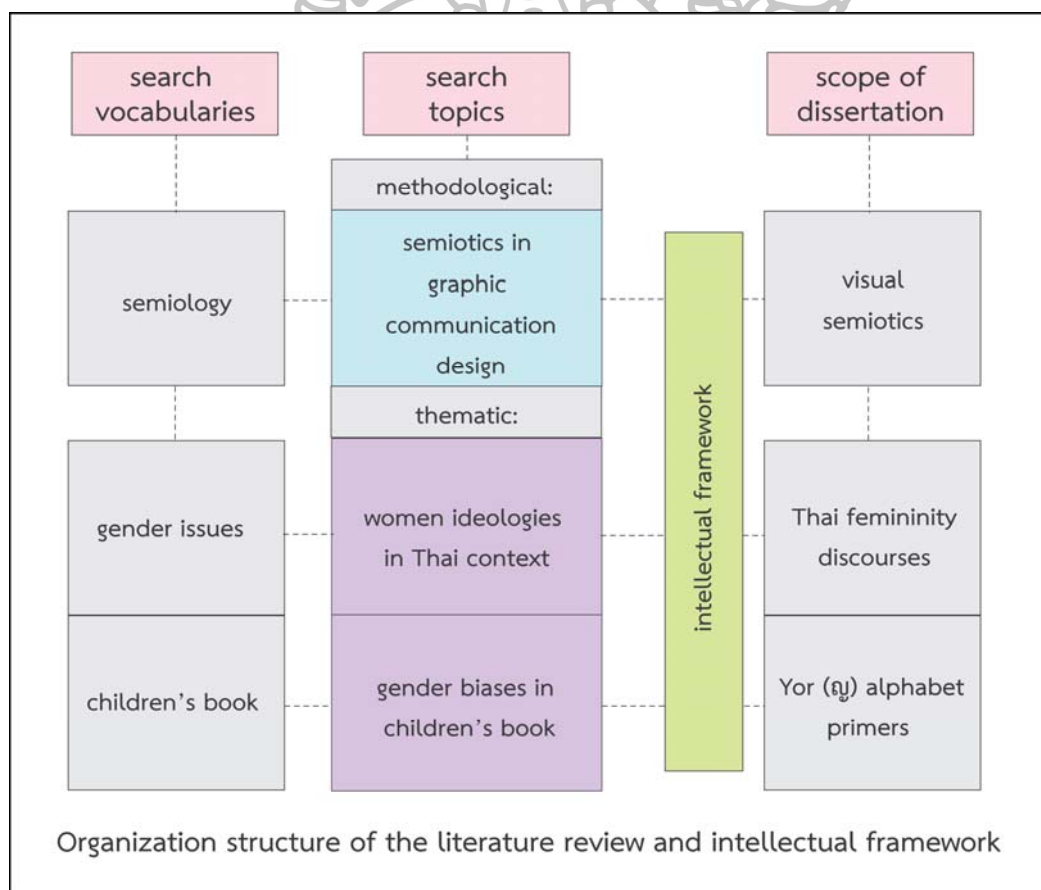


Figure 1 A diagram illustrating the organizational structure of the literature review and the intellectual framework

## 1. Semiotics in graphic communication design

This search topic leads to the research question, ‘what are the definitions of terms related to semiotics and how are semiotics and visual methodologies used in the previous studies as analytical tools to interpret the meanings of graphic communication design works?’

### 1.1 Definition of terms

The main research questions of this study, which focuses on the visual language and femininity discourses, are: ‘what are the connotative meanings of the visual languages in Yor (ຸງ) alphabet primers?’ and ‘how do these connotations relate to the social discourses and power of Thai femininity?’ Hence, this research utilizes the visual semiotics framework in the process of analysis and interpretation, by mixing the methods related to the visual methodologies and critical discourse analysis. In order to analyze and interpret the meaning potentials of the texts and images in Yor (ຸງ) alphabet primers, social semiotics, a branch of semiology, and critical discourse analysis, a branch in critical language study, are adapted as the research frameworks and analytical tools. These are the selected terms regarding visual methodologies that are related to this research.

#### 1.1.1 Visual rhetoric

Visual rhetoric is a term under ‘visual literacy,’ that aims to understand how visual images communicate and influence viewers. Their cultural meanings are shaped by a variety of contexts such as political power, social myths, or monarchic rulers, which then influence the attitudes and beliefs of the people. By using visual rhetoric as the analytical lens, the stereotyped codes with gender or femininity discourses are revealed.

#### 1.1.2 Visual semiotics

Visual semiotics is a term under ‘semiotics or semiology’ that aims to identify and reveal the choices of visual features made by the author. It tries to find out how images, photos, diagrams, and graphics work to create meaning. Moreover, this semiotic perspective intends to reveal the kinds of ideas, absences, and taken-for-granted assumptions embedded in the images and texts.



### 1.1.3 Social semiotics

Social Semiotics is a branch of the semiotics field that investigates human signifying practices in specific social and cultural circumstances and tries to explain meaning-making as a social practice.

### 1.1.4 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical Discourse Analysis is a type of discourse of analytical research that pays attention to the question of how the 'visual semiotic choices' play a part in the communication of power relations. While 'power' is transmitted and practiced through 'discourse,' CDA tries to answer how power relations are exercised and negotiated within the discourse as well as offer a discursive approach to analyze social discourses about the issues of power and the regimes of truth. It is a process that reveals the discourses embedded in the texts and brings the ideologies out into the open so that they can be made aware of and discussed.

After reviewing the relevant terms, I found that the most practical and comprehensive knowledge about the 'critical visual methodology' for art and design fields is explained and discussed by Gillian Rose (2001) in her prominent book "Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials." The essential modes of understanding for living in the world where "what we see is as important, if not more so, than what we hear or read," (Rose, 2001: 1) are totally relevant to her contents. Her guideline application of how to interpret the visual materials includes (1) understanding the visual materials, through which one realizes that they need to be criticized or decoded; (2) using 'the good eye' to look into the image through the use of compositional interpretation; (3) analysis of their contents; (4) decoding their meanings by using semiology; (5) unraveling the psychoanalysis concept in order to understand the visual culture around us; (6) investigating the context and intertextuality by using discourse analysis; and (7) using mixing methods to comprehend what we are looking for in terms of 'the visual' and its meaning. Notably, Rose gives her opinion on the importance of learning 'the visual' in her 'introducing this book' section, which states that "there are calls to restructure school and college curricula so that visual grammar can be learnt alongside understandings of texts, numbers, and molecules." (Rose, 2001: 1)

Besides the practical visual methodologies by Rose, two significant terms that are relevant to this research and deserve highlighting are ‘dialogue’ and ‘intertextuality,’ which are related to each other. The understanding that ‘discourse’ proceeds only by referencing, quoting, assuming other texts, speech, or words is essential to the process of semiotic practice for an interpretation, or the process of ‘decoding’ any visuals.

The term ‘Dialogue/Dialogic/Dialogical/Dialogism’ is addressed by Mikhail Bakhtin, a Russian theorist and literary scholar, stating that literary texts are always ‘dialogic’ in relation to the readers and audiences. Any text is an intersection of multiple words or texts rather than a fixed point or meaning. Hence, it is a ‘dialogue’ among various texts, genres, and voices that have previously occurred or which are happening concurrently. Moreover, ‘dialogue’ is new statements that presuppose earlier statements and anticipate a future response. Bakhtin is credited as the first one to define the term ‘intertextual’ or ‘structural dialogism.’ Later, Julia Kristeva, a poststructuralist, similarly explained Bakhtin’s concept and coined the term ‘intertextuality’ in 1966/2509. The principle of intertextuality is that, each statement in a text or discourse is an intersection of words or texts where at least one other word or text can be read. The meaning of any text is absorbed and transformed by the others. The following diagram attempts to illustrate how ‘dialogue’ or ‘intertextuality’ works in the context of language, by adapting from the definition by Martin Irvine (2004-2005) in ‘Media Theory and Semiotics: Key Terms and Concepts’ (see figure 2). These intertextual relations will later be further explained in the context of the visuals, which is relevant to this research.

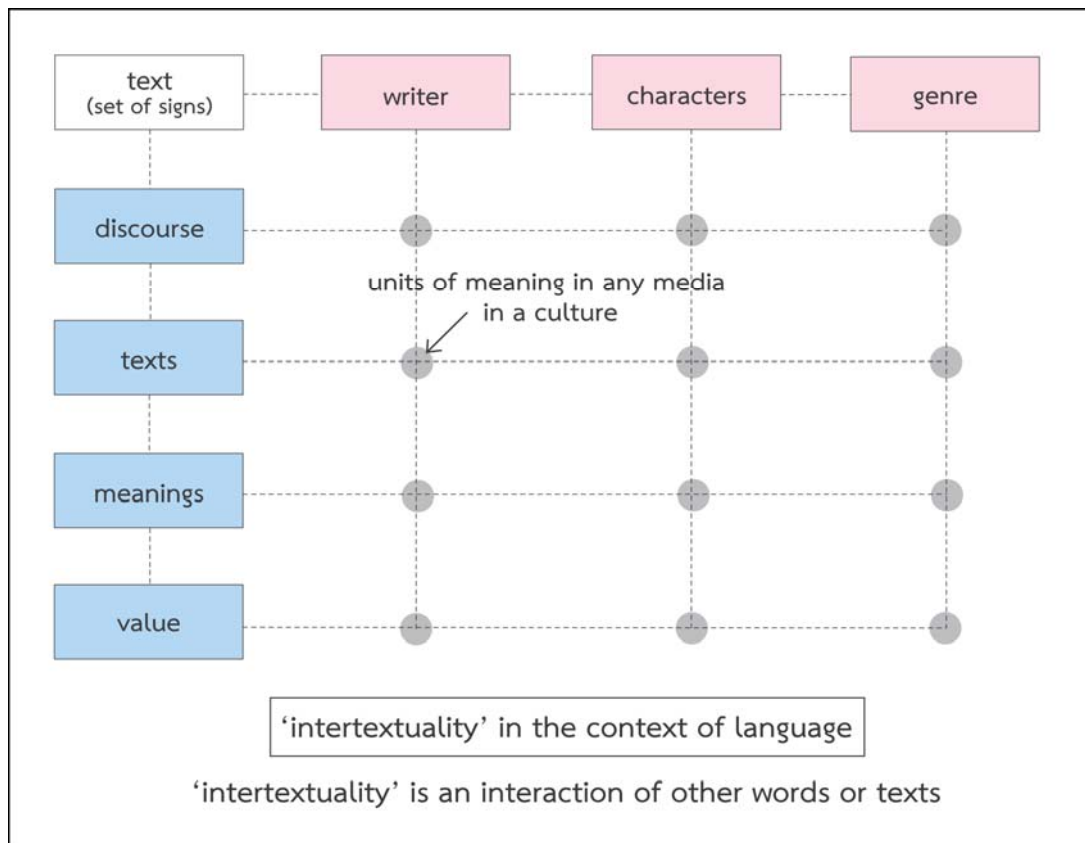


Figure 2 A diagram illustrating 'intertextuality' in the context of language

## 1.2 Selected previous studies

The selected previous studies were conducted in the fields of graphic communication design that utilize visual methodologies to rhetorically investigate the meanings of specific works. One of them is partially related to gender issues.

The two studies are:

1.2.1 "Visual reflections: Lollywood billboards, just a commercial medium or an ideological allegorical literacy?" by Hena Ali from the Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, U.K.

1.2.2 "Representing Macbeth: A Case Study in Visual Rhetoric" by Hanno H. J. Eshes from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Canada

Hena Ali (2011) studies Pakistani cinema's 'Lollywood billboards' in terms of their vernacular art practices and productions, and also their visual narrations that use allegory to communicate a reflection of the indigenous social and cultural ideologies. By focusing on the visual language and visual rhetoric of these billboards, this study is based on semiotics and multimodal literacy theories. As shown in the diagram illustrating this study's rhetorical framework, (1) the content, composition and construction of art, (2) the context and level of involvement, (3) the type of audience invoked, (4) the space: location of the art, geographically and culturally, (5) the socio-cultural denotations, and (6) commercialism within a communication context are analyzed (see figure 3).

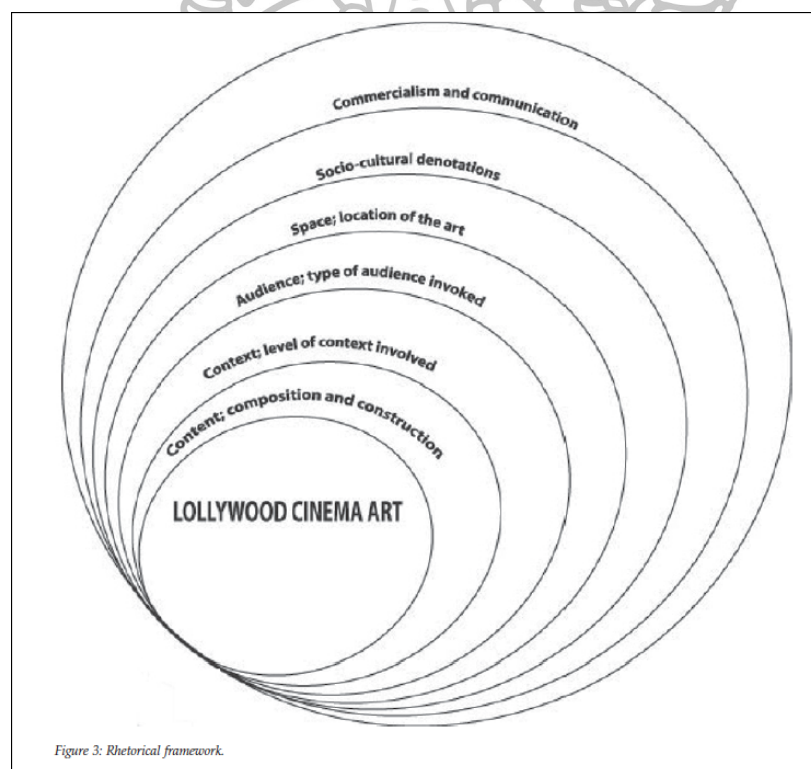


Figure 3 A diagram illustrating Hena Ali's rhetorical framework in analyzing the Lollywood cinema billboards

Source: Hena Ali, "Visual Reflections: Lollywood Billboards, Just a Commercial Medium or an Ideological Allegorical Literacy?," **Journal of Writing in Creative Practice** 3, 4 (November 2011): 408.

In order to understand the meanings of the visual languages in the billboards, the methods used are interviews, observation, and semiotic analysis. The design signifiers in the composition including space, grid, color, emphasis, and typography, are compared with the cultural signifiers including space, spatial position, color, exaggeration, metaphor, gender based innuendos and iconography (see figure 4).

		CONTENT	CONTEXT
ALLEGORY	Syntagmatic structures Intertextuality Rhetorical tropes	<b>Design signifiers</b>	<b>Cultural signifiers</b>
		Dimension	Dimension
		Space <i>(Figure ground ambiguity)</i>	Space <i>(Space of viewing)</i>
		Grid <i>(Spatial relation to visual hierarchy and eye movement)</i>	Spatial position <i>(Spatial relation to social hierarchal role)</i>
		Colours <i>(as design elements)</i>	Colours <i>(as vernacular aesthetics)</i>
		Emphasis <i>(Size, position, perspective, exaggeration)</i>	Exaggeration <i>(Facial expression, gestures, sizes)</i>
		Typography <i>(as illustration)</i>	Metaphors <i>(as illustration)</i>
			Gender based innuendos <i>(Poses, gestures)</i>
			Iconology

*Figure 4: The analytical lens.*

Figure 4 A diagram illustrating Hena Ali's comparison between the content and context of Lollywood cinema billboards

Source: Hena Ali, "Visual Reflections: Lollywood Billboards, Just a Commercial Medium or an Ideological Allegorical Literacy?," **Journal of Writing in Creative Practice** 3, 4 (November 2011): 409.

Concerning the gender issues found in this study, the poses, gestures, and positions of women represented on the billboards reflect the gender-based social hierarchy in the Pakistani society, where patriarchy still rules. Images of women are shown in smaller sizes than those of men depicting a lower social status, in an embrace by a man depicting a need for protection, or dressed in traditional clothes but with low necklines and in suggestive poses depicting sexual innuendos. By decoding the visual grammar and the allegories in Lollywood billboards, the syntagmatic structures, rhetorical tropes, and intertextuality reflect the vernacular aesthetics that can be considered design standards to the context they are viewed in. Finally, Hena Ali raises the question as to whether this analysis and understanding can be used as the basis for other works of graphic design that communicate with low-literacy audiences, and what features might be borrowed to build the designs through a comparable dynamic as to that utilized by the cinema billboards.

Another study investigating how meanings are created in graphic design works conducted by Hanno H. J. Ehses (1984) adapts the contemporary semiotic and rhetoric theory to explore the operational model of concept formation in the design and creative processes. Ehses studies the process of graphic signification or rhetorical coding in the design of posters for the play *Macbeth*. The semiotic structure of the title of the play, presented in typographic form, and the graphic image, presented in the form of an illustration, are encoded to communicate the plot or the designer's chosen visual concept. Second-year students from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design conducted an experiment with the poster designs through the use of rhetorical methodology. They list the rhetorical figures from the play and look for potential themes that have a visual impact. The rhetorical figures, according to Ehses, "are exploration tools that can spur lateral thinking, giving designers the awareness of possibilities to make the best choice." This study is concluded by raising the question as to whether the rhetoric methodology could be adapted in the design curricula, which must be updated with "the new rhetoric movement and in the context of contemporary society." (Ehses, 1984: 196)

Based on these two studies, we can conclude that visual methodologies, including visual rhetoric, semiotics, and visual semiotics, are practical in the graphic communication design field. They can be utilized in the design process, or in the semiotic term of encoding, and in the analysis and interpreting processes, or in the semiotic term of decoding. The process of signification and the semiotic structure of coding lead to rhetorical characteristics that control the visual appearances of the design and make them visually impacted and meaningful. Most of all, the critical notion gained from these studies is that the process of visual analyses or visual interpretations are certainly substantive to the study of design and design curricula. The process of visual semiotic analysis is a systematic and controlled exercise for a particular subject or interest, but at the same time, it can be applied and used to analyze and interpret any other works by any other person. Hence, the interpretation of any visual semiotic process is considered an outcome of research that is beneficial to the scholar, designer, or educators who are interested in these visual methodologies, especially those concerned with the relations between design and social or gender issues.

## **2. Women ideologies in Thai context**

This search topic leads to the research question, 'what ideologies about Thai women are upheld in cultural and social contexts?' Traditional values for women in Thai society refer to the beliefs, moral codes, and mores for which whomever follows them would be praised and admired. From the Sukhothai period up until present, the traditional values in each historical period have been changing from time to time. Most of them are evidenced in literary works such as proverbs, dictums, chronicles and literature. The four aspects of Thai traditional values for women are their physical appearances, manners, possessions and marital status. From the study of eight significant Thai literatures created during the Rattanakosin period, around 1782/2325 to 1851/2394, Boonyong Kettate (1989) concludes that, among the four aspects, the manners and the responsibility of being a housewife are the most important qualifications of Thai women. (Boonyong Kettate, 1989: 61) The norms of being a good wife and a good mother are typical in Thai society.

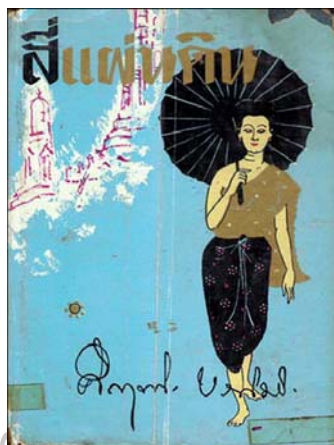


Figure 5 Cover of the novel “Four Reigns” Volume 1, 1962/2505

Sources: Manager Online, **The Four Reigns**, accessed December 3, 2013, available from <http://www.manager.co.th/entertainment/viewnews.aspx?NewsID=9540000152551>

Similarly, one of the most admired fictional female characters, ‘Mae Phloi’ (แม่พลอย), is praised for these two qualifications. Mae Phloi is a praiseworthy character that was invented in the novel ‘Four Reigns’ (สี่แผ่นดิน) in 1950/2493 by M.R. Kukrit Pramoj (ม.ร.ว. คึกฤทธิ์ ปราโมช) (see figure 5). She is the daughter of a low level aristocrat who spends her teenage life as a minor courtier in the Royal Palace and later gains nobility as the wife of a military man. Throughout this novel’s plot that takes place between 1882/2425 and 1946/2489, a time period ranging from the reigns of King Rama V through King Rama VIII, Mae Phloi devoted herself to the roles of a wife and mother. Besides the fact that this novel was selected by Withayakon Chiangkun et al. as one of one hundred good books listed in ‘100 Good Books that Thai People Should Read: A Guide’ which was published in 1999/2542, it has also been reproduced as a television drama series many times over, and recently, as a musical play in 2011/2554. The stereotype of the devoted wife and mother of Mae Phloi is considered by Saichol Sattayanurak to be a part of the mainstream construction of ‘Thainess’ (2007). Her critique, which does not focus on gender issues but on the overall ideological context of this novel, addresses the notion that many significant intellectuals, including M.R. Kukrit Pramoj who was the prime minister during 1975/2518 and 1976/2519, have been constructing the mainstream concept of



'Thainess' since the reign of King Rama V in response to the changing political contexts. She insists that it "became the basis of the ideology that maintained the centralized political regime and the hierarchical social structure." (Saichol, 2007: abstract) In addition, M. R. Kukrit's political ideology from the novel 'Four Reigns' was adapted as the contents of Thai textbooks published after the 1957/2500s era. This insight by Saichol allows for us to realize that 'Thainess' or 'Thai stereotypes' of culture, class, and politics are social artifacts ideologically constructed by the participants who have power in their hands.

However, Thai women's ideological roles of a wife and a mother are again challenged by the confrontation of patriarchic 'myths' and the notion of gender equity, as the result of Thai feminist movements. The study of Thai literature during the decade of B.E. 2530 to 2540 (around 1987 to 1997) by Sanor Jarernporn (2005) reveals that, as a consequence of the quickly-expanded Capitalist economy during that period, the lack of workers and laborers brought Thai women into the workforce, both in government services and private companies. The women's roles and responsibilities were expanded from nurturing and domestic chores to working for the family income. Even though women's spaces expanded from the private space at home to the public space in the workforce, this so-called 'gender equity' is not actually proof of their freedom from the male power. The trend of being 'progressing women' during the decade of B.E. 2530/1987 found by Sanor manifests that most Thai women unquestionably accept their double roles as a nurturer and a worker. They live happily ever after, as long as the well-being of their husbands and children prevails.

### **3. Gender biases in children's books**

This topic leads to the research question, 'what are the gender biases locally and internationally discovered in children's books and textbooks?' In many countries, including the U.S.A., New Zealand, Thailand, and Brazil, previous studies show similar findings that gender biases in children's books and textbooks have been reproducing and disseminating for decades.

In the Thai context, two sources of research reveal similar conclusions about gender roles and stereotypes. The first one is a quantitative research focusing on the gender's role in Thai language textbooks. Saranya Ekthamsut (2006) investigated the contents and illustrations in eight Thai language textbooks published by the Ministry of Education and used in elementary schools throughout the country. The first edition of each book was printed in an amount of 700,000 copies during 2004/2547 and 2005/2548. This study discovered that male's roles, including the characters of boys and male adults, are more prominent than that of the female in both the contents and illustrations. There are more numbers of male characters, which dominate as the main character, the active subject, or the leader in both contents and illustrations, than the female. The ratio between males and females is about 2:1 in the level 1 textbook, and 6:1 in the level 2 textbook. (Saranya Ekthamsut, 2006: 186) Moreover, by analyzing the illustrations, there are more pictures solely portraying the full figure image of males than females. The ratio between males and females is about 1.4:1 in the level 1 textbooks and 1.3:1 in the level 2 textbooks. (Saranya Ekthamsut, 2006: 126) In conclusion, the content analyses from this research shows that gender bias are still embedded in Thai language textbooks, even in the updated curriculum of the national basic education proclaimed in 2001/2544. They also transmit the social values and social ideologies that men are superior to women. Their 'access-control-benefit' roles are dominated in every aspect of the society including economics, politics, and education. (Saranya Ekthamsut, 2006: 190-191)

Similarly, another study by Thitima Sukaew (2007) also discovers that, among twelve contemporary Thai literature textbooks for primary school level learning, the conventional gender stereotypes considering male characters as the superior roles and female characters as the inferior roles are reproduced. The verbal languages used in these textbooks, including word choices, adjectives and verbs, cause the children to believe that the appropriate behaviors are illustrated as the 'nature' or 'natural traits' of men or women. (Thitima Sukaew, 2007: 136) Concerning the illustrations, Thitima concludes that "the evidence is not enough to judge whether or not the elements of visual language are used to cause gender bias. Nevertheless, they can illustrate certain stereotypes such as color and clothes." (Thitima Sukaew, 2007: 135-136) Finally, she discusses how the representations and stereotypes in the

textbooks cause gender biases to remain in the society, describing that, “the textbooks create what children believe to be the ultimate truth and when they adopt this behavior, the gender bias will persist in society.” (Thitima Sukaew, 2007: 147)

At an international level, issues regarding sexism and racism are investigated by Anne Else (1995) in New Zealand’s well-known reading book series, “Janet and John,” first published in 1949/2492 (see figure 6). This series was originally used in British schools and later in many countries around the world including New Zealand and Thailand. This series was translated into Thai in 1951/2494 as the “Suda and Ka-we Reading Book Series” (แบบเรียนชุดสุดาและคาวี) (see figure 7). Anne describes the distinctive roles between mother and father in Janet and John and critiques that:

Mother does not cook or clean, and Father seems to lead a fairly leisurely life too, though they both do a little light gardening. They are shown doing only two things for or with their children — taking them out into the glamorous adult world of shops, boats and planes, and buying them things. The major function of good parents, it seems, is to supply their children with the luxuries of life — made all the more attractive by the bright full-color pictures that accompany the carefully graded words. (Else, 1995: 230)



Figure 6 A double-page spread from the reading book series, Janet and John Book Two  
Source: O’Donnel Mabel and Munro, Rona, **Janet and John Book Two** (London: James Nisbet & Co, 1949), 12-13.



Figure 7 The four covers of “Suda and Ka-we Reading Book Series” for Bpratom 1  
 Source: Apai Jantawimon, **Suda and Ka-we Reading Book Series, Book One** (15th ed.). (Bangkok: Kurusapaa Lad Phrao, 1972), cover; Apai Jantawimon, **Suda and Ka-we Reading Book Series, Book Two** (16th ed.). (Bangkok: Kurusapaa Lad Phrao, 1974), cover.; Apai Jantawimon, **Suda and Ka-we Reading Book Series, Book Three** (15th ed.). (Bangkok: Kurusapaa Lad Phrao, 1976), cover; Apai Jantawimon, **Suda and Ka-we Reading Book Series, Book Four** (15th ed.). (Bangkok: Kurusapaa Lad Phrao, 1976), cover.

Besides ‘Janet and John,’ many children’s reading book series in several countries typically depict a stereotyped ‘perfect and happy family’ consisting of a mother, a father, and two children of the opposite sex. Anne Else (1995) pointed out that, in New Zealand, besides the reading books, this role model family is exploited in healthcare posters, nursing practice manuals and magazines for women. She also emphasized that “they all carried the same message: that this is the only right way to live.” (Anne Else, 1995: 231) This stereotypical family is also represented in ‘Dick and Jane’ and ‘Alice and Jerry,’ popular basic readers in the United States, and also in ‘Peter and Jane’ in the U.K. The ‘presences’ of normal life in the children’s reading books seem naturally ‘neutral’ and are taken for granted by readers as the norm. Both male and female main characters seem to typify gender equality, but in fact, many sources of research reveal that there are gender biases hidden in children’s books.

In Brazil, similar evidence in a report by Fúlvia Rosemberg, Neide Cardoso De Moura, and Paulo Vinícius Baptista Silva (2008) reveals that sexism is discovered in Brazilian textbooks. Most female characters are under-represented and receive less prominence than males. Adult females are repeatedly represented as housewives and mothers, with a few of them working in the workforce. However, males are represented with intelligent qualities and engaged in intellectual activities, which is the opposite of the case of the female. (Rosemberg et al., 2008: 15) In addition, besides sexism, this study shows many sources of evidence proving that gender stereotypes are exacerbated by biases about ethnic and racial issues. This research also critiques the ideological and cultural function of the textbooks under the national textbook program, stating that they are considered “a privileged instrument in the construction of identity.” Moreover, Choppin’s (2004) critical discussion about the importance of the textbooks “within the constitution of national states and the development of the main educational systems within this particular context” is cited. Choppin argues that these textbooks “are generally recognized as a symbol of national sovereignty, in the same way as the currency or flag, and in this sense, they assume an important political role.” (Choppin 2004, cited in Rosemberg et al., 2008: 2) However, the numerous sources of research that have been conducted for many years in Brazil brought out criticisms of sexual discrimination in traditional cultural patterns and several disclosures via talks, television programs, debates, articles in the press, and etc. A sample of these discussions is as follows:

How traditional and passive behavior among women was being maintained (almost behaviorist); some of the research contributed to advancing knowledge about schools and much of it served as support for making the teaching profession conscious of the differentiated education of boys and girls. (Rosemberg et al., 2008: 16)

Among the previous sources of research on gender issues in textbooks, the paper, “Gender bias in textbooks: a hidden obstacle on the road to gender equality in education” by Rae Lesser Blumberg (2007) is the most comprehensive source that

gathers significant information about these issues. It was prepared as background information to help assist in the drafting of the 'EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR) 2008, Education for All by 2015: will we make it?' This report deserves highlighting for its breadth of scope covering studies in the U.S. and many developing countries such as Latin America, the Caribbean, China, and India. The statistics about the educational quality and gender equity in education reveal that, "the problem of gender biases in textbooks (or the related issue of gender biases in curricula and teachers' treatment of students) appears less urgent." (Blumberg, 2007: 4) Even though the 2003/4 EFA report had proclaimed that, "Full gender equality in education would imply that girls and boys are offered the same chances to go to school and enjoy teaching methods, curricula and academic orientation unaffected by gender bias." (2003: 17, cited in Blumberg, 2007: 4) In the 2007 report, "stereotypes [that persist] in learning materials" were identified as one of the two issues that "negatively affect gender equality." (UNESCO 2006: 2, cited in Blumberg, 2007: 4) In the last chapter of the 2008 report, evidence that the Nordic countries, especially Sweden, have been successfully reforming curricula and textbooks in terms of gender issues is reported. For almost four decades, the male stereotypes in textbooks decreased while a number of Swedish men have been improving their parenting skills. (Blumberg, 2007: 30) Finally, this report suggests many recommendations for various groups of social participants involved, including the donors who could support the upcoming "second-generation" studies that should be focusing on the "monitoring and evaluation of any intervention designed to ameliorate gender biases in textbooks and/or curricula." One final recommendation is that "reductions in the intensity of gender biases in textbooks be considered as a useful indicator of gender equity in society" and suggests "decreases in gender stereotypes in learning materials for this purpose." (Blumberg, 2007: 36)

The reading primer, which is usually the first book for every child, is worthy of attention. It has tremendous influence on the literacy of a child. In the book, "The Story of A: The Alphabetization of America from The New England Primer to The Scarlet Letter," Patricia Crain (2000) investigates the alphabet as an object of study, or 'a particular cultural artifact,' and discusses its role and relation to the meanings.

Her focus is “mainly on one kind of alphabet: the letters as they are transmitted through elementary reading instruction texts and practices.” (Crain, 2000: 6) She explains that the representations of the alphabet have particular textual, tropic, and cultural characteristics. These poetic characters reveal the history of American literacy and cultural beliefs about the value of reading and books. Regarding the meaning of the term ‘alphabetization,’ she notes that it is derived from the ‘Romance Language,’ which descended from Latin. The verb ‘to alphabetize, to be alphabetized’ means the getting and giving of literacy. Her choice to use this word allows for us to realize how important alphabets are to literacy in culture.

From the title of Crain’s book, there were two significant books selected to represent the history of American literacy. The first one is “The New England Primer,” the first reading primer designed for the American Colonies. It was the reprinted version of the British primer, the “English Protestant Tutor” and the core of the primer consisting of its rhyming alphabet, the Bible alphabet, the Bible questions and Shorter Catechism have remained unchanged from reprinting to reprinting for a period of over three hundred years, with the first edition being published by Boston publishers between 1687/2230 and 1690/2233. Besides basic language learning including the characters of the alphabet, vowels, consonants, double letters and syllabaries of two to six letter syllables, the religious maxims, woodcuts, alphabetical assistants, acronyms, catechism answers, and moral lessons are printed within this 90-page book. This primer has been used throughout the U.S.A. to teach reading and Bible lessons in schools up until the twentieth century. It is considered “one of the longest-lived and most successful literacy manuals in history.” (Crain, 2000: 16) The letter ‘A’ is accompanied by a rhyme: “In Adam’s fall / We sinned all,” which is inspired by the Bible (see figure 8). This book was significant to the status of alphabet learning during the founding decade of the alphabetized culture of the United States. Furthermore, it is a great sample of how letter, image and text were combined in order to transmit both religious messages together with traditional cultural images at a time when the spiritual fate of the colonists, especially the young, was of concern. (Crain, 2000: 39)

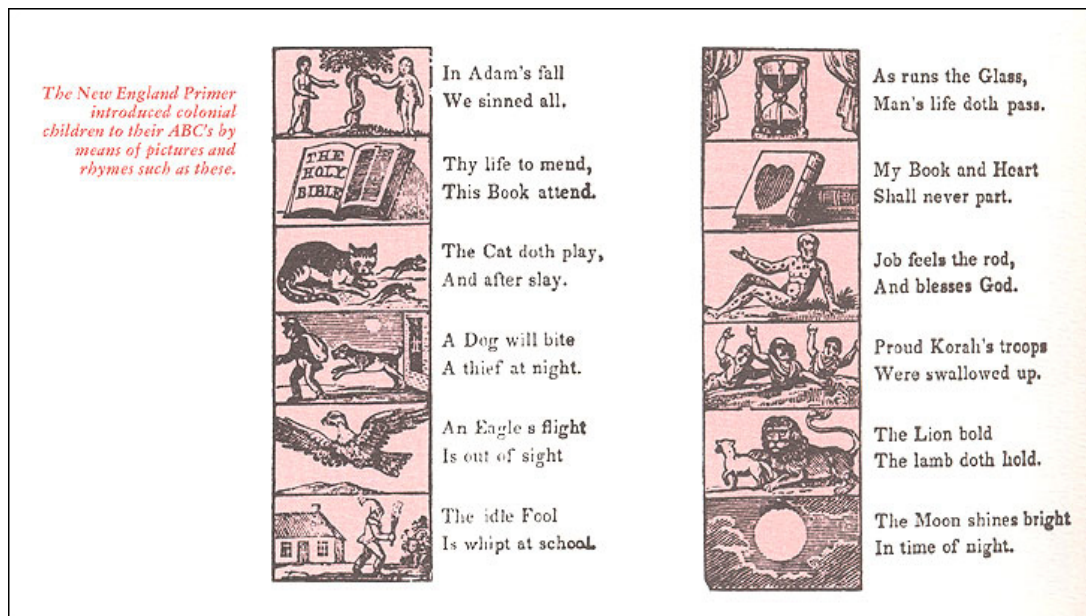


Figure 8 A page from “The New England Primer,” published in 1850/2393

Source: Wikipedia, **The New England Primer**, accessed March 7, 2016, available from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_New\\_England\\_Primer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_New_England_Primer)

The first letter of the alphabet, ‘A’, plays an important role in the second publication presented in the title of Crain’s book. It is one of the most renowned and widely taught American novels, “The Scarlet Letter” written by Nathaniel Hawthorne in 1850/2393. It was one of the first mass-produced books in America and the first 2,500 volumes sold out within ten days time. The novel’s setting was 17<sup>th</sup>-century Puritan Boston, Massachusetts during the years of 1642/2185 to 1649/2192. The main young female character, Hester Prynne, was found guilty of adultery and forced to wear a scarlet ‘A’ on her dress for the rest of her life. In this fiction, there are many symbols and meanings to be decoded such as the fact that ‘A’ stands for ‘adultery,’ which is considered a sin in Christianity. In the plot, besides the appearance of the ‘A’ on Hester’s dress, most witnesses saw a stigma in the form of the scarlet ‘A’ on her lover’s chest when he confessed and died in her arms. Lastly, the ‘A’ appeared once again on their shared tombstone engraved with an escutcheon stating ‘On a field, sable, the letter A, gules.’ Nowadays, the literal meaning of the word ‘scarlet’ means a bright red color, but dating back to the past,



it used to refer to a wicked, heinous, and immortal character, and especially one who is promiscuous or unchaste.

In addition to the symbolic meanings constructed by the author via the title, plot, and the characters, these connotations are encoded in both verbal and non-verbal signs within the printing production of this novel from the first edition up until present. For example, a cover of the Salem edition, printed in 1892/2435 with a three-part binding, white cloth and red paper. It is interesting to notice that the letter 'A' is not visible on this cover. Instead, only the title of the book, the author's name, and a floral motif with a heart-like shaped line stamped in gold appear. The three heart-like shaped motifs on both the cover and spine might be intentionally used to symbolize romance and love rather than focusing on guilt and sin (see figure 9).

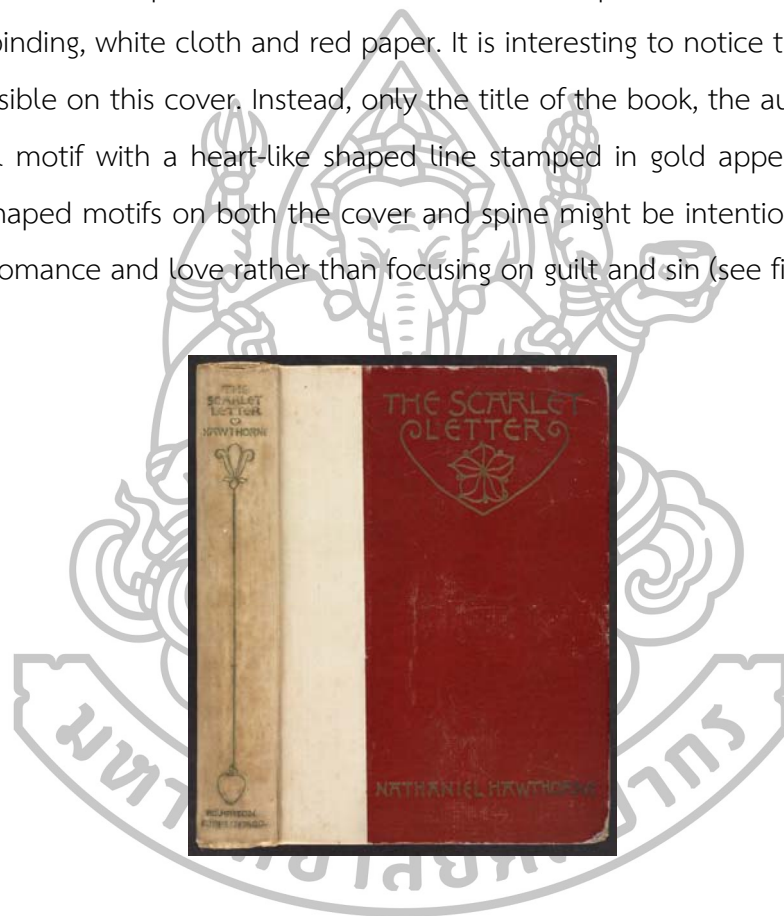


Figure 9 The cover of “The Scarlet Letter” novel, Salem edition, published in 1892/2435

Source: “The Scarlet Letter,” **Flickr**, accessed March 7, 2016, available from [https://www.flickr.com/photos/boston\\_public\\_library/2349947847/in/photostream/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/boston_public_library/2349947847/in/photostream/)

This cover of the Scholastic Library edition was printed in 1964/2507 with a beautiful woodcut illustration. The letter ‘A’ in red color is salient on Hester’s dress. The shadow covering half of her body might be signifying the unchaste sin (see figure 10).

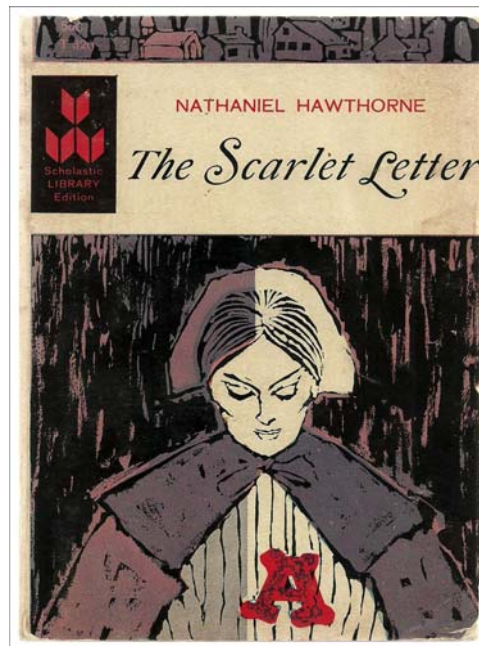


Figure 10 The cover of “The Scarlet Letter” novel, Scholastic Library edition, published in 1964/2507

Source: “The Scarlet Letter,” **Flickr**, accessed March 7, 2016, available from <http://books0977.tumblr.com/post/97216017957/the-scarlet-letter-nathaniel-hawthorne>

Another cover of an updated Penguin Readers’ edition, printed in 2000/2543, (see figure 11) uses the figures of Hester holding her daughter, Pearl, in her arms as depicted in the 1859/2402 painting by Hugues Merle, which Hawthorne regarded as the finest illustration of his novel (see figure 12). On the cover of the book, the image is die-cut from the background and horizontally flipped over. The figures of the two men, the father of the girl and Hester’s husband on the left side of the painting and the ambience are omitted and replaced by the solid background of a red color. In the painting, Hester and Pearl are depicted in a pose that recalls that of the Madonna and Child, underlining Merle’s and “The Scarlet Letter’s themes of sin and redemption.” (The Scarlet Letter, Wikipedia, 2016)

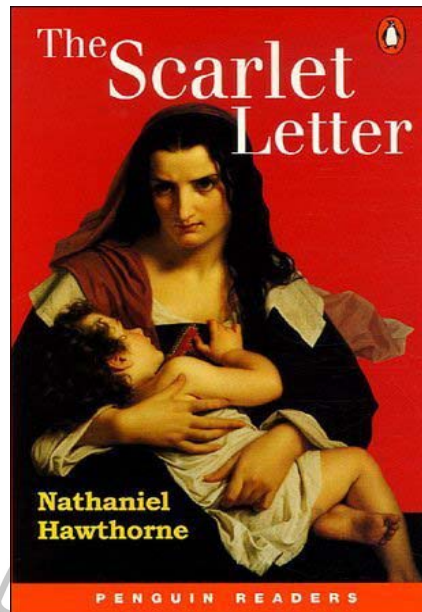


Figure 11 The cover of “The Scarlet Letter” novel, Penguin Readers edition, published in 2000/2543

Source: “The Scarlet Letter,” **Amazon Books**, accessed March 7, 2016, available from <http://www.amazon.com/Scarlet-Letter-Penguin-Readers-Level/dp/0582421764>



Figure 12 Hugues Merle’s painting, “The Scarlet Letter”, 1859/2402

Source: The Scarlet Letter, **Walters Art Museum Home page**, accessed March 7, 2016, available from <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=18762961>

Crain (2000) selects this novel as a part of her study because it signifies that “the relationship of a girl and her mother is forged in the heat of alphabetization” and “their mobilization of particular modes of and expectations for the reading experience, which are manifest in the very shape of their narratives.” (Crain, 2000: 10) Moreover, she discusses that, Hawthorne’s letter ‘A’ “can represent many things to many people, but it is also an object of representation; it ranges freely between the satanic and the sacred; it is intimately involved in forming children” (Crain, 2000: 11). At last, she concludes about the alphabet and alphabetization that they “are deeply implicated not only in our relation to language but also in our relation to children and in our discourses about children and childhood” (Crain, 2000: 12).

In conclusion, regarding the search topic of gender issues in children’s books, numerous scholars and activists have been producing apparently significant sources of research that address many aspects including gender stratification, biases, roles, and equity. What has been hidden and camouflaged are exposed to the public and evoke in-depth debates and discussions across multicultural contexts. Unfortunately, these sources of research discover the uniformity of textbooks’ contents that are embedded with these gender biases on every continent. The similarities are:

- (a) under-representation of females, (b) use of male words to mean all of humanity, (c) traditional gender stereotypes about the activities of males and females in the occupational sphere and in the domestic sphere, (d) traditional stereotypes about the traits and activities of males and females, and so on. (Blumberg, 2007: 33)

Hence, according to Blumberg, what seems to be appropriate in pursuing this substantive field might be the impact of studies on how these gender issues affect girls and boys through evaluation of the level and type of impact. Beyond identifying and describing these gender biases in textbooks, further activities should include an attempt “to reform all learning materials entirely and/or the curricular

system.” In addition, there must be sufficient funding support for monitoring and evaluation processes for the researchers, activists, women’s organizations, or NGOs who are committed to these issues (Blumberg, 2007: 33-35).

Besides that, the study of Crain (2000) emphasizes how important alphabets are to the activities and practices surrounding alphabetization, in terms of both learning and teaching. Significantly, the images are crucial because “learning to read means first and foremost learning how to look.” (Crain, 2000: 7) What Crain introduces for us to think about is not only how the alphabet functions as a genre of text with a historical development, but also in relation to how the visual and verbal tropes associated with the alphabet have raised larger theoretical questions about the relation of letters to meanings and their functions related to literacy in any culture.

### Summary

From the search vocabulary, ‘semiology, gender issues, children’s books’ and the search topics: semiotics in graphic communication design, women’s ideologies in the Thai context, and gender biases in children’s books, as well as the previous studies in graphic communication design that focus on visual language and visual rhetoric, the unaddressed issue or research gap can be identified. It is the design study that aims to concentrate on the semiotic practice and attempts to reveal social ideologies and femininity discourses hidden in plain sight within Thai children’s books. The learning materials for pre-school children are significant to their literacy and, at the same time, affect their points of view and behaviors. The Yor (ย) alphabet learning pages in Thai alphabet primers are appropriate as a cultural artifact to be decoded.

Drawing from the diagram illustrating how ‘dialogue’ or ‘intertextuality’ works in the context of language, a linguistic text is decoded and replaced by a design work in order to link it to this research. It is composed by a designer through the use of a visual language transmitted through any medium, thus ‘intertextuality’ in the context of visuals can be illustrated as follows (see figure 13).

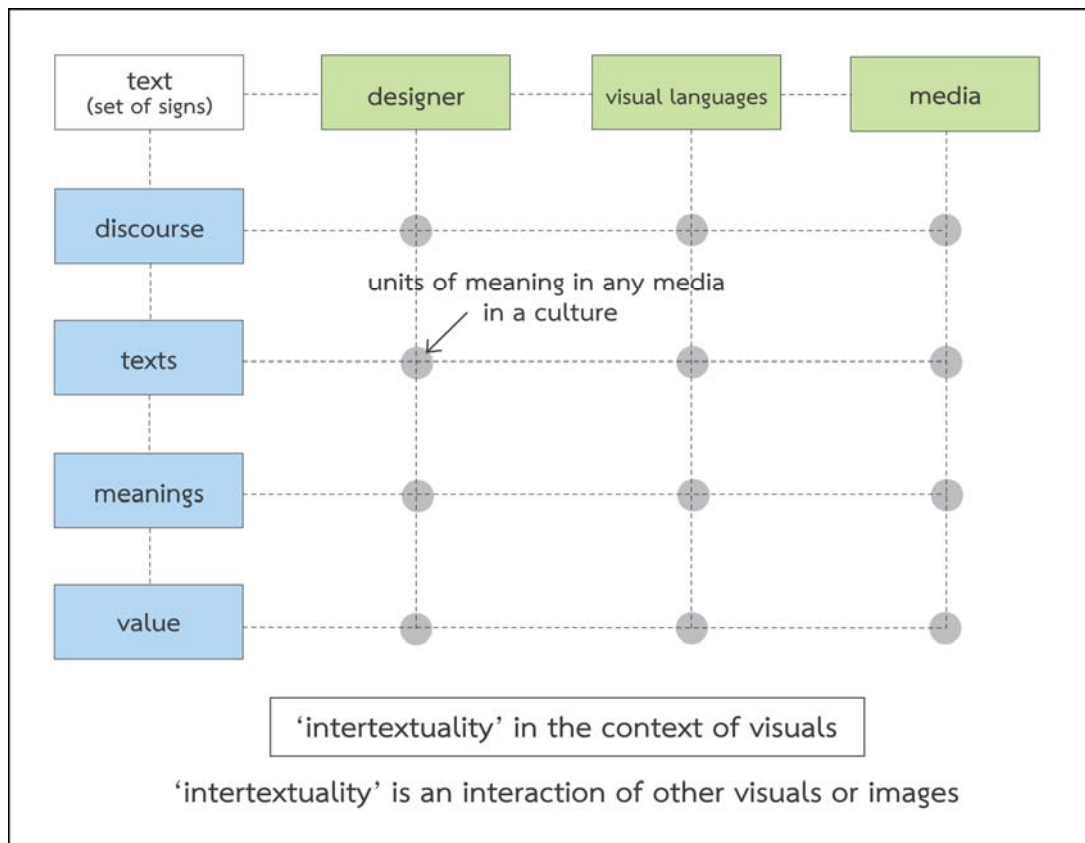


Figure 13 A diagram illustrating 'intertextuality' in the context of visuals

Thus, this research poses the following primary questions: (1) what are the representations of women and their connotative meanings in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers dating from 1899 to 2012, and (2) how the connotations of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers are related to Thai femininity discourses that can be answered by finding the 'intertextuality' of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers' meanings in the dialogical context of gender discourses, the meanings of other graphic design works, and Thai traditional values about women.

The character of the alphabet Yor (ญ) has been embedded with gender stereotypes for more than a hundred and fifteen years since its accompaniment with the word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) in 1899/2442. By utilizing visual semiotics and critical discourse analysis concepts as analytical tools, the outcome of this semiotic practice aims to disclose cultural and social ideologies about Thai women that are considered 'natural' to most people. The outcome of this research will be

applicable to the aims of the UNESCO project, 'Education for All' (EFA), which has been raising issues of gender biases in textbooks, curricula, and teachers' treatment of students for more than twenty-five years. (Blumberg, 2007: 36) The EFA 2008 report suggests an attempt to reform all learning materials by decreasing gender stereotypes in textbooks or, as an ultimate goal, creating and using non-sexist textbooks across the world.



## Chapter 3

### Methodology of the research

This research utilizes qualitative methodologies to analyze and interpret the visual languages and the semiotic meanings of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers. By focusing on visual methodologies, the meanings of signs in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers as the main visual resources, and the other gender-related graphic design artifacts as the secondary visual resources, are deeply investigated and decoded.

Firstly, historical research is conducted to gather historical and contextual information related to the Yor (ญ) alphabet primers. Then, in order to understand the visual grammar of the signs that constitute the specific meanings, the syntagmatic relations of signs in each Yor (ญ) alphabet primer are investigated. Next, the visual semiotic and critical discourse analysis frameworks are utilized as decoding tools to interpret the semiotic meanings of signs in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and the other gender-related graphic design artifacts. At this point, the interpretations, or the findings, reveal the intertextual relations between Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and femininity discourses that have been reproducing and disseminating throughout Thai society.

#### 1. The visual semiotics resources

Thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers in various formats such as books, posters, and cards for learning the alphabet, as well as collectible cigarette cards in the edition of the characters of the Thai alphabet, are collected. The images of Yor (ญ) alphabet learning pages from early out-of-print Thai alphabet primers or Thai language readers are scanned from the book, “Tracing Kor Kai” (“แกะรอย ก. ไก่”), which was compiled by Anake Nawigamune and published in 1993/2536. Besides the black and white scanned images, most Yor (ญ) alphabet learning pages are taken from the actual copies of Thai alphabet primers, which were collected by the



researcher. Frequently, Yor Ying (ญ หญิง) alphabet learning is displayed in conjunction with the other alphabet on the same page. For example, it is displayed with the following character of the alphabet, Dor Chada (ฎ ชฎา) (see figure 14). Thus, only the areas of the Yor Ying (ญ หญิง) alphabet learning are cropped and used as the visual resources for this research.



Figure 14 The Yor Ying (ญ หญิง) and Dor Chada page (ฎ ชฎา) in Baep Hat Rian Kor Kai (2010/2553), published by Sermwit Bannaakaan

Source: **Baep Hat Rian Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sermwit Bannaakaan, 2010), 30.

timeline of Yor alphabet primers from 1899 to 2012 (2442 to 2555)											
from the era of the monarchy and Western influence		from the beginning of the democratic reform		from the beginning of the National Economic Development Plan in Thailand		from the Digital Age in Thailand					
AD 1899	to	1931	1936	to	1956	1966	to	1986	1989	to	2012
B.E. 2442	to	2474	2479	to	2499	2509	to	2529	2532	to	2555

Figure 15 The diagram illustrating the four periods of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers timeline

The thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers are arranged on a timeline and divided into four periods (see figure 16), based on their social and political contexts in Thai society. The first group, (1) Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the era of the

monarchy and Western influence, consists of nine alphabet primers and collectible cigarette cards. The first Yor (ย) learning page is from the Thai language reader that began to reference femininity discourses through accompaniment of the word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) to the character of the alphabet Yor (ย) in 1899/2442. This first period is extended from the era of the monarchy and Western influence, during the reign of King Rama V, until the year 1931/2474, the period during the reign of King Rama VII. The second group, (2) Yor (ย) alphabet primers from the beginning of the democratic reform, consists of four Yor (ย) alphabet primers, dating from the beginning of the democratic reform to the year 1956/2499. The third group, (3) Yor (ย) alphabet primers from the Modernization Period, consists of eleven Yor (ย) alphabet primers and posters for learning the alphabet, dating from the Modernization Period, when the first National Development Plan was proclaimed in 1961/2504, until the year 1986/2529. The fourth group, (4) Yor (ย) alphabet primers from the Digital Age in Thailand, consists of seven Yor (ย) alphabet primers and posters for learning the alphabet, dating from the Digital Age in Thailand, when the first digital typefaces were created in 1987/2530, until the year 2012/2555, when this research was initiated. Only a few of the early out-of-print Yor (ย) alphabet primers are presented in black and white, otherwise, most of them are presented in color. In the appendix, the alphabet primers' covers and the entire page of the actual copies of Yor (ย) pages are compiled in chronological order, except the ones that are scanned from Anake Nawigamune's book. In addition, the actual sizes and the information about the publications are provided as well.

## 2. The visual semiotics procedures

In this research, the process of visual semiotic analysis and the interpretation are conducted in four procedures:

2.1 Compiling and researching the history and context of Yor (ย) alphabet primers, which are described in Chapter 4.

2.2 Investigating the verbal and non-verbal codes in Yor (ย) alphabet primers, analyzing the syntagmatic relations of signs in each Yor (ย) alphabet primer. Simultaneously, searching for the 'absences' and the intertextual relations.

2.3 Decoding or interpreting the connotative meanings of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, and then finding the paradigmatic relations of signs between Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and the other visual resources. Simultaneously, searching for the ‘absences’ and the intertextual relations.

2.4 Reforming the concept of alphabet learning and design the Yor (ญ) alphabet learning reform tools.

The procedures of 2.2 through 2.4 are described in Chapter 5.

### 3. The visual semiotics analyses and the interpretations

On each Yor (ญ) alphabet page, both word and image are considered the visual units or signs. The main visual units are the character of the Yor (ญ) alphabet, the accompanying word, if any, the rhyming word, and the illustration. The verbal codes or the accompanying words in thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet pages are textually analyzed and categorized into three groups: (see figure 16)

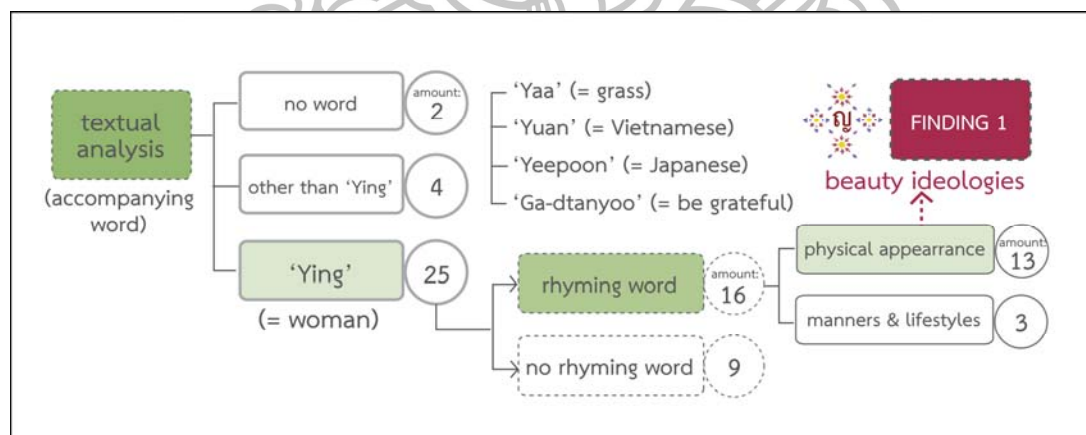


Figure 16 The diagram illustrating the textual analysis and the Finding 1

1. Yor (ญ) alphabet with no accompanying word. There are two Yor (ญ) pages with no accompanying word.

2. Yor (ญ) alphabet with the accompanying word other than ‘Ying’ (หญิง) (meaning woman). There are four Yor (ญ) pages: ‘Yaa’ (หญ้า) (meaning grass); ‘Yuan’

(ญวน) (meaning Vietnamese); ‘Yeepoon’ (ญี่ปุ่น) (meaning Japanese); and ‘Ga-dtanyoo’ (กตัญญู) (meaning be grateful).

3. Yor (ญ) alphabet with the accompanying word of ‘Ying’ (หญิง) (meaning woman). There are twenty-five Yor (ญ) pages.

In addition, from the Yor (ญ) pages with the accompanying word of ‘Ying’ (หญิง) (meaning women), sixteen of them have rhyming words while the other nine have no rhyming word. When the sixteen rhyming words are analyzed, thirteen of them have meanings related to the women’s physical appearances, while the other three have meanings related to the women’s manners and lifestyles. During this process, the first finding is discovered. All the women’s physical appearances, which are the rhyming words of the Yor (ญ) alphabet, are connected to the notions of ‘beauty.’ This finding reveals that ‘beauty ideologies’ are embedded in pre-school children’s memories through the learning of the Yor (ญ) alphabet.

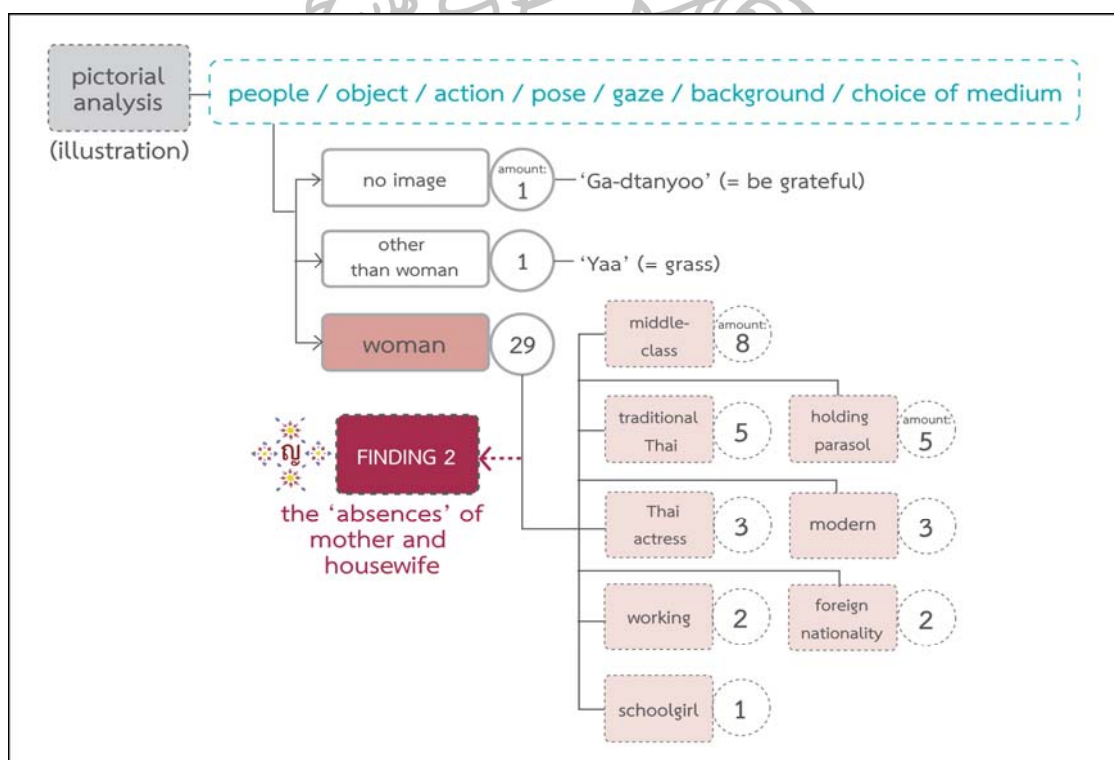


Figure 17 The diagram illustrating the pictorial analysis and the Finding 2

While the verbal codes in Yor (ญ) alphabet pages are textually analyzed, the non-verbal codes or the images, in the form of the illustrations, are analyzed as well (see figure 17). The process of the pictorial analysis is specifically designed for this research. Each image or illustration is thoroughly investigated by dissecting visual units into the tiniest signs. In order to understand the grammar of these signs, the syntagmatic structure of signs are analyzed and described in words in the form of the tables. The pictorial analysis of the signs in each Yor (ญ) alphabet page is divided into seven categories in vertical columns. They are comprised of: (1) people (2) object (3) action (4) pose (5) gaze/eye direction (6) background and (7) choice of medium (see figure 18).


visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects			3. transitivity / action	4. pose	5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	costume	hairstyle & decoration					
Figure 64 Yor #11 	Yor Ying Sopa (=beautiful woman) (primer)	1950/2493	woman	paper parasol	Western style (blouse with collar, an embroidery on the left side)	curly long	posing while holding a parasol on her right shoulder	half body / slightly turn her face to her left side & smile	not clearly seen	none	painting / printed in four-color process (only B&W is obtained)

Figure 18 Sample of the table displaying the syntagmatic structure of signs in Yor #11 alphabet primers

From the pictorial analysis, the illustrations are categorized into three groups:

1. Yor (ญ) alphabet character with no image. There is one Yor page, ‘Gatanyoo’ (กตัญญู) (meaning be grateful) with no image.
2. Yor (ญ) alphabet character with an image representing something other than ‘woman.’ There is one Yor page, depicting ‘Yaa’ (หญ้า) (meaning grass).
3. Yor (ญ) alphabet character with images of ‘representations of women.’ There are twenty-nine Yor pages with images of a woman.

From the twenty-nine Yor pages with the images of a woman, these representations are categorized into eight groups. They are comprised of: (1) middle-class women: there are eight Yor pages (2) traditional Thai women: there are five Yor pages (3) a woman holding a parasol: there are five Yor pages (4) Thai actresses: there are three Yor pages (5) modern women: there are three Yor pages (6) working women: There are two Yor pages (7) women of foreign nationalities: there are two Yor pages and (8) the schoolgirl: there is one Yor page.

From the process of the pictorial analysis in thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet pages, the second finding is discovered. There are no images or representations of the mother and the housewife. In the other Thai schoolbooks for elementary level learning, for example, Baep Rian Reo Mai Lem Neung Dton Glaang Bpratom 2 (แบบเรียนเร็วใหม่ เล่มหนึ่ง ตอนกลาง ป.2), the Thai language readers that were originally published in 1937/2480, the women's representations are portrayed as mothers and housewives. These two roles are socially expected and considered the most significant duties and responsibilities of all women, no matter what classes or statuses they are categorized by. This research reveals the absences of the 'mother and the housewife' in Yor (ญ) alphabet pages, but does not aim to find the reason why they do not appear in any alphabet primers.



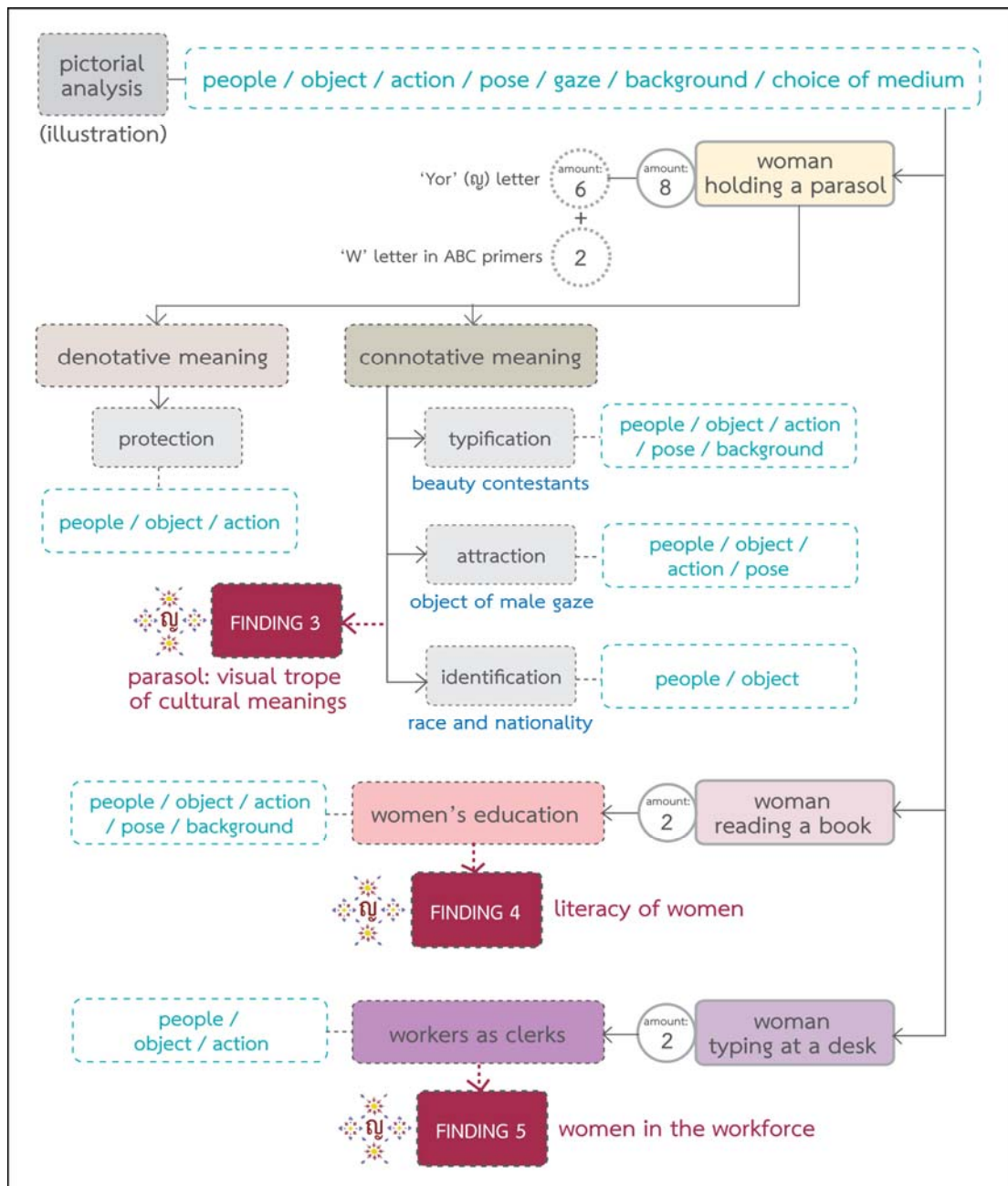


Figure 19 The diagram illustrating the pictorial analyses of the three sets of sign combinations and the Findings 3, 4 and 5

Besides the syntagmatic structure of the sign analysis in each Yor (ḡ) alphabet page, all the syntagms of thirty-one Yor (ḡ) alphabet pages are compared in the vertical columns in the tables. The method of paradigmatic relations of signs analysis is used to find similarities and differences among all the tiniest signs.

Additionally, when the other gender-related graphic design artifacts, the secondary resources of this research, are gathered and compared, the paradigmatic relations of these signs are analyzed as well. Through this process, there are three sets of sign combinations in Yor (ย) alphabet pages that reveal another three findings (see figure 19). They are comprised of:

1. The six images of a ‘woman holding a parasol’ reveal the finding of ‘parasol’ as the visual trope of three cultural meanings: (1.1) the typification of ‘beauty contestants’ (1.2) the attraction and being the ‘objects of male gaze’ (1.3) the identification of race or nationality.

2. The two images of a ‘woman reading a book’ reveal findings related to the literacy of Thai women.

3. The two images of a ‘woman typing at a desk’ reveal findings related to Thai women in the workforce.

These last three findings, together with the first and second findings from the textual and pictorial analyses, are critically discussed in Chapter 5.

In conclusion, all five findings from the historical research, visual semiotics analyses, and subsequent interpretations prove that Yor (ย) alphabet primers are a component of the social practices that embed Thai femininity discourses in children’s alphabet learning experiences. Pre-school children, who are the direct users of these learning tools, learn by rote and memorize how ‘Ying’ (หญิง) or ‘women’ and their characteristics should be. They grow up with the ideals that ‘beauty’ is the preferable characteristic of women and being an ‘object of male gaze’ is accepted as a normal lifestyle. Even though Thai women are literate, progressing at work, and constitutionally have equal rights to men, their expected roles as mothers and housewives remain social ideologies.

#### 4. The Reform

From the five research findings:

**Finding 1:** from the textual analysis, ‘beauty ideologies’ are embedded as preferable characteristics of Thai women via the rhyming words of Yor Ying (ย หญิง) alphabet learning.



**Finding 2:** from the pictorial analysis, the ‘absences’ in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers are the images representing the roles of the mother and the housewife.

**Finding 3:** from the visual semiotic analyses and the interpretation of the images of a ‘woman holding a parasol’ in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and the other gender-related graphic design artifacts, a ‘parasol’ is the visual trope and ‘typification’ of beauty contestants, ‘attraction’ of being the object of male gaze, and ‘identification’ of the woman’s race and nationality.

**Finding 4:** from the visual semiotic analyses and the interpretation of the images of a ‘woman reading a book’ in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, it has been found that even though these images connote the literacy of women, the women’s actions, costume, poses, and settings illustrate that they are reading to enjoy their leisure time, not working or studying.

**Finding 5:** From the visual semiotic analyses and the interpretation of the images of a ‘woman typing at a desk’ in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, it has been found that, even though these images connote working women in the workforce, or ‘Modern’ women, the women’s actions, poses, and especially the absence of their male bosses, illustrate that they are working under the male power. Their roles are rather supporting and related to the ‘objects of male gaze’ femininity discourse. Cultural and social ideologies about women’s appearances, manners, roles and statuses have been continuously reproduced and disseminated throughout Thai history through the representations of women in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and alphabet learning.

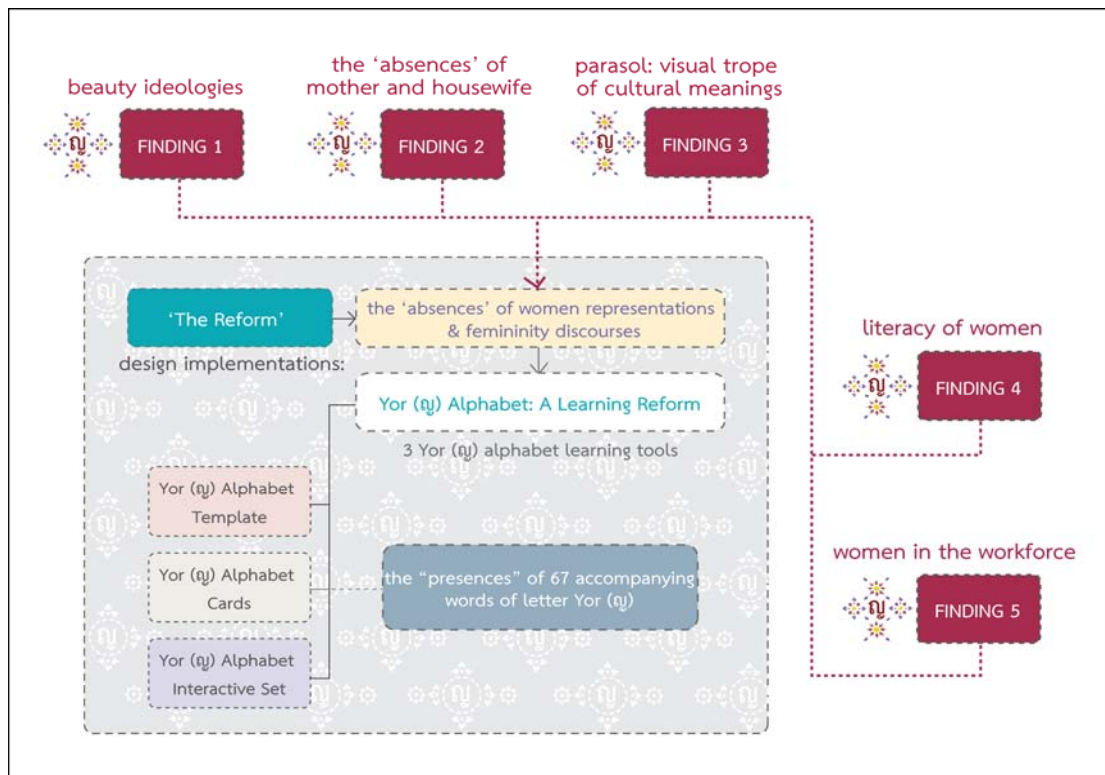


Figure 20 The diagram illustrating the five research findings and the reform

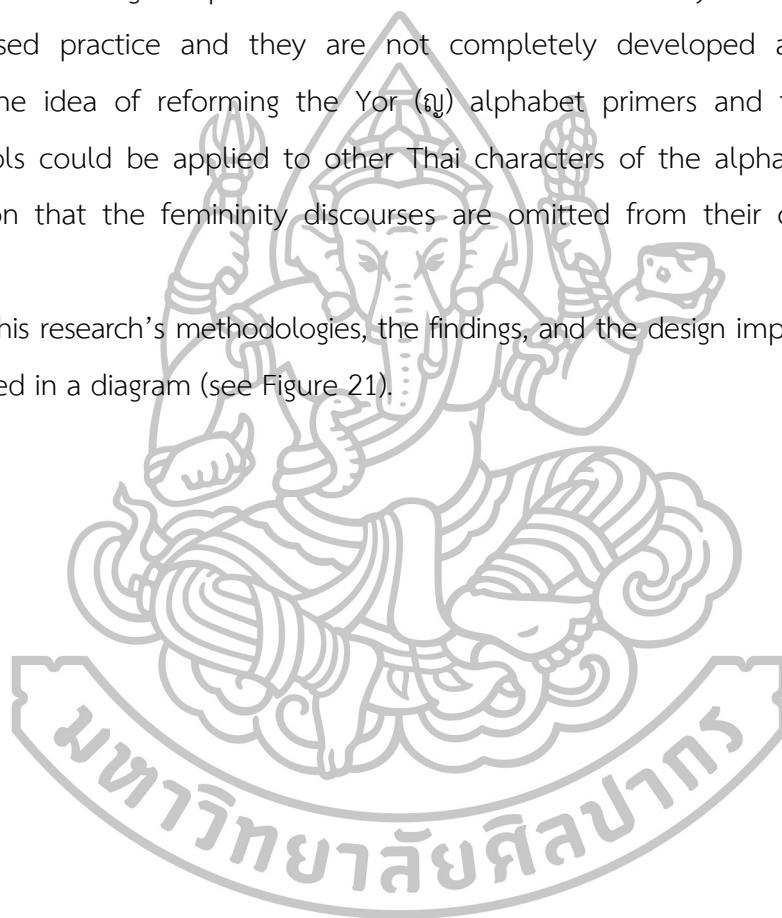
In order to reform the concept of alphabet learning, a process which in this research refers to ‘denaturalizing’ the intertextual relations between Yor (ญ) alphabet learning tools and Thai femininity discourses found in the research findings related to the Yor (ญ) alphabet learning tools, the design implementations of ‘Yor Alphabet: A Learning Reform’ are created. The concept of this learning reform tool is to address ‘the absences’ or eliminate the representations of women and Thai femininity discourses. Hence, the other Thai words that use the Yor (ญ) alphabet character as the first or final consonants are compiled. There are sixty-seven words that are used to replace the word ‘Ying’ (หญิง) or ‘Pooying’ (ผู้หญิง) (meaning woman). These words are presented as accompanying words to the letter Yor (ญ) in this learning reform tool. All sixty-seven accompanying words are addressed as ‘the presences’ that have no meaning related to women or any gender discourses (see figure 20).

Three Yor (ญ) alphabet learning reform tools are designed and presented as the prototypes. They are comprised of:

1. Yor (ญ) Alphabet Template
2. Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards
3. Yor (ญ) Alphabet Interactive Set

These design implementations act as the secondary outcome of this research-based practice and they are not completely developed as design-led research. The idea of reforming the Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and the alphabet learning tools could be applied to other Thai characters of the alphabet with the consideration that the femininity discourses are omitted from their contents and illustrations.

This research's methodologies, the findings, and the design implementations are presented in a diagram (see Figure 21).



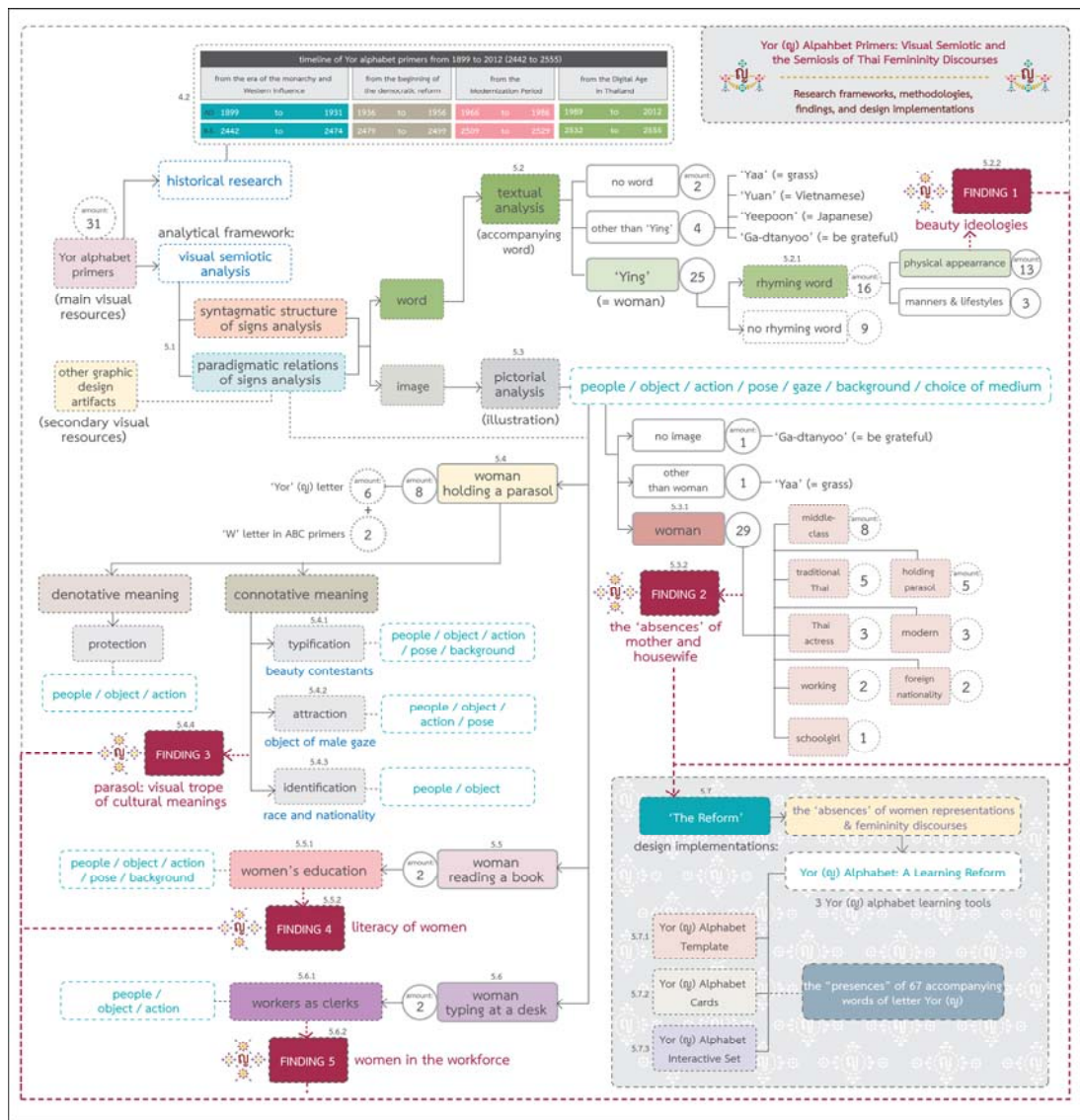


Figure 21 The diagram illustrating this research’s methodologies, the findings, and design implementations

**Summary**

In conclusion, this research is indeed what Roland Barthes called ‘semiological research’. In his book, ‘Elements of Semiology,’ this kind of research aims “to reconstitute the functioning of the systems of significations other than language in accordance with the process typical of any structuralist activity, which is to build a simulacrum of the objects under observation.” (Barthes, trans. 1986: 95)

In order to find the answers to the main research questions: ‘what are the connotative meanings of the visual languages in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers?’ and ‘how do these connotations relate to the social discourses and power of Thai femininity?’ the mixed-method of decoding and interpreting the meanings of women representations in both Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and other graphic design artifacts are employed. The ‘absences,’ which are as important as the ‘presences,’ are revealed and brought into discussion. The power relations between the males and females in patriarchic society are part of the social discourses related to gender issues. Most importantly, the ‘semiosis’ or the outcome of the whole semiotic process explicates the network of complexity and contradictions of how a conventional way of learning a character of the alphabet, Yor (ญ), has ‘fixed’ social ideologies about women, and even emphasizes gender-related discursive issues in Thai society. Lastly, the integration between a visual semiotics approach, critical discourse analysis and design implementations have brought the ‘reform’ concept into this inquiry, resulting in the alphabet learning reform tools that ‘denaturalize’ and eliminate social ideologies about women in the activities of learning characters of the alphabet.



## Chapter 4

### History of Yor (ย) alphabet primers

#### 1. Thai alphabet

In Thailand, Thai serves as the official national language and is taught in schools and used by the media and for government affairs. Linguistically, the language is related to the languages spoken in eastern Burma (Myanmar), northern Vietnam, Yunnan, and Laos. The written Thai language was based on Pali, Sanskrit, Indian, Mon and Khmer. It uses a phonemic alphabet of forty-four consonants and fifteen basic vowels, which can be assembled into about thirty-two vowel combinations. Since 1902/2445, the alphabet Khor Khuat (ข) and Khor Khon (ค) are no longer used. The forty-four consonants produce twenty-one initial consonant sounds when used at the beginning of the syllable and six final consonant sounds when used at the end of the syllable. The characters of the alphabet are placed, left to right, with no intervening space, to form syllables, words, and sentences. The vowels are written above, below, before, or after the consonant they modify. Most words are not modified or conjugated for tense, person, possession, number, gender, or subject-verb agreement. In Thai language, tense, politeness, verb-to-noun conversion, and other linguistic objectives are accomplished with the addition of modifying words to the basic 'subject-verb-object' word order. Thai pronouns are selected according to the gender and relative status of speaker and audience. Many words can be used either as an adverb or an adjective. They follow the word they modify, which may be a noun, verb, or another adjective or adverb. Many Thai words are borrowed from Sanskrit, Pali, middle Chinese, and old Khmer. However, since the beginning of the 20th century, the English language has had the greatest influence, especially for scientific, technical, international, and other modern terms.

The significant characters of most Thai alphabet letterforms are their terminals. Forty-two letterforms have loop terminals, except Kor Kai (ก) and Thor Thong (ธ). The loop terminals are divided into three groups: (1) single round loop terminals, either with inside direction as in alphabet Yor Ying (ญ), Phor Phueng (ผ) or Yor Yak (ย) or with outside direction as in alphabet Nor Nu (น), Bor Bai-mai (บ) or Hor Heep (ห) (2) double round loop terminals as in alphabet Khor Khai (ข) and Chor Chang (ช) (3) double round loop terminals with a notch as in alphabet Khor Khuat (ค), Sor So (ซ), Khor Ra-khang (ฆ) and Thor Mon-tho (ฑ). Although a set of Thai typefaces with loop terminals are primarily accepted for their suitable usage in the body text, modern typographic designs using a set of loopless terminal typefaces in the heading, subheading and body text have recently been embraced.

Table 2 Forty-four Thai alphabets with their accompanying words and meanings

	Alphabet (พยัญชนะ)	พยัญชนะ และ คำกำกับ	Alphabet & accompanying word	Meaning of the accompanying word	Initial consonant/ Final consonant
1	ก	ก ไก่	Kor kai	chicken	k/k
2	ข	ข ไข่	Khor khai	egg	kh/k
3	ช	ช ขวด	Khor khuat	bottle	kh/k
4	ค	ค ควาย	Khor khwai	water buffalo	kh/k
5	ค	ค คน	Khor khon	person	kh/k
6	ฆ	ฆ ระฆัง	Khor ra-khang	bell	kh/k
7	ง	งู	Ngor ngu	snake	ng/ng
8	จ	จ จาน	Chor chan	plate	ch/t
9	ฉ	ฉ ฉิ่ง	Chor ching	cymbals	ch/-
10	ช	ช ช้าง	Chor chang	elephant	ch/t
11	ซ	ซ โซ่	Sor so	chain	s/t
12	ฌ	ฌ เฌอ	Chor choe	tree	ch/-
13	ญ	ญ หญิง	Yor ying	woman	y/n
14	ฎ	ฎ ขฎา	Dor cha-da	headdress	d/t
15	ฏ	ฏ ปฏัก	Tor pa-tak	goad	t/t
16	ฐ	ฐ ฐาน	Thor than	pedestal	th/t
17	ฑ	ฑ มณโฑ	Thor montho	Mandodari	th/t

Table 2 Forty-four Thai alphabets with their accompanying words and meanings  
(Continue)

	Alphabet (พยัญชนะ)	พยัญชนะ และ คำกำกับ	Alphabet & accompanying word	Meaning of the accompanying word	Initial consonant/ Final consonant
18	ฒ	ฒ ผู้เฒ่า	Thor phu-thao	elder	th/t
19	ณ	ณ เณร	Nor nen	novice monk	n/n
20	ด	ด เด็ก	Dor dek	child	d/t
21	ต	ต เต่า	Tor tao	turtle	t/t
22	ถ	ถ ถุง	Thor thung	sack	th/t
23	ท	ท ทหาร	Thor tha-han	soldier	th/t
24	ธ	ธ ธง	Thor thong	flag	th/t
25	น	น หนู	Nor nu	mouse	n/n
26	บ	บ ใบไม้	Bor bai-mai	leaf	b/p
27	ป	ป ปลา	Por pla	fish	p/p
28	ผ	ผ ผึ้ง	Phor phueng	bee	ph/-
29	ฝ	ฝ ฝา	For fa	lid	f/-
30	พ	พ พาน	Phor phan	tray with pedestal	ph/p
31	ฟ	ฟ ฟัน	For fun	tooth	f/p
32	ภ	ภ ลำไผ่	Phor sam-phao	sailing boat	ph/p
33	ม	ม ม้า	Mor ma	horse	m/m
34	ย	ย ยักษ์	Yor yak	giant	y/y
35	ร	ร เรือ	Ror ruea	boat	r/n
36	ล	ล ลิง	Lor ling	monkey	l/n
37	ว	ว แหวน	Wor Waen	ring	w/w
38	ศ	ศ ศาลา	Sor sala	pavilion	s/t
39	ษ	ษ ฤๅษี	Sor rue-si	hermit	s/t
40	ส	ส เสือ	Sor suea	tiger	s/t
41	ห	ห หีบ	Hor heep	chest	h/-
42	ฬ	ฬ จุฬา	Lor chu-la	kite	l/n
43	อ	อ อ่าง	Or ang	basin	-
44	ฮ	ฮ นกฮูก	Hor nok-huk	owl	h/-

Source: Pannawit Tandraechanurat, **Thai alphabet**, accessed April 26, 2016, available from <http://www.omniglot.com/writing/thai.htm>



## 2. History of Thai alphabet learning and Thai printing technology

According to the history of Thai language readers compiled by Prof. Dr. Niyada Laosontorn in “Changes in Thai Readers”, the first Thai language reader produced in the form of five Samudthais (สมุดไทย) was Jindamani (จินตามณี), written by Phra Horathippadi (พระโหราธิบดี) in 1672/2215 in the Ayudhaya Period during the reign of King Narai (สมเด็จพระนารายณ์มหาราช) (reigning from 1656/2199 to 1688/2231). The texts were used for teaching Thai language to boys in informal group studies or in the home prior to their studies with the monks at the Buddhist temples at the age of seven or eight. These boys were ordained as Buddhist novices or Nen (เณร). Jindamani was presumably composed before Siam had developed its own formal educational system. At the same time, the French missionaries were settling in the Kingdom of Ayudhaya and starting to establish formal schools while also trying to convince Siamese citizens to become Christian. Forty-four Thai alphabets make up the content of the fourth section named Gaan Jaek Akson (การแจกอักษร). Unfortunately, during the second Burmese-Siamese War from 1765/2308 to 1767/2310, its original copies were lost. The more than one hundred copies of Jindamani conserved at The National Library in Bangkok are the written script copies that might contain additional contents added during duplication.

Later, during the early Rattanakosin period, Thai alphabets were still taught as a part of basic Thai language learning through many language readers such as Bpratomb Kor Gaa (ประถม ก กา), Bpratomb Mala (ประถมมาลา), and Akson Ni-dhi (อักษรนิติ). All were composed and written in verse or poetic forms and their contents consisted of traditional Thai language learning. The students were required to read and learn by duplicating their teachers’ copies by hand (see Figure 22). Therefore, even though there were no “formal standardized” readers at the time, the learning process of copying a particular set of knowledge may be considered as accepting these texts as the standard.



Figure 22 A boy learning the Thai language by reading Samudthai and duplicating characters on a slate by hand during studies with a monk teacher

Source: **History of school in Thailand**, accessed February 5, 2016, available from <http://allknowledges.tripod.com/historyofschool.html>

Significantly, the printing technology that affected how knowledge and information were publicly spread in the Kingdom of Siam was introduced during the reign of King Rama III (reigning from 1824/2367 to 1851/2394) when Dan Beach Bradley, a Baptist missionary from the United States, brought the technique of letterpress or movable type printing to, and set up a printing press in, Bangkok. Bradley's typeface, which was the first set of movable types made in the Kingdom of Siam in 1842/2385 and used in the printing of the obstetrics book "Kampee Kantha Raksa" (คำภีร์ ครรภ์รักษา) (see Figure 23 and Figure 24), and another following set used in the printing of the first Thai newspaper "The Bangkok Recorder" (หนังสือจดหมายเหตุนานาชาติ), set the standard of Thai letterform structure for their descendants. Considering the characters of the Thai alphabet, the slanting letterform of the early set of movable types inspired by the Thai written script called 'Aa-lak' type (แบบอาลักษณ์) gradually changed to the upright position like that in Bradley's typeface.



When books, newspapers, schoolbooks, and novels were published in mass production, knowledge from Western civilization in part replaced local wisdoms and traditional beliefs of Thai citizens. Since then, many private printing presses were set up and reproduced abundant knowledge from the original copies of Samudthai that were once limited to the royal family and nobleman. Moreover, the standard letterform and language grammar printed in schoolbooks and authorized by the royal or governmental institutions dominated how Thai people across the Kingdom learned, read and wrote. Especially in 1898/2441 during the reign of King Rama V (reigning from 1868/2411 to 1910/2453), the education reform was proclaimed in many provinces and schoolbooks, including Thai language readers, were printed in great number and disseminated to the commoners. Since then, Thai language learning was influenced by English language grammar and the Western educational system.

During the reign of King Rama V, the first Thai school was established in the palace and was named Rong School Luang (โรงเรียนหลวง) or The Royal Palace School (see Figure 25). The set of five Thai language readers, or Baep Rian Luang (แบบเรียนหลวง), composed by Phraya Srisunthornvohan (พระยาศรีสุนทรโวหาร) were used to teach reading and writing in The Royal Palace School. The most renowned language reader in this set, that might be called the “state reader,” was Molbotbhanphakit (มุลบทบรรพกิจ) (see Figure 26). This reader was used in The Royal Palace School and early government schools in Buddhist monasteries for almost twenty years, from 1871/2414 until 1890/2433.



Figure 25 The Royal Palace School in Siam, 1899/2442

Source: Teakdoor, **Siam, Thailand & Bangkok Old Photo Thread**, accessed February 5, 2016, available from <http://teakdoor.com/famous-threads/39970-siam-thailand-bangkok-old-photo-thread-65.html>

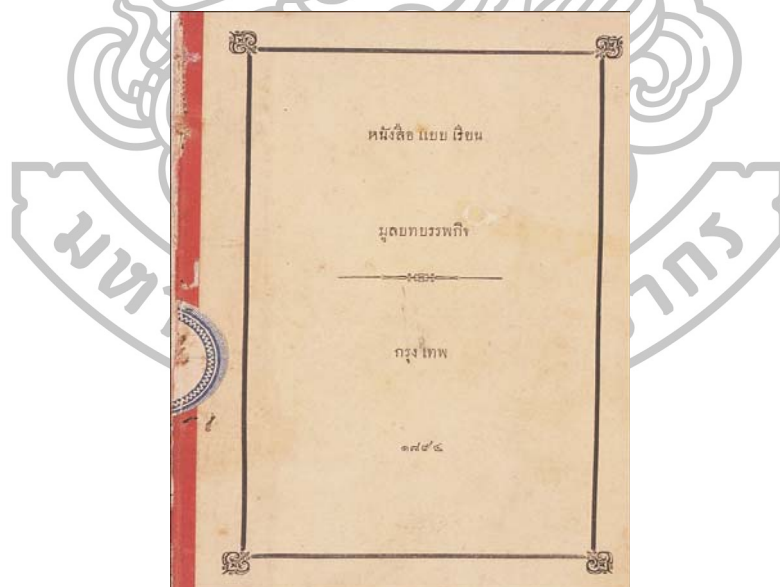


Figure 26 Molbotbhanphakit's cover, 1894/2437

Source: Pracha Suveeranont, **Tracing Thai Typefaces** (Bangkok: S.C. Matchbox, 2002).

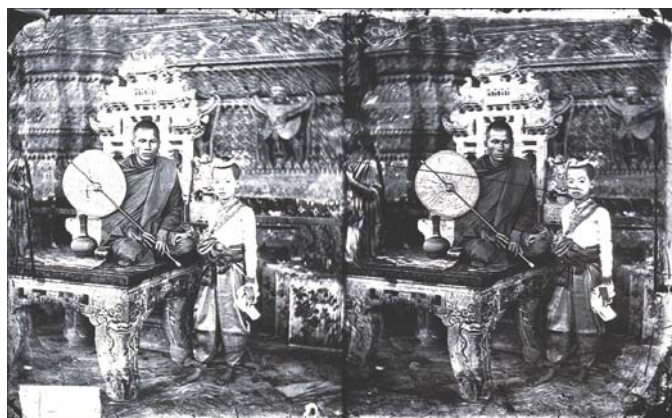


Figure 27 A monk teaching a royal pupil in 1865/2408

Source: Wikimedia Commons, **A Siamese bonze (Buddhist Priest) with a royal pupil, Siam**, accessed February 5, 2016, available from [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AA\\_Siamese\\_bonze\\_\(Buddhist\\_Priest\)\\_with\\_a\\_royal\\_pupil%2C\\_Siam\\_Wellcome\\_V0037072.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AA_Siamese_bonze_(Buddhist_Priest)_with_a_royal_pupil%2C_Siam_Wellcome_V0037072.jpg).

In 1887/2430, the Education Department (กรมศึกษาธิการ) was established and Thai curricula and the educational system were improved and modernized. At the time when the Education Department had not established its own printing press, which was later called Kurusapa Printing Press (โรงพิมพ์คุรุสภา), most schoolbooks were printed by private presses, for example Bamrungnugoongit (บำรุงนุกูลกิจ), Sophon Pipatthanakorn Press (โรงพิมพ์โสภณพิพรรตธนากร), and Aksornnit (อักษรนิติ). Movable types most commonly used to print schoolbooks at the time were ‘Wittayajaan’ (วิทยาจารย์) and ‘Farangset’ (ฝรั่งเซต), which was created for the Assumption Press and later commonly used.

The new “state primer,” Baep Rian Reo (แบบเรียนเร็ว) was composed in 1887/2430 by Prince Damrong Rajanubhab (สมเด็จพระยาบรมมงกุฎราชกุมาร), the Director General of the Education Department, and Phraya Wisut Suriyasak (พระยาวิสุทธิสุริยศักดิ์). Baep Rian Reo was a set of three books, designed to be simple in use for both the students and teachers. Children were taught how to read within a year, compared to the three years studying time when learning with the old set of “state readers”. This reader was considered the most significant revolution in the Thai alphabet learning method, as accompanying words and illustrations were added to all forty-four letters. Moreover, the English language grammar, especially the word

categories such as noun, adjective, or verb, were first introduced to the Thai language (Laosontorn, 2009: 307). For forty-nine years, from 1890/2433 until 1937/2480, Baep Rian Reo was used consecutively in schools throughout the country including The Royal Palace School, Christian schools and government schools in Buddhist monasteries.

Later, in 1892/2435, the Education Department compiled the new Thai language reader, Siam Waiyaagon (สยามไวยากรณ์), which was considered another significant revolution in Thai language learning. All knowledge about Thai language grammar was adapted in accordance with English language grammar, such as phonetics, syntax, morphology, etc. (Laosontorn, 2009: 308). Another notable Thai language reader was that by Darun Seuksaa (ตรุณศึกษา) (see Figure 28) composed by F. Hilaire, the French missionary, in 1910/2453. It was the first Thai language reader authored by a foreigner and was aimed for use in the Assumption School of Bangkok (โรงเรียนอัสสัมชัญ), a renowned Christian school that remains open at present. This reader, which was influenced by Baep Rian Reo (แบบเรียนเร็ว), was comprised of three books. There were some distinctions from other readers, such as the contents that were divided into short sections, and each section concluded with a review or a short reading exercise, etc.



Figure 28 Darun Seuksaa Dton Klang, printed by the Assumption Press Bangkok, 1921/2464

Source: Pracha Suveeranont, **Tracing Thai Typefaces** (Bangkok: S.C. Matchbox, 2002).

During the reign of King Rama VI (reigning from 1910/2453 to 1925/2468), newspaper printing businesses flourished. They were owned by Siamese or Chinese bourgeoisie instead of noblemen or foreigners. At the time, a movable type set called the ‘Pong’ family (ชุดโป๊ง), including ‘Pong Sae’ (โป๊งแซ) and ‘Pong Mai’ (โป๊งไม้), was created and used as display types for headlines. After the Second World War when publications were still the main media for learning and entertainment, a lot of printing presses published daily newspapers, magazines, novels, and schoolbooks. During this period, a group of writers and journalists called “Kana Supaap Burut” (คณะสุภาพบุรุษ) declared their jobs as being professionals who were able to be independent and self-employed. One of their publications was the “Suppaap Burut” journal, which was published every two weeks in 1929/2472 and later re-issued as daily newspaper in 1939/2482. The newspapers’ headlines used wood types as the display texts (see Figure 29). Moreover, when the printing businesses proliferated, services such as the printing block production houses were separated from the printing presses. The gatherings of skillful artists, illustrators, and typographers became the starting careers of the later so-called graphic design professionals. Famous production design studios at the time were “Kana Chaang” (คณะช่าง), “Silpa-khan” (ศิลปาคาร), “Silpa-gam” (ศิลปกรรม), “Hong Silp” (ห้องศิลป์), “Sa-nay Silp” (เสน่ห์ศิลป์), etc. During this period, various hand-drawn display types were created and used as titles, headlines, column heads, or image descriptions. Besides designing artworks for publications, another popular job that were crafted by these studios were rubber stamps for personal and institutional usage (see Figure 30).





Figure 29 “Suppap Burut” daily newspapers, 1940/2483

Source: Pracha Suveeranont, **Tracing Thai Typefaces** (Bangkok: S.C. Matchbox, 2002).



Figure 30 Kana Chaang’s rubber stamp advertisement, 1936/2479

Source: Pracha Suveeranont, **Tracing Thai Typefaces** (Bangkok: S.C. Matchbox, 2002).

Subsequently, educational institutions started to offer art, design, printing techniques and craftsmanship classes. In 1913/2456, Pohchang School (โรงเรียนเพาะช่าง) was established and later called Pohchang Academy of Arts (วิทยาลัยเพาะช่าง มหาวิทยาลัยเทคโนโลยีราชมงคลรัตนโกสินทร์). This school was rooted in its wood engraving division (กองช่างแกะไม้) under the Textbook Division (กองแบบเรียน), the

Ministry of Education (กระทรวงธรรมการ), that was responsible for creating woodblocks for illustrations in schoolbooks.

In 1930/2473, Yuan Thannithet (ย้วน ทันนิเทศ) composed another alphabet primer Baep Rian Wai Lem Neung Dton Dton (แบบเรียนไว เล่มหนึ่ง ตอนต้น). This was the first primer where rhymes were added at the end of the alphabet following the character's accompanying words. This new method made learning much easier for children and better enabled them to memorize all forty-four characters of the alphabet by rote. A few years after the democratic reform, during the reign of King Rama VIII (reigning from 1935/2478 to 1946/2489) in 1936/2479, Thailand proclaimed a two-year educational plan and the new language primer Baep Rian Tan Samai (แบบเรียนทันสมัย), composed by Noie Isranggoon Na Ayudhaya (นาย อิศรางกูร ณ อยุธยา), was permitted by The Ministry of Education (กระทรวงธรรมการ). During this period, many language primers were composed and permitted for use in schools throughout the country such as Baep Rian Reo Mai (แบบเรียนเร็วใหม่), Baep Hat Aan Nangseu Thai (แบบหัดอ่านหนังสือไทย) (see Figure 31) and etc.

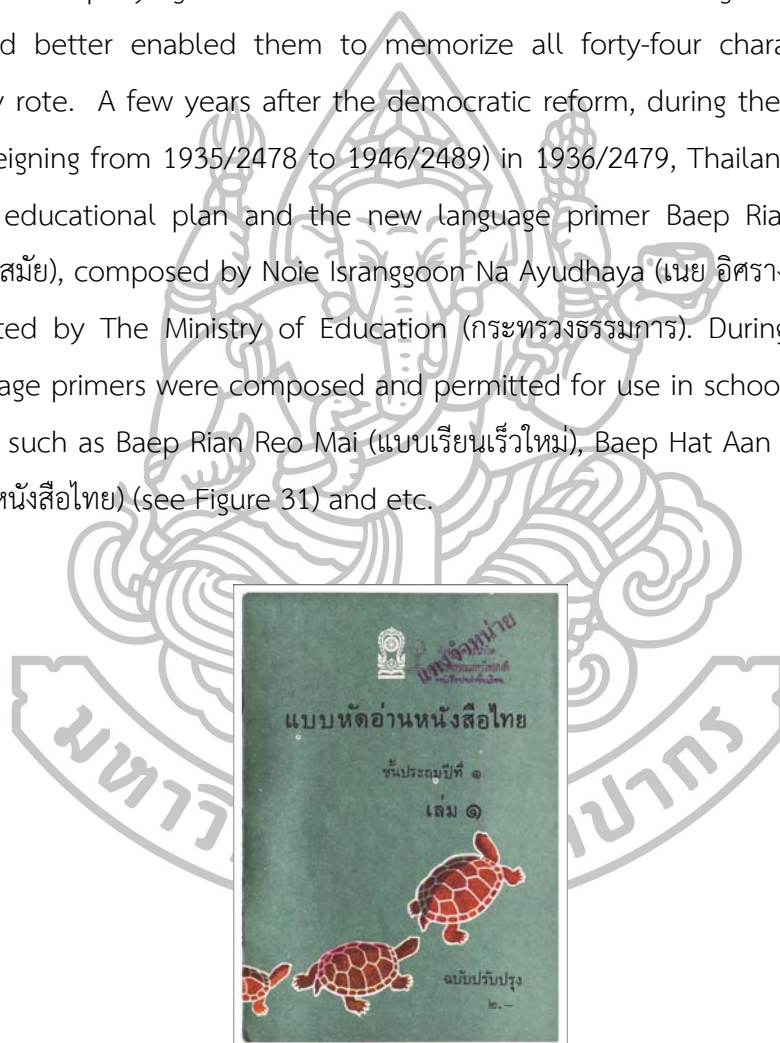


Figure 31 The cover of Baep Hat Aan Nangseu Thai Lem Neung 15th edition, 1976/2519

Source: Jaa Daeng, “Nangseu Rian Mana Manee Piti Choojai” Jitwittayaa Mana Manee Piti Choojai, accessed September 23, 2011, available from <http://pouloaun.blogspot.com/2009/08/blog-post.html>

In 1947/2490, Prachachang (ประชาช่าง), a private graphic house and printing company, published Baep Rian Kor Kai (แบบเรียน ก ไก่) where rhymes were added to the characters of the alphabet and their accompanying words as well. There were many versions of alphabet primers produced by Prachachang throughout its business achievements, all of which were used in kindergartens or for home teaching. Interestingly, one version of Prachachang's alphabet primers entitled Baep Rian Kor Kai Anubaan (แบบเรียน ก. ไก่ อุนบาล) that was printed in color with photographic illustrations has been reproduced continuously for more than forty years up until present (2012/2555) (see Figure 32). Besides the book, Prachachang also published alphabet-learning tools in the format of posters and a box set of cards.

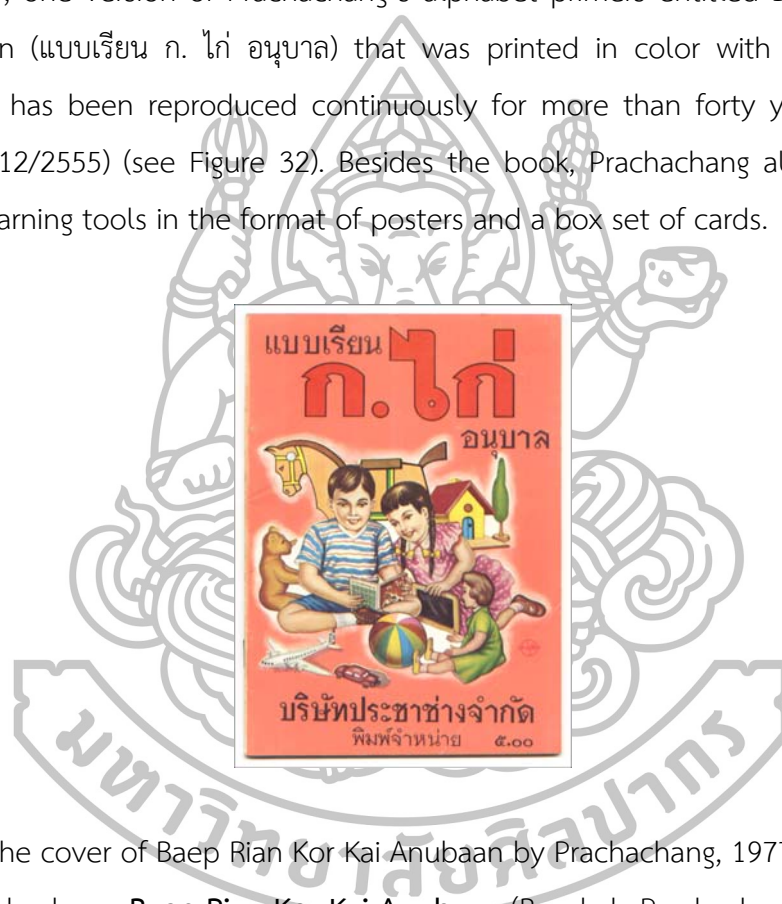


Figure 32 The cover of Baep Rian Kor Kai Anubaan by Prachachang, 1977/2520  
Source: Prachachang, **Baep Rian Kor Kai Anubaan** (Bangkok: Prachachang, 1977), cover.

From the beginning of the National Economic Development Plan, the Thai economy became industrialized and supported by the United States government. A major development in printing businesses was the collaboration between “Thai Wattana Panit Press” (สำนักพิมพ์ไทยวัฒนาพานิช) and the Monotype Company from the United Kingdom to create a set of typefaces called “Monotype” (โมนอนไทป์). This set was specifically designed to be legible in a small size and used in the Monotype

typesetting machine that improved the quality of mass printing. Typefaces originating during this period were “Unesco” (ยูเนสโก) and “Kurusapa” (คุรุสภา). When movable type printing was outdated and replaced by offset lithography, dry-transfer letterpress was used to create the artwork for headlines. “Manoptica” (มานพตี๊ก้า) (see Figure 33) was a new typeface designed as the dry-transfer letter by Manop Srisomporn (มานพ ศรีสัมพร) with the intention to have the same character as the Roman typeface, “Helvetica”. From 1973/2516 until 1979/2522, he created more than twenty typefaces for the dry-transfer letter-press technique.

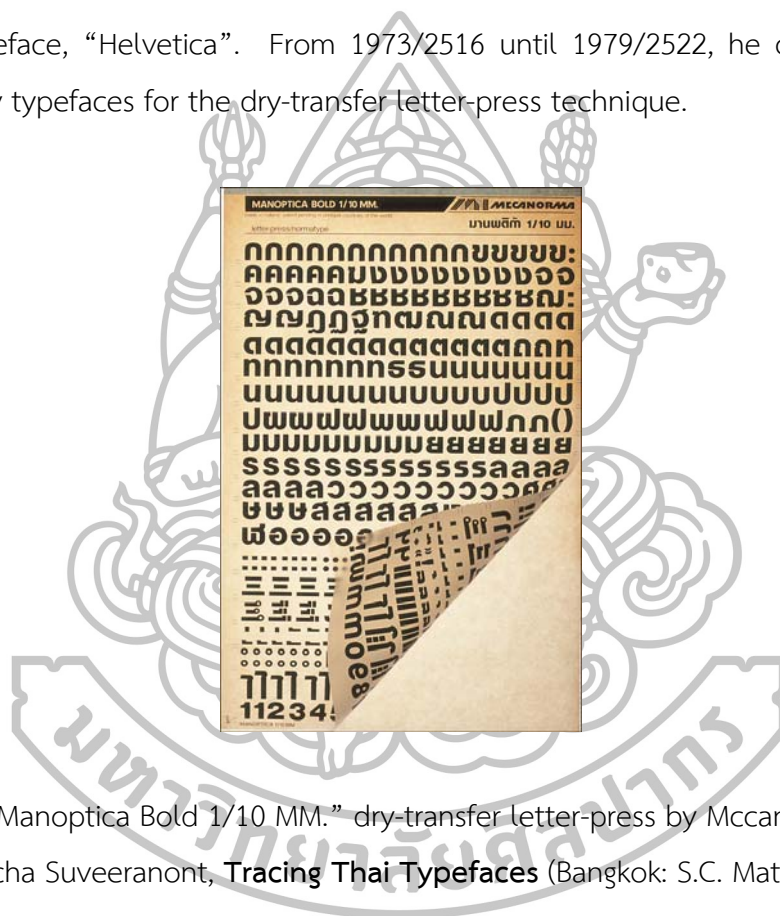


Figure 33 “Manoptica Bold 1/10 MM.” dry-transfer letter-press by Mccanorma

Source: Pracha Suveeranont, **Tracing Thai Typefaces** (Bangkok: S.C. Matchbox, 2002).

In 1974/2517, another development in the printing business was the photo-typesetting technique from the collaboration between the “Thairath” (ไทยรัฐ) newspaper publisher and “Compugraphic” company (see Figure 34). Many new typefaces called “EAC” set were created by Thongterm Samerasoot (ทองเต็ม เสรมรสุต), for example “Tom Light” (ทอมไลท์) and “Tom Bold” (ทอมโบลด์). Later, the photo-typesetting technique was combined with a digital system and called the Modular Compositing System (MCS), through which their typefaces were improved (see Figure 35).

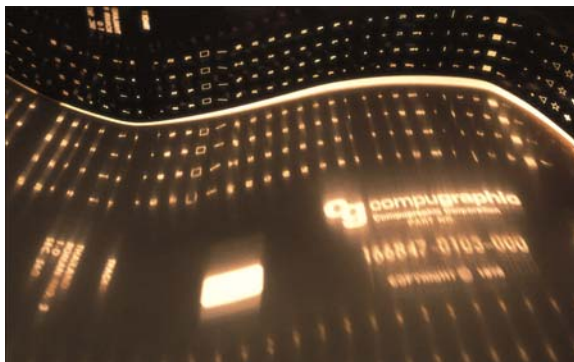


Figure 34 Negative film for Compugraphic's photo-typesetting technique

Source: Pracha Suveeranont, **Tracing Thai Typefaces** (Bangkok: S.C. Matchbox, 2002), 101.

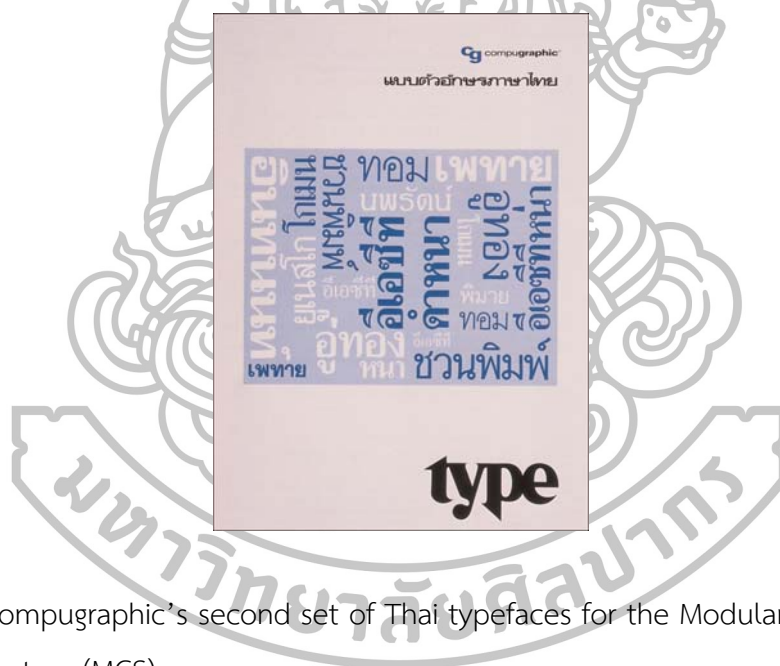


Figure 35 Compugraphic's second set of Thai typefaces for the Modular Compositing System (MCS)

Source: Pracha Suveeranont, **Tracing Thai Typefaces** (Bangkok: S.C. Matchbox, 2002), 101.

In 1977/2520, the fourth National Education Plan 1977-1981 (แผนการศึกษาแห่งชาติ ฉบับที่ 4 2520-2524) was proclaimed and compulsory primary education was extended to six years. The new Thai language primer Nangseu Rian Pasathai (หนังสือเรียนภาษาไทย) (see Figure 36) with its contents that introduced the recallable characters Manee and Mana (มานี่ มานะ) to the public was enforced in elementary classes.



Figure 36 Page 2 of “Nangseu Rian Pasathai Bpratom 1 Lem 1” 13th edition, 1989/2532  
 Source: Jaa Daeng, “Nangseu Rian Mana Manee Piti Choojai” Jitwittayaa Mana Manee Piti Choojai, accessed September 23, 2011, available from <http://pouloaun.blogspot.com/2009/08/blog-post.html>

Consequently, the letterpress printing and movable types foundries were brought to an end. The era of digital offset printing started when Dear Book Company created the first set of digital typefaces in 1987/2530 (see Figure 37). Since then, the limitless designs of fonts or typefaces, of both body text and display types, have provided opportunities for users to select those that are best suited to their purposes.

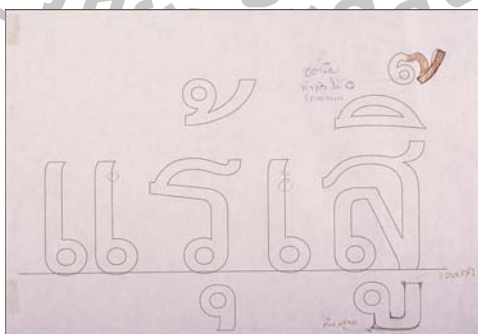


Figure 37 A sketch of DB Surawong Modern digital typeface by Prinya Roj-aryanont  
 Source: Pracha Suveeranont, **Tracing Thai Typefaces** (Bangkok: S.C. Matchbox, 2002), 105.

Besides the language readers that aimed to teach basic grammar and reading skills to students, there were many versions of handwriting exercise books. Children practiced writing the alphabet, simple words and phrases in these exercise books. For example, Dtamraa Hat Laaimeu (ตำราหัดลายมือ) (1915/2458), Baep Kud Laaimeu Panaek Bpratomb (แบบคัดลายมือแผนกประถม) (1932/2475), and Baep Kud Nangseu Thai (แบบคัดหนังสือไทย) (1933/2476), etc.

In conclusion, the learning of the Thai alphabet has been a part of basic grammar language learning in informal education from the Ayudhaya Period up until the educational modernization during the reign of King Rama V. Jindamani and Molbotbhanphakit were the prominent Thai language readers used before the influences of English language grammar. During the educational modernization, Baep Rian Reo Lem Neung Dton Dton was considered the most significant revolution of the Thai alphabet primer, as it introduced the new method of learning through the addition of accompanying words and illustrations to all forty-four alphabets. Its contents also included how the consonants, vowels, and tone marks combined to make different words. Later, around 1915/2458, the forty-four alphabet primers were printed separately by many private printing presses in small booklets as supplements to Molbotbhanphakit, which remained in use in schools for many years. After the democratic reform, many Thai alphabet primers, of which their contents were solely focused on learning the alphabet, were printed by various printing presses. Prachachang is one of the printing presses that has been publishing many versions of alphabet primers since 1947/2490 up until present.

### 2.1 History of Yor (ญ) alphabet learning

During the early Rattanakosin Period, the illegal lottery called Huay Kor Khor (หวย ก ข) was popular among Chinese people living and working in Siam. The wooden plates with images of the characters from Chinese tales and Chinese words were used as gambling tools. In order for Thai people who could not read Chinese to be able to take part and gamble, thirty-six Thai alphabets were added to the other sides of the plates (see Figure 38). For example, the Yor (ญ) letter was added to the thirteenth Chinese word, Yong Seng (ย่องเซ็ง). According to the Chinese rhymes accompanying the illustration in Huay Kor Khor book (see Figure 39), Yong

Seng is a woman who was a goose in a former life (see Figure 40). Hence, the Chinese words of the characters from Chinese tales were the first words to accompany the Thai alphabet characters, but were only used by and among gamblers.



Figure 38 Huay Kor Khor wooden plate displayed in the National Gallery Phra Nakorn, image from a book, “Thaïlande des Formes,” 1979/2522 p.35  
Source: Anake Nawigamune, *Tracing Kor Kai* (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 29.

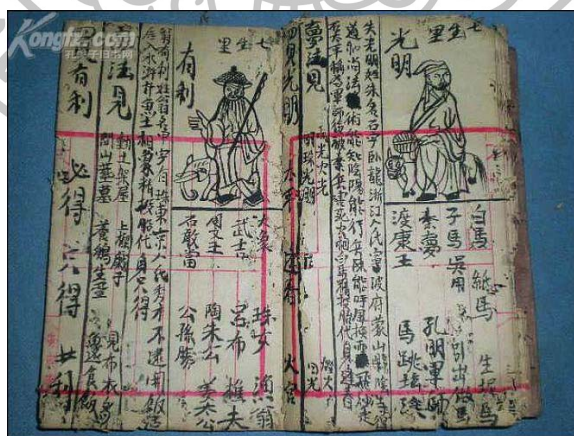


Figure 39 A Chinese lottery book with calligraphy and hand-drawn illustrations  
Source: OK Nation Blog, *Huay Kor Khor*, accessed April 20, 2016, available from <http://www.oknation.net/blog/chailasalle/2015/04/25/entry-1>





Figure 40 An illustration of Yong Seng, a woman from Chinese tales, with a goose and the Thai character of the alphabet Yor (ญ)

Source: OK Nation Blog, **Huay Kor Khor**, accessed April 20, 2016, available from <http://www.oknation.net/blog/chailasalle/2015/04/25/entry-1>

For Thai language learning, the forty-four characters of the alphabet were studied as a part of basic grammar and had no words attached to them. Until the reign of King Rama V, Phraya Srisunthornvohan, who taught at The Royal Palace School and composed the set of five Thai language readers, initiated the first twenty-six Thai accompanying words that were added to the characters of the alphabet. They were added to the particular groups of letters that shared the same pronunciation with an additional character, such as the letters Chor (ช) and Chor (ฌ) or Thor (ท) and Thor (ธ), etc.

The first accompanying word to the letter Yor (ญ) was Yart (ญาติ) (meaning relative), while another letter with the same pronunciation, Yor (ย), was paired with the word Yinyon (ยินยอม) (meaning hearing and seeing). However, this innovative way of teaching and learning the characters of the alphabet was not printed in the primer itself. Later, in his article “Methods of How to Teach Thai Language” (วิธีสอนหนังสือไทย) published in 1877/2420, Phraya Srisunthornvohan explained the reasoning behind his initiation of these accompanying words. Besides stating that the purpose was to help children to learn the characters of the alphabet

in a simple way, he insisted that these words were not enforced as the standard method of teaching and learning the alphabet (see Figure 41).

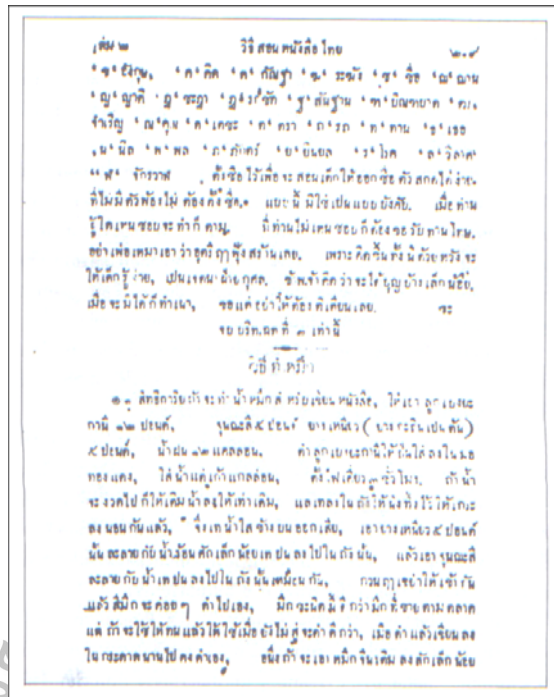


Figure 41 Phraya Srisunthornvohan’s article “Methods of How to Teach Thai Language,” 1877/2420

Source: Anake Nawigamune, *Tracing Kor Kai* (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 37.

Anake Nawigamune (อเนก นาวิกมูล) discovered that, for the first time, the forty-four characters of the alphabet had a complete set of accompanying words printed in the tenth edition of *Baep Rian Reo* (แบบเรียนเร็ว) by Bamrungnugoongit Press (โรงพิมพ์บำรุงนุกูลกิจ) in 1899/2442. (Nawigamune, 1993: 44) In this set, only two words initiated by Phraya Srisunthornvohan were used while the other forty-two words were newly created by Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, the co-author of *Baep Rian Reo*. This complete set of forty-four characters with accompanying words supposedly established the everlasting “official and standard way to learn and memorize the Thai alphabet.” For example, the letter Kor (ก) is paired with its accompanying word Kai (meaning chicken) and the letter Khor (ข) is paired with its

accompanying word Khai (meaning egg). For the thirteenth letter, it was the first time that the letter Yor (ย) was paired with the word Pooying (ผู้หญิง) (meaning woman), marking the beginning of the timeless relations between the letter Yor (ย) and meanings related to Thai femininity. But up until present, the reason why this word was selected has not been identified.

Historically, the word “Pooying” (ผู้หญิง) (meaning woman), which was differently written from the current word ‘ผู้หญิง’, was found in the inscription on the first stone slab of King Ram Khamhaeng’s stele telling of his autobiography, composed in 1292/1835. Part of the biography described that his parents had five children, three of them being male and two female. This stele was inscribed by using the Sukhothai’s Thai letterform. In addition, the etymological information on the word “Pooying” (ผู้หญิง) and the presumption as to why it was selected to accompany the alphabet Yor (ย) was explained as the word “Ying” (ยั้ง) or “Mae-ying” (แม่ยั้ง) was used in Thai old language, Lao language and Lanna language to mean ‘woman.’ It is the nasal speech sound that differs from the oral speech sound of the alphabet character Yor (ย). Moreover, when comparing the alphabet character Yor (ย) to other languages’ letterforms in the Indo-European family languages, such as the tenth alphabet “ชญ” in Sanskrit, “ญ” in Pali and “gn” in Latin, all of them have meanings related to ‘knowledge, wisdom, scholar and philosopher.’ Interestingly, these words in Thai language use the alphabet Yor (ย), for example ‘ปัญญา, ญาณทัศนะ, นักปราชญ์, วิญญูชน, สัพพัญญู and ปรัชญา.’

## 2.2 Development of the Yor (ย) letterform

Evidence on a stone inscription from the reign of King Ram Kamhaeng during the Sukhothai Period depicts the Yor (ย) letterform without the lower base (เชิง). Later, by 1357/1900, the lower base had been added to the letterform. From the compilation of “The Development of the Thai Alphabets” by Phraya Anuman Rajadhon (พระยาอนุมานราชธน) published in 1963/2506, it can be seen that its letterform as handwritten script has changed over time (see Figure 42).

The Development of the Thai Alphabets	
King Ram Kamhaeng / 1283 A.D. (1826 B.E.)	๓
King Lu Thai / 1357 A.D. (1900 B.E.)	๓
Chiangmai Area / 1518 A.D. (2061 B.E.)	๓
Lao Script - (ລາວໂພດທັດພູນະ ພູ)	-
King Narai / 1660 A.D. (2203 B.E.)	๓
Compressed Thai Characters	๓
Thai Writing - Tamarind-leaf shape	๓
Thai Writing - King Rama I / 1782-1809 A.D. (2325-2352 B.E.)	๓

Figure 42 The Development of the Yor (ย) letterform, from 1283/1826 to 1809/2352

During the Second World War, under the command of Field Marshal Plaek Phibunsongkhram, Thai spelling reform was announced in 1942/2485. The Thai writing system was simplified and thirteen letters were eliminated, with the letter Yor (ย) being replaced with Yor (ย) in the initial consonant, but retained in the final consonant without its lower base. Thai language spelling during this two-year period was widely known as Paasaa Wibat (ภาษาวิบัติ) (meaning the ruined language).

Since then, even though the printing technologies had developed over time, from woodblock, letterpress, lithography and offset press to digital press, there had been only two main differences that occurred in the Yor (ย) letterform. The lower base was either attached to the main letterform, as seen in Thong Siam (ธงสยาม), Kana Chang (คณษช้าง), and Manoptica (มานพติก้า) in Figure 43, or separately placed under the main letterform.

Bradley (บริดล) 1841/2384 - 1868/2411	ญ
Thong Siam (ธงสยาม) 1868/2411 - 1910/2453	ญ
Farangset (ฝรั่งเซต) 1898/2441 - 1927/2470	ญ
Pong Mai (โป่งไม้) 1917/2460 - 1939/2482	ญ
Kana Chang (คณชะง) 1941/2484 - 1956/2499	ญ
Monotype (โมนโทยป์) 1957/2500 - 1972/2515	ญ
Manoptica (มานพติกา) 1973/2516 - 1987/2530	ญ
Tom Light (ทอมไลท์) 1976/2519 - 1987/2530	ญ

Figure 43 The Development of the Yor (ญ) letterform, from 1841/2384 to 1987/2530

### 3. Yor (ญ) alphabet primers' timeline

For this research that focuses solely on the letter Yor (ญ), thirty-one Thai alphabet primers are collected in chronological order. They represent various forms of publications including pre-school learning books, learning cards, posters and collectible cigarette cards. Most are out-of-print primers in black and white and color photographs compiled by Anake Nawigamune in the book, "Tracing Kor Kai" (แกะรอย ก. ไก่), published by Sarakhadee Press in 1993/2536. Besides that, the actual copies of recently published alphabet primers from 1967/2510 are further investigated. By analyzing their cultural, political, and social contexts, these thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers are divided into four periods: (see Figure 34)

3.1 Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the era of the monarchy and Western influence.

3.2 Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the beginning of the democratic reform.

3.3 Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the beginning of the National Economic Development Plan in Thailand.

3.4 Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the Digital Age in Thailand.

The compilation of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers for the period of one hundred and fourteen years, from 1899/2442 to 2012/2555, reveals various contextual representations of Thai women. These representations illustrate the meaning of the most frequently used accompanying word, Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman). Up until present, the Yor (ญ) character of the alphabet is spontaneously referred to as Yor Ying (ญ หญิง) because of what Thai people have learned by rote from the alphabet primers or “state primers” since its first accompaniment in 1899/2442.

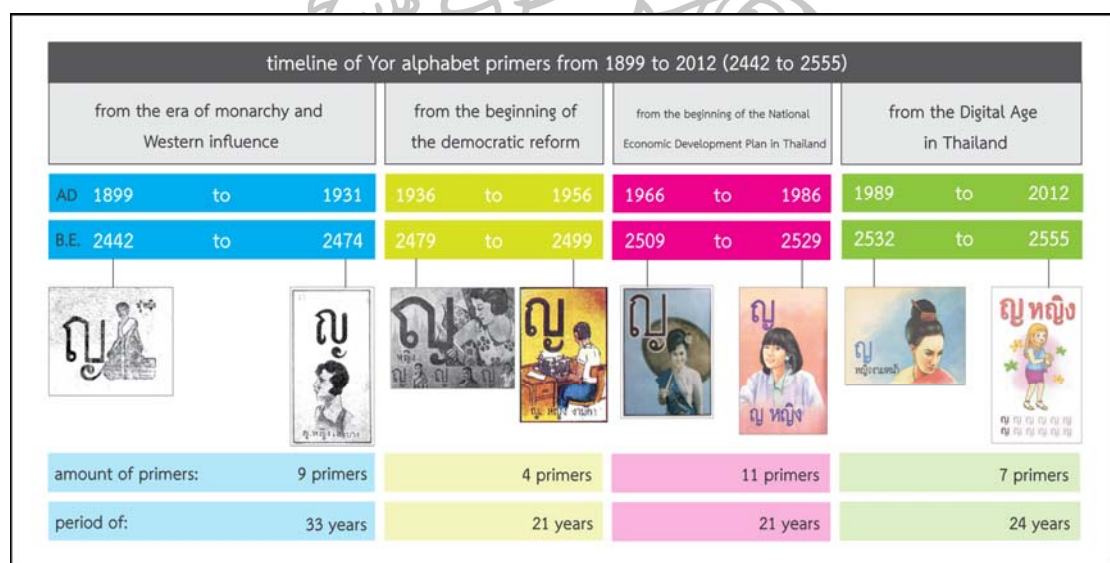


Figure 44 The four periods of the Yor (ญ) alphabet primers’ timeline, from 1899/2442 to 2012/2555

### 3.1 Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the era of the monarchy and Western influence (from 1899/2442 to 1931/2474).

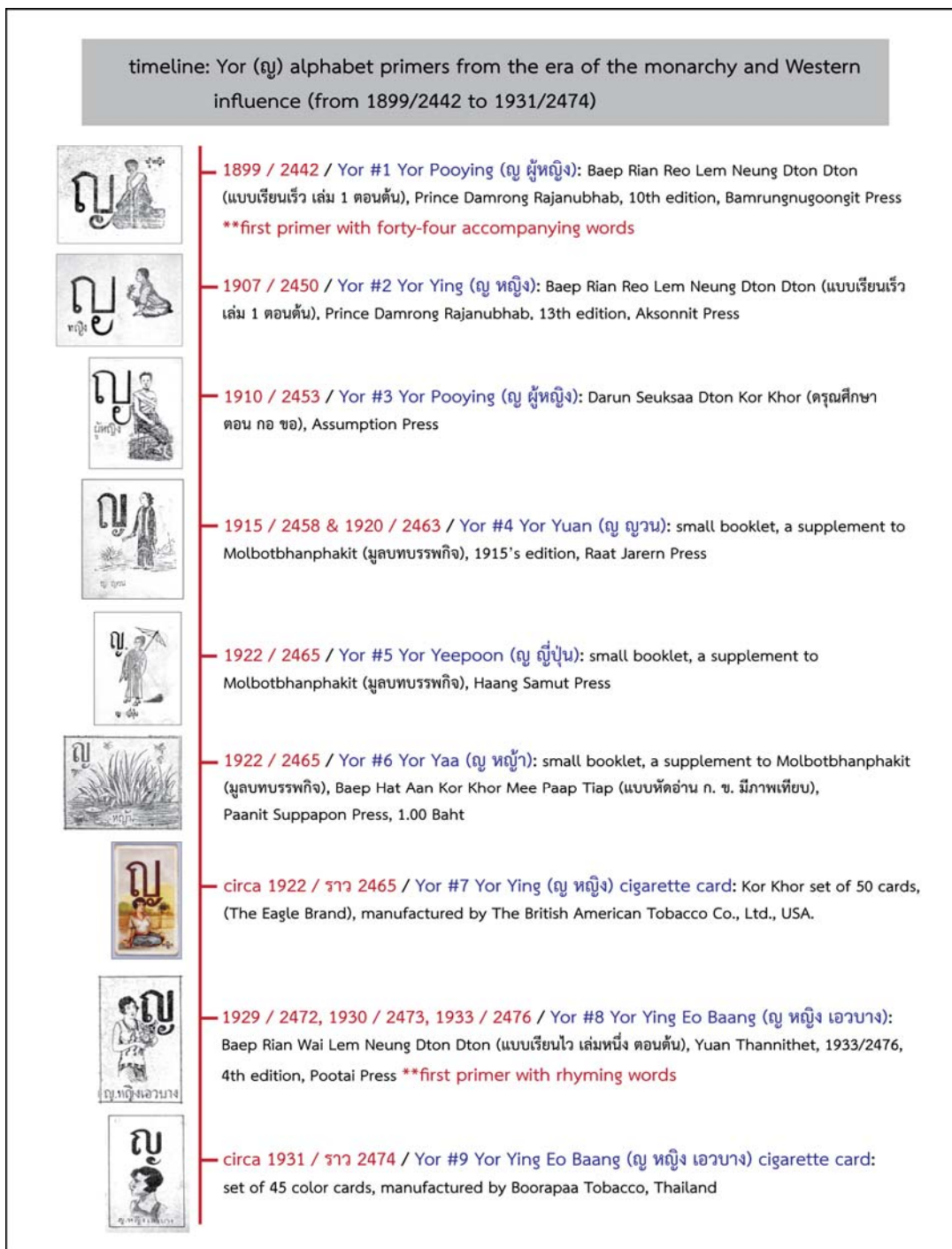


Figure 45 Timeline of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the era of the monarchy and Western influence (from 1899/2442 to 1931/2474)

Collected for this research, nine Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and collectible cigarette cards printed during the period of thirty-three years from 1899/2442 to 1931/2474 are compiled in chronological order. Six out of the nine primers use Pooying (ผู้หญิง) or Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) as the accompanying word, while eight out of nine primers use representations of women as the illustrations. The only rhyming word found during this period is Eo Baang (เอวบาง) (meaning slim waist).



Figure 46 Yor #1 Yor Pooying (1899/2442) 10th edition, published by Bamrungnugoongit Press

Source: Anake Nawigamune, *Tracing Kor Kai* (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 130.

This primer composed by Prince Damrong Rajanubhab is named Baep Rian Reo Lem Neung Dton Dton (แบบเรียนเร็ว เล่ม 1 ตอนต้น) (meaning immediate textbook, book 1, first part) and was published in 1889/2432 in a set of three books. The tenth edition was published by Bamrungnugoongit Press (โรงพิมพ์บำรุงนุกุลกิจ) in 1899/2442. It was the first time that the complete set of forty-four accompanying words was printed and the word Pooying (ผู้หญิง) (meaning woman) appeared in the alphabet primer. From then on, the letter Yor (ญ) and its visual representations began to reference femininity discourses.

On the Yor (ญ) page (see Figure 36), an image of a woman sitting, probably on a Thai-styled bench (ตั่ง), is depicted next to the big letter Yor (ญ). Its accompanying word Pooying (ผู้หญิง) (meaning woman) in a smaller size is placed at the top right corner. The letter Yor (ญ) and the woman illustration were produced by the technique of woodcut. Since the image is not clearly copied, only her short hairstyle and the Thai traditional costume are noticeable. She is probably wearing a shawl and a loincloth that has been pulled up. Since 1873/2416, during the reign of



King Rama V, Thai lady-courts and upper-class ladies started to wear long-sleeved blouses with a rayon shawl wrapped around the body and over one shoulder as well as a loincloth that had been pulled up. Additionally, they also started to wear boots with long socks, another style drawn from Western influence. At that time, women of commoner status, especially those living in the rural areas, still wore a breast-cloth with a loincloth pulled up or a sarong.



Figure 47 Yor #2 Yor Ying (1907/2450) 13th edition, published by Aksonnit Press  
Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Tracing Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 141.

This Yo page is a different version of Baep Rian Reo Lem Neung Dton Dton (แบบเรียนเร็ว เล่ม 1 ตอนต้น) (meaning intermediate textbook, volume 1, part 1) from the thirteenth edition published in 1907/2450 by Aksonnit Press (โรงพิมพ์อักษรนิติ). These primers were permitted by the Education Department to be used in schools. A shorter word with the same meaning as Pooying (ผู้หญิง) (meaning woman), the word Ying (หญิง) is utilized. An image of a woman in a crouching posture with a stem of flowers or leaves in her right hand is shown next to the letter Yor (ญ) and the word Ying. The letter Yor (ญ) and the illustration are made by the technique of woodcut. The size of the letter Yor (ญ) is bigger than the woman's figure. Her left arm rests down on the floor in front of her knees. She looks straight to the left of the viewer towards the letter Yor. This posture resembles the respectful appearance taken before royalty by courtiers and lady-courts. She wears short hair and a long-sleeved blouse with a loincloth pulled up or a sarong. The details and style of this woman's blouse resemble Javanese batik clothes. She also wears a bracelet and earrings as accessories.



Figure 48 Yor #3 Yor Pooying (1910/2453) published by Assumption Press

Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Tracing Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 146.

This Yor (ญ) page was taken from another prominent language reader, Darun Seuksaa Dton Kor Khor (ตรุณศึกษา ตอน กอ ขอ) printed during the beginning of King Rama VI's reign. It was published by Assumption Press for students at Assumption School Bangkok. An image of a short-haired woman sitting on a chair is shown next to the word Pooying (ผู้หญิง) (meaning woman) and the letter Yor (ญ). She looks straight toward the viewer. Possibly, her posture of sitting on a chair signifies her upper class status in the royal court (see Figure 49). The chair designates the significance of Western influence on Thai lifestyles in which people used to sit on the floor. The woman in the illustration wears a shawl wrapped around the top of her body and over one shoulder with a Thai-styled loincloth pulled up.



Figure 49 Lady-court of upper-class status posing on a chair, photographed during the reign of King Rama V

Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Thai Costume in the Rattanakosin Period** (Bangkok: Muangboran, 2004), 35.

The three images of women in Figures 46, 47, and 48 depict the characteristics and costumes of Thai women during the reign of King Rama V. Since 1873/2416, Thai lady-courts and upper-class ladies started to wear long-sleeved blouses with a rayon shawl wrapped around the body and over one shoulder as well as a loincloth pulled up. Influenced by Westerners, they also started to wear boots with long socks. However, at the time, women of the commoner status, especially those in rural areas, still wore a breast-cloth with a loincloth pulled up or a sarong. Regarding the typical hairstyle, women of all statuses: royal members, lady-courts, and commoners, started to wear the short hairstyle known as Dok Kratoom.



Figure 50 Yor #4 Yor Yuan (1915/2458) published by Raat Jarern Press

Source: Anake Navigamune, **Tracing Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 163.

This image is taken from a small booklet printed as a supplement to the language reader *Molbotbhanphakit* (มุลบทบรรพกิจ) published in 1915 by Raat Jarern Press (โรงพิมพ์ราษฎร์เจริญ) known as *Baep Hat Aan Kor Khor Mee Paap Tiap* (แบบหัดอ่าน ก. ข. มีภาพเทียบ) (meaning illustrated basic readers). The letter Yor (ญ) and the illustration on this page were made by the technique of woodcut. The accompanying word used with the letter Yor (ญ) is Yuan (ยูวน) (meaning Vietnamese people). Next to them, the illustration portrays a Vietnamese woman dressed in her traditional costume: a long-sleeved blouse, long pants and a shawl hung over her neck. She wears long hair in a Vietnamese-styled bun likely held with a hairpin. The small tree on the ground at the left side and her posture suggests that she is strolling outdoors while holding a fan in her right hand. Due to the poor condition of this copied image, something on the ground behind her cannot be clearly seen.

Throughout this version of the primer, there are three other letters that utilize accompanying words related to nationalities: (1) Jor Jayk (จ เจ๊ก) (meaning Chinese people) portraying a Chinese peasant man walking while holding a hoe on his shoulder; (2) For Farang (ฝ ฝรั่งเศส) (meaning Westerner) portraying a figure who is probably an actor or a comedian in a long-tailed suit. He is shown standing with his left arm akimbo in front of a curtain while holding a hat in his right hand; and (3) Hor Uppahaat (ฮ อุปฮาด) (meaning Laotian nobleman) portraying a barefoot man walking outdoors. He wears a long-sleeved shirt with what is probably a loincloth. All three of these illustrations manifest portraits of men except for the Yor Yuan (ย ยูวน) page that illustrates a woman (see Figure 51).



Figure 51 Illustrations of male portraits representing Jor Jayk, For Farang, and Hor Uppahaat alphabet pages (1915/2458, 1920/2463)

Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Tracing Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 162, 165, 168.



Figure 52 Yor #5 Yor Yeepoon (1922/2465) published by Haang Samut Press

Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Tracing Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 171.

This primer is also a small booklet printed as a supplement to the language reader Molbotbhanphakit (มุลบตบทรพกิจ) published in 1922/2465 by Haang Samut Press (โรงพิมพ์ห้างสมุด). The letter Yor (ญ) and the illustration were made by the technique of woodcut. This Yor (ญ) page utilizes accompanying words related to another nationality, Yeepoon (ญี่ปุ่น), which means Japan or Japanese people. The author selects a typical image of a Japanese woman that is familiar to foreigners. She wears her hair in a Japanese hairstyle and dresses in the national costume, a kimono, with traditional wooden shoes. The presence of a paper parasol in her left arm over her head and her posture signify that she is strolling outdoors. Undoubtedly, some dense black lines on the ground near her legs denote her shadow and indicate bright and sunny weather.

It is noteworthy that, in this primer, the three letters with accompanying words that were related to nationalities in the previous primer published by Raat Jarern Press are replaced by other words related to fruits and animals. For example, Jor Lookjan (จ ลูกจันทน์) (meaning a Chinese plum), For Farang (ฟ ฝรั่งเศส) (meaning a guava), and Hor Nokhook (ฮ นกฮูก) (meaning an owl).



Figure 53 Yor #6 Yor Ya (1922/2465) published by Paanit Suppapon Press

Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Tracing Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 63.

This Yor (ญ) page utilizes a different accompanying word Yaa (หญ้า) (meaning grass). It is another version of a small booklet printed as a supplement to the language reader Molbotbhanphakit. It was published in 1922/2465 by Paanit Suppapon Press (โรงพิมพ์พานิชสุขผล) with the price of one baht per copy. This primer is believed to have been printed by metal blocks, probably by the

technique of lithography. The illustration displays the scenery of a pond with some lily leaves covering its edge and some grass. Moreover, some insects are hovering above the grass. Most accompanying words in this version are related to animals, for example, Jor Jorrakay (จ จรเข้) (meaning a crocodile), and Chor Matchaa (ฉ มัจฉา) (meaning a fish).



Figure 54 Yor #7 Yor Ying cigarette card (c. 1922/2465) manufactured by The British American Tobacco  
(Photographed by Piyaluk Benjadol, Nonthaburi. May 20, 2012)

Circa 1922/2465, The British American Tobacco Co., Ltd. of the United States of America, with the Eagle Bird brand, manufactured a set of fifty collectible cigarette cards called Kor Khor set (ชุด ก ข). Different versions of cigarette cards printed from abroad had, since the reign of King Rama V, gained widespread distribution in Thailand. The Yor (ย) card in the Kor Khor set manifests an illustration of a woman squatting on the floor with the letter Yor (ย) placed next to her head. The accompanying word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) in a small size is positioned at the lower right corner of the card. The woman wears short hair and a short-sleeved blouse with a collar and what is probably a sarong or a loincloth pulled up. Her left arm with a bracelet is placed on the left knee while her right arm rests on the floor next to her hips. Not clearly visible, there is something of a red color tied to her right wrist. The background view behind her displays a low wall with one column that has a potted tree set above it. Afar, there are some shrubs beyond the wall. The light

yellow area above the tree probably depicts the golden sunlight before sunset. The style of this background view is similar to those of painted background sets typically used in various photography studios at the time (see Figure 55). Presumably, the artwork of the cigarette card was painted to simulate the original photograph of a woman shot in a studio.



Figure 55 A photograph of a noble Thai woman shot in a photography studio during the reign of King Rama VI

Source: Reurnthai, **Thai History : Hiso Boraan (2)**, accessed February 9, 2016, available from <http://www.reurnthai.com/index.php?topic=6120.0>

The woman's image in Figure 55 represents the typical costume and hairstyle of Thai women during the reign of King Rama VI. Originating in the royal court, women were encouraged to wear longer hair than the Dok Kratom hairstyle. The most popular style influenced by Westerners was called the bob hairstyle and it features an ear-length hair cut with curly waves around the forehead and the nape of the neck (see Figure 56). Lady-courts and upper-class ladies often fastened a string of jewelry or a cloth band around their heads for decoration. A loose-cut blouse with short or long sleeves was usually worn with a wrap-around skirt. The fashionable accessories seen in this illustration are the pearl necklaces and high-heeled shoes. Additionally, King Rama VI himself preferred that women should wear long hair in a bun and keep their teeth very white as opposed to the dark color caused by the habit of chewing betel nut.



Figure 56 A teenage girl with the popular bob hairstyle (1925/2468) during the reign of King Rama VI, photographed in Phetchaburi province

Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Thai Costume in Rattanakosin Period** (Bangkok: Meuang Boran, 2004), 140.



Figure 57 Yor #8 Yor Ying Eo Baang (1933/2476) 4th edition, published by Poo-tai Press

Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Tracing Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 78.

This Yor (ญ) page is from Baep Rian Wai Lem Neung Dton Dton (แบบเรียนไฉ่เล่มหนึ่ง ตอนต้น) by Yuan Thannithet (ย่าน ทันนิเทศ) that was first published in 1929/2472. Notably, this was the first time that the rhyming words were added to the accompanying words throughout the primer. This fourth edition was published on the occasion of a funeral ceremony in 1933/2476 by Poo-tai Press (โรงพิมพ์ภูไท). Its artwork was created by Kanachang (คณะช่าง), one of the prominent graphic studios at the time. On the Yor (ญ) page, the rhyming word Eo Baang (เอวบาง) (meaning slim waist) describing a desirable appearance of a beautiful woman is utilized. Displayed beside the letter Yor (ญ), an illustration depicts a woman standing while holding a bouquet of flowers. She wears curly short hair and a loose-cut sleeveless blouse with what is probably a wrap-around skirt. The blouse's collar is decorated with a long bow.





Figure 58 Yor #9 Yor Ying Eo Baang cigarette card (c. 1931/2474) manufactured by the Boorapaa Tobacco Company

Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Tracing Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 184.

Another version of a set of collectible cigarette cards displaying Thai alphabets was manufactured by the Boorapaa Tobacco Company (บริษัทบุรพาษาสูบ) in 1931/2474 during the reign of King Rama VII (reigning from 1925/2468 to 1933/2476). It is comprised of forty-five colored cards and uses almost the same accompanying words and rhymes as in the 1930/2473 primer by Yuan Thannithet (ย่าน ทันนิเทศ), but differs in the fact that the illustration of the woman in the letter Yor (ย) card is a close-up view of her upper body. She wears a curly short hairstyle and a sleeveless blouse. It is interesting to notice that the meaning of the rhyming words, Eo Baang (เอวบาง) (meaning slim waist), is not obviously emphasized on the bodies of the women in either Figure 57 or Figure 58. The fashionable loose cut blouse of the time primarily concealed the women's figures, especially the waist.

The two images of the women in Figures 57 and 58 represent the typical style of dress during the reign of King Rama VII. The most popular costume is a sleeveless blouse with a skirt or a wrap-around skirt. Considering the fashionable hairstyle, which originated in the royal court, women were encouraged to wear short hair with curly waves. According to the advertisements at the time, these services were provided at the hair salons in Phra Nakhon (พระนคร), Bangkok's former name. It also states that the curly waves hairstyle was made possible by the latest imported electrical tools and techniques (see Figure 59).



Figure 59 Hair salons’ advertisements (1927/2470) during the reign of King Rama VII, printed in Seegrung Daily Newspaper (หนังสือพิมพ์ศรีกรุง ฉบับรายวัน)

Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Thai Costume in the Rattanakosin Period** (Bangkok: Meuangbohraan, 2004), 167.

### 3.2 Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the beginning of the democratic reform (from 1936/2479 to 1956/2499)

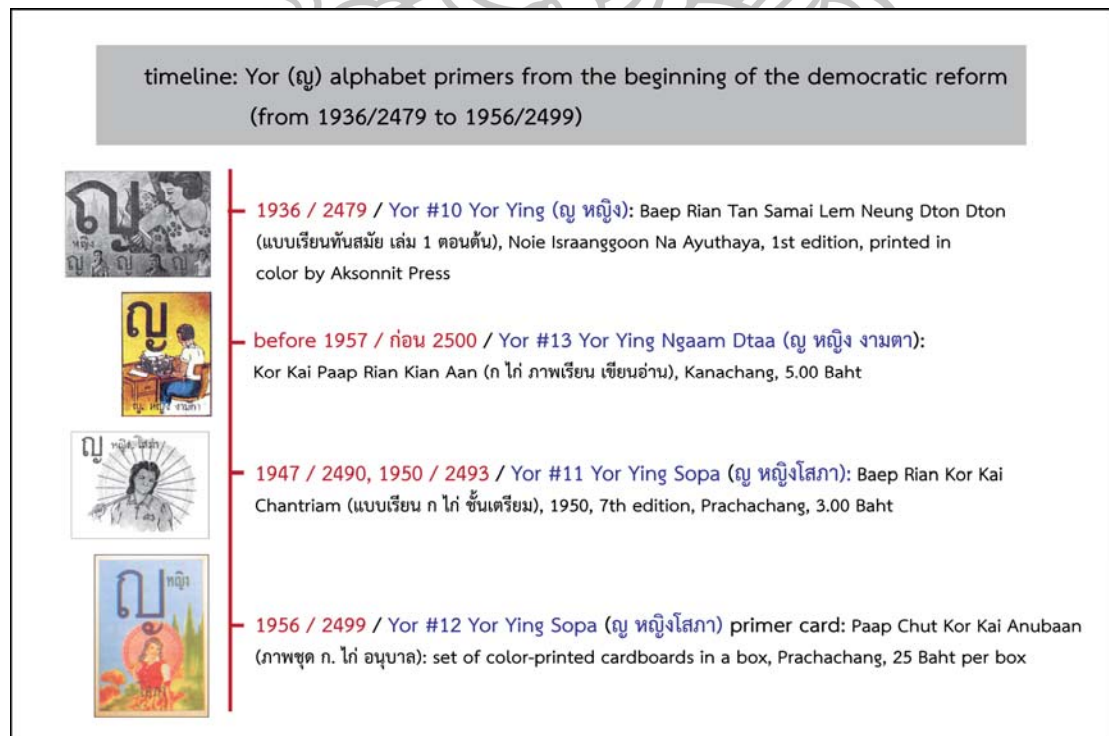


Figure 60 Timeline of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the beginning of the democratic reform (from 1936/2479 to 1956/2499)

Collected for this research, four Yor (ญ) alphabet primers printed during a period of twenty-one years, from 1936/2479 to 1956/2499, are compiled in chronological order. All four primers use Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) as the accompanying word and the representations of women as the illustrations. Two rhyming words found during this period are Ngaam Dtaa (งามตา) and Sopa (โสภา), both of which mean beautiful.



Figure 61 Yor #10 Yor Ying (1936/2479) 1st edition, published by Aksonnit Press  
Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Tracing Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 191.

Shortly after the democratic reform in 1932/2475 during the reign of King Rama VII, the government proclaimed the National Education Plan (แผนการศึกษาแห่งชาติ) within the same year. Later in 1936/2479, Noie Israngoon Na Ayuthaya (นาย อิศรางกูร ณ อยุธยา) composed the first edition of a new language reader named Baep Rian Tan Samai Lem Neung Dton Dton (แบบเรียนทันสมัย เล่ม 1 ตอนต้น). The reader was published with color prints by Aksonnit Press (โรงพิมพ์อักษรนิติ). The primers' distribution by a private publisher was officially permitted by The Ministry of Education. During the reign of King Rama VIII, the printing industry in Thailand took the first step toward implementing a multi-color printing process.

The appearance of this Yor (ญ) page with its accompanying word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) is apparently distinct from the previous ones. It is comprised of two parts, the main top and the narrow strip below. The main top part portrays a half body of a curly, short-haired woman dressed in a sleeveless floral-patterned blouse. She is reading a book in a relaxing manner. She leans on a pile of big cushions that serves as comfortable support for her body. Her eyes look

straight at the book spread out and loosely held by her right hand. It is noteworthy that the woman's vague background illustrates many instances of towering Gothic-styled architecture, probably with some shrubs situated at the front. This image seemingly portrays a Western location rather than a Thai landscape.

Horizontally spread out across the narrow strip below are three Yor (ญ) letters with three different women's portraits. The first woman and the second from the left wear traditional Thai costumes with pleated shawls wrapped over the tops of their bodies and draped over one shoulder with what is probably a loincloth pulled up. Both of them wear their hair long, while one of them has flowers or hairpin decorations. The third woman with short curly hair wears a short-sleeved blouse with what is probably a wrap-around skirt or a sarong. All three women's gestures do not allow for speculation as to whether they are sitting, standing, or walking somewhere.

The illustrations in Figure 61 represent Thai women during the reign of King Rama VIII in both traditional and modern styles before the state conventions (รัฐนิยม) by Field Marshal Plaek Phibunsongkhram's (จอมพลแปลก พิบูลสงคราม) administration began in 1938/2481. During the state conventions in 1939/2482, all citizens, either those living in the cities or rural areas, were dictated to quit chewing betel nut and, in 1941/2484, were additionally ordered to wear hats. Moreover, citizens were required to wear shoes instead of going barefoot when out in public areas. Women were further required to wear skirts or sarongs instead of loincloths pulled up.

In 1937/2480, the updated National Education Plan (แผนการศึกษาแห่งชาติ) was announced during the reign of King Rama VIII. It is noteworthy that under the state conventions during the very short period of 1942/2485 to 1944/2487, Thai spelling reform was announced. Unfortunately, no example of the alphabet primers from during that two-year period has yet been found.



Figure 62 Yor #13 Yor Ying Ngaam Dtaa (before 1957/2500) published by Kanachang  
Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Photography and Prints** (Bangkok: Matichon, 2006), 15.

Before 1957/2500, another prominent graphic design and illustration studio, Kanachang (คณะช่าง), published an alphabet primer named Kor Kai Paap Rian Kian Aan (ก ไก่ ภาพเขียน เขียนอ่าน). This large format alphabet primer in full color was priced at five baht each. The name of its author and the publication year are not indicated. It uses the rhyming word, Ngaam Dtaa (งามตา) (meaning beautiful, usually in poetry), to characterize the woman. But instead of using the illustration of a beautiful woman, it unusually displays an image of a woman typing at a working desk. She is sitting and turning her back to the viewer. There is a notepad on the left side of the typewriter. From the eye direction of the viewer and the position of the desk that is probably placed at the frontal area, it can be presumed that she works as a clerk, either in a government service office or for a private company. She wears short hair with a hair clip and a white short-sleeved blouse with what is probably a blue sarong. In the background, the space is filled with gradual shades of yellow and red.

In comparison to the other visual resources from this period, this Yor (ญ) page's illustration has some similarities to an advertisement by the McFarland Typewriter Company, published in Seegrung Newspaper (หนังสือพิมพ์ศรีกรุง) on December 3, 1931/2474 (see Figure 63). The product advertised is an additional tool that one attaches to the typewriter allowing for the user to conveniently read the manuscript. In the illustration, a woman turns the right side of her back to the

viewer while typing and sitting on a chair at a working desk. She wears curly short hair, a long-sleeved blouse and a necklace. The appearances of the typewriter, chair, and desk are almost identical to those in Yor (ญ) Ying Ngaam Dtaa's alphabet page.



Figure 63 An advertisement for a typewriter tool in See-grung newspaper, 1931/2474  
Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Thai Advertisement Vol. 2, 1920s** (Bangkok: Saitarn, 2007), 145.



Figure 64 Yor #11 Yor Ying Sopa (1950/2493) 7th edition, published by Prachachang  
Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Tracing Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 198.

This primer, Baep Rian Kor Gai Chantriam (แบบเรียน ก ไก่ ชั้นเตรียม) (meaning basic alphabet primer), published by a prominent graphic design and illustration studio, Prachachang (ประชาช่าง), utilizes the most widely known rhyming word, Sopa (โสภา) (meaning beautiful, usually in literature) to characterize its accompanying word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman). This studio was established in 1935/2478. The primer's first edition of twenty thousand copies was published and distributed in 1947/2490

during the reign of King Rama IX. These primers were extensively used in kindergartens and by the parents who taught their own children at home. Only three years later, its seventh edition was increasingly printed at the in an amount of thirty thousand copies at a lower price of three to two baht and fifty satang each. The primer's advertisements are found in the Ramakien epic (รามเกียรติ์), which was printed by Prachachang (ประชาช่าง) in 1950/2493 (see Figure 65 and Figure 66).



Figure 65 Prachachang's primer advertisement on the back cover of Ramakien epic, Volume 36 (1950/2493)

Source: Chanjarus Pantharangsi and Seree Premruethai, **Ramakien Novel Volume 36** (Phra Nakhon: Prachachang, 1950), back cover.



Figure 66 Prachachang's primer advertisement inside Ramakien epic, Volume 36 (1950/2493)

Source: Chanjarus Pantharangsi and Seree Premruethai, **Ramakien Novel Volume 36** (Phra Nakhon: Prachachang, 1950), 57.

This Yor Ying Sopa (ญ หญิง โสภา) (meaning beautiful woman) page in Figure 54 illustrates the half body of a woman holding a parasol on her right shoulder. Her face is turned slightly to the right side of the viewer while she gazes down towards the left. She wears shoulder-length curly hair and a collared blouse with what are probably short sleeves. On the blouse around her left chest, there is an embroidery mark resembling the contours of two mountains.

Besides the 1922/2465 image of a Japanese woman in a kimono with a paper parasol in Figure 52, this 1947/2490 Yor Ying (ญ หญิง) page is probably the first primer that illustrated a Thai woman with a parasol. By researching numerous photographs and prints dating back to that era, many black and white photographs of Thai beauty contestants walking on an outdoor platform while holding a parasol can be found (see Figure 67). The image depicts a rehearsal round on the morning of the Miss Thailand beauty pageant's final day. All final contestants wore casual dresses and hold paper parasols on their shoulders. For example, the photograph of the 9th Miss Thailand, Miss Ampon Buraarak (อัมพร บุรารักษ์), crowned in 1950/2493.



Figure 67 Miss Ampon Buraarak before being crowned the 9th Miss Thailand, 1950/2493

Source: Onsom Suttisaakon, **Flowers of Nation: From Beauty Pageant Platform to the Platform of Life** (Bangkok: Ruamtat, 1990), 96.





Figure 68 Yor #12 Yor Ying Sopa (1956/2499) primer card, published by Prachachang Company

Source: Anake Nawigamune, **Photography and Prints** (Bangkok: Matichon, 2006), 190.

Besides publishing alphabet primers in the form of books, Prachachang Company (บริษัทประชาช่าง) manufactured sets of alphabet learning cards contained in cardboard boxes as well. The cards were named Paap Chut Kor Kai Anubaan (ภาพชุด ก. ไก่ อนุบาล) and the price was twenty-five baht per box. The Yor (ย) card displays a big letter Yor (ย) in the top area with a word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) in a smaller size. The illustration depicts a woman in a bright colored dress holding a red parasol over her right shoulder. She wears curly long hair and a short-sleeved collared blouse with a floral skirt. The trees and grassland on the small slopes behind her suggest an outdoor scenic view, probably a garden or a hillside. The solid blue color suggests a bright and sunny sky. As well, in comparison to the photographs of the beauty pageants, this illustration signifies that she is a beauty contestant walking on an outdoor platform during the rehearsal round.

### 3.3 Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the beginning of the National Economic Development Plan in Thailand (from 1966/2509 to 1986/2529)



Figure 69 Timeline of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the beginning of the National Economic Development Plan in Thailand (from 1966/2509 to 1986/2529)

Collected for this research, eleven Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and posters printed during the period of twenty-one years from 1966/2509 to 1986/2529 are compiled in chronological order. The beginning of the National Economic Development Plan in Thailand was started in the year 1961/2504 with the first National Development Plan (แผนพัฒนาแห่งชาติ) proclaimed by Field Marshal Sarit Tanarat (จอมพลสฤษดิ์ ธนะรัชต์). Moreover, the first long-term Development Plan for Thai Women (แผนพัฒนาสตรีในระยะยาว) implemented during the period between 1982/2525 and 2001/2544 was proclaimed in 1979/2522. Prior to that, the United Nations also declared the ‘International Women’s Decade: 1975-1985’ (2518-2528) (ปีทศวรรษ สตรีสากลแห่งสหประชาชาติ). Nine out of eleven primers used the word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) as the accompanying word, while all eleven primers used images of women as the illustrations. Most rhyming words found during this period have meanings related to beauty characteristics.



Figure 70 Yor #14 Yor (1966/2509) alphabet poster, published by Prachachang (Photographed by Piyaluk Benjadol, House of Museum Bangkok. December 3, 2013)

In addition to the primer books and sets of alphabet cards, Prachachang Company (บริษัท ประชาช่าง) also started to publish another educational tool in the form of posters for learning the alphabet in 1966/2509 known as Paap Hatjam Kor Kai Samrap Dek Rerm Rian (ภาพหัดจำ ก. ไก่ สำหรับเด็กเริ่มเรียน) (meaning learning pictures for pre-school children). At the bottom of the poster, the publisher explains how to

use this poster as a supplement to the primer book. It suggests that parents should post the poster on the wall at home where the children can always see it. Additionally, the parents should often put the book in the children's hands, so that the poster and the book will help them to rapidly learn and recognize all the letterforms. At the time, the full-color printed poster was priced at one baht and fifty satang each.

Significantly, as yet discovered, this is the first time that photographs are used as the illustrations in alphabet primers. Due to the very limited space for each alphabet, the accompanying words and their rhymes are removed. The letter Yor (ญ) is placed at the top left corner while an image of a woman holding a parasol occupies most of the space. This image explicitly represents a beauty contestant with a blue sash across her right shoulder imprinted with the name of her sponsor on it. The background is filled with a solid light blue color.

She wears long hair in a bun decorated with a pink flower. Her dresses are a pale pink long-sleeved Thai traditional blouse with an upright collar and what is probably a wrap-around skirt. The parasol on her shoulder can be considered an early mulberry paper parasol made in Chiang Mai province, the well-known source of its production in the Northern region of Thailand. The minimal decorative style on the parasol in one or two colors with some flowers and straight lines on the edge are distinct from those decorated with multi-colored coats of paint and various types of forms and patterns produced at a later date.



Figure 71 Yor #15 Yor Ying Saen Ngon (1969/2512) distributed by Padungwit

Source: M. M.T., **Kor Kai Samrap Anubaan** (Pra Nakhon: Padungwit, 1969), 7.

This is an early version of an alphabet primer that designated usage for kindergarten and pre-school learning at home in its title. Distributed by Padungwit (ผดุงวิทย์) in 1969, it is titled Kor Kai Samrap Anubaan (ก ไก่ สำหรับอนุบาล) (meaning alphabet primer for pre-school children). Its Yor (ญ) page uses rhyming words San Ngon (แสนงอน) (meaning being in a petulant manner) to characterize the woman. An image of a smiley woman with a sense of being overly proud of herself is depicted. She looks superbly elegant with her curly short hairstyle and well-applied make-up. Her costume is probably a silk sack dress that was fashionable at the time. She also wears a beaded necklace, probably of a colored plastic material. Her character could represent a high-class housewife or a working woman.



Figure 72 Yor #16 Yor Ying Samai Mai (1970/2513) published by Niyom Wittaya Press  
Source: Wirat Boonchai, **Baep Rian Kor Kai Baep Mai** (Phra Nakhon: Niyom Wittayaa Press, 1970), 7.

This version of an alphabet primer published by Niyom Wittayaa Press (สำนักพิมพ์นิยมวิทยา) in 1970 is titled Baep Rian Kor Kai Baep Mai (แบบเรียน ก ไก่ แบบใหม่) (meaning new alphabet primer). It was compiled and illustrated by Wirat Boonchai (วิรัช บุญไชย) and its price was one baht and fifty satang at the time. Its rhyming word Samai Mai (สมัยใหม่) (meaning modern time or being modern) emphasizes Thailand's Modernization Period during the democracy under the military rules. The illustration portrays a smiley woman sitting in a relaxed manner on the ground, probably a grass field. Both of her arms rest against the ground while her left leg stretches out towards the viewer. She wears curly long hair and a pair of high-heeled shoes.

Notably, the dress she wears resembles the bathing suit style that was tailor-made for Miss Thailand beauty pageants at the time. It was called *Seua Aap Naam* (เสื้ออาบนํ้า), or swimming suit, was made of non-stretchable cloth and was fashionable for all women at the time. In comparison to many photographs of the beauty pageants during the 1960s and 1970s, this illustration bears similarity to an image of Miss Thailand from 1954/2497, *Sucheela Sisombun* (สุชีลา ศรีสมบูรณ์) who, while in a slightly different gesture, was taken before the pageant. She poses in a bathing suit while sitting on the lawn at her trainer's house (see Figure 73).



Figure 73 Miss Sucheela Sisombun posing in a bathing suit before being crowned Miss Thailand 1954 /2497

Source: Onsom Suttisaakon, **Flowers of Nation: From Beauty Pageant Platform to the Platform of Life** (Bangkok: Ruamtat, 1990), 128.



Figure 74 Yor #17 Yor Ying Sopa (before 1971/2514) distributed by Paanfaa Panit

Source: Nate Morragot, **Baep Hat Rian Kor Kai Duay Paap Samrap Dek Anubaan** (Phra Nakhon: Paanfaa Panit, 1971), 4.

This Yor (ญ) page is in a primer named Baep Hat Rian Kor Kai Duay Paap Samrap Dek Anubaan (แบบหัดเรียน ก. ไก่ ด้วยภาพ สำหรับเด็กอนุบาล) (meaning illustrated alphabet primer for pre-school children), distributed by Paanfaa Panit (ผ่านฟ้าพานิช) before 1971/2514. The accurate year of the publishing is not clearly printed but the publisher's address indicates the capital's old name, Phra Nakhon (พระนคร) that was later changed to Bangkok in 1971/2514. Its price was one baht and fifty satang each. On the inner cover, details of the publication are printed: illustrated and compiled by Nayt Morragot (เนตร มรกต) with copyright. The rhyming word Sopa (โสภา) (meaning beautiful, usually in literature) is used to characterize the woman. Its illustration portrays the upper body of a smiley woman with curly long hair. She wears round-shaped earrings and a V-necked blouse.



Figure 75 Yor #18 Yor Ying Ngam Wilai (before 1971/2514) distributed by Siam Stationery

Source: Siam Stationery, **Baep Rian Anubaan Kor Kai** (Phra Nakhon: Mit Padung Press, 1971), 7.

Distributed by Siam Stationery (สยามสเตชันเนอร์รี่) and printed at Mit Padung Press (มิตรผดุงการพิมพ์), this primer is titled Baep Rian Anubaan Kor Kai (แบบเรียนอนุบาล ก. ไก่) (meaning pre-school alphabet primer). Its year of publishing is not printed but the publisher's address indicates Bangkok's old name, Phra Nakhon (พระนคร) that was later changed in 1971. Its Yor (ญ) page uses Ngam Wilai (งามวิไล) (meaning beautiful, usually in poetry) as the rhyming words to represent the woman's characteristics. The illustration depicts a woman fully dressed in a traditional Thai costume of the Rattanakosin style. She wears her hair in a topknot with a golden

hairpin. Her costume is a blue round-necked and long-sleeved blouse with a golden embroidered shawl draped over her left shoulder. Other pieces of jewelry are a golden necklace and a pair of golden earrings with multi-colored gemstones. She looks straight at the viewer and does not express a beaming smile.



Figure 76 Yor #19 Yor Ying learning poster (c. 1973/2516) distributed by Siam Stationery Ltd., Part.

Source: Siam Stationery, **Kor Kai Samrap Kunnoo** [poster] (Bangkok: Gim Seng Huat, c1973).

Circa 1973/2516, there was another alphabet learning poster distributed by Siam Stationery Ltd., Part. (ห้างหุ้นส่วนจำกัดสยามสเตชันเนอรี) and printed at Gim Seng Huat (กิมเซ่งฮวด). It was called **Kor Kai Samrap Kunnoo** (ก. ไก่ สำหรับคุณหนู). Because the year of publishing is not indicated, the illustrations in this primer are investigated in order to find the estimated printing date. Evidently, an illustration of the alphabet character Khor Kon (ค) provides a clue. It features the portrait of a leading actor from the movie *Tong* (ทอง), Grung Seewilai (กรุง ศรีวิไล) (see Figure 77). Hence, presumably, the publication year was around 1973/2516 when the movie first premiered.

Although the letter Yor (ญ) is solely placed at the right corner without the accompanying word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman), the illustration portrays a smiley woman holding a blue paper parasol on her left shoulder. The parasol is decorated with floral motifs. She wears long hair in a bun decorated with yellow flowers, probably orchids. Her costumes are an upright-collared and long-sleeved yellow blouse with what is probably a matching sarong.



Her face and body do not face the viewer directly and she smiles as she looks beyond us toward the right. At the bottom edge, parts of her right hand and fingers make it appear as if she is waving her hand. This gesture seems reminiscent of the greeting manner exercised by beauty contestants as they parade on the stage. Behind her, the background is filled with gradual shades of a green color.



Figure 77 Khor Kon alphabet character on a learning poster portraying Grung Sriwilai from the movie Tong (c. 1973/2516)

Source: Siam Stationery, **Kor Kai Samrap Kunnoo** [poster] (Bangkok: Gim Seng Huat, c1973).



Figure 78 Yor #20 Yor Ying Sopa (1974/2517) published by Siam Panit Stationery

Source: Sayree Sattayataadaagoon, **Baep Hat Aan Kor Kai Duay Paap** (Bangkok: Siam Panit Stationery, 1974), 4.

This Yor (ญ) page with its rhyming word Sopa (โสภา) (meaning beautiful, usually in poetry) was published in 1974/2517 by Siam Panit Stationery (สยามพานิชส

เตชั่นเนอร์). This alphabet primer is titled Baep Hat Aan Kor Kai Duay Paap (แบบหัดอ่าน ก. ไก่ด้วยภาพ). It was compiled by Sayree Sattayataadaagoon (เสรี สัตยธาตาagoon) but the illustrator's name is not indicated. The sale price at the time was two baht each. On the inner cover, an accepting letter from The Office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary (สำนักพระราชเลขานุการ) is printed. It states that Her Majesty Queen Sirikit had received three thousand copies from the publisher in order to distribute them to schools in rural areas. The Yor (ญ) page illustration portrays the upper body of a woman with curly long hair. She turns the left side of her face and body slightly towards the audience and directly gazes at us with a smile in a mild manner. Her costume is intentionally left out, while the only visible accessory is a pair of round-shaped earrings.



Figure 79 Yor #21 Yor Ying Sopa (after 1976/2519) published by Sayreepan Ltd.  
Source: **Noo Aan Sawatdee Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sayreepan, 1976), 7.

Another version of the alphabet primer with Yor Ying Sopa words (ญ หญิงใโสภา) (meaning beautiful woman) published by Sayreepan Ltd. (หจก. เสรีภักดิ์) is named Noo Aan Sawatdee Kor Kai (หนูอ่าน สวัสดิ์ ก ไก่) (meaning children read 'Hello Kor Kai'). The publishing year is not printed but the publisher's telephone number has seven figures, which dates it to a time after 1976/2519. Its price was one baht and fifty satang per copy. The illustration depicts a smiley woman reading a book in a relaxed manner, probably at home. It is noteworthy that even though the rhyming word Sopa (ใโสภา) means beautiful, this illustration gives another dominant character to her, a literate and well-read woman.

Even though she is holding a book in her hand, her gaze looks far beyond it. She looks straight to the right side of the viewer. She wears shoulder-length curly hair and a short-sleeved blouse with a collar and what is probably a long skirt. Her right hand holds a book on her lap while her left arm leans around her cheek. She rests herself on a big round cushion that is probably placed on a sofa. At the back and on the right side of her body, there are several books on a shelf and probably more on a table. The style of all books seem to indicate bulky ones bound in hardcovers. The one held by this woman illustrates a solid-colored cover with no texts or images printed on it.



Figure 80 Yor #22 Yor Ying Suay Ngam (after 1976/2519) published by Pittayaakaan Press

Source: **Baep Rian Kor Kai Anubaan** (Bangkok: Pittayaakaan, 1976), 7.

This primer named *Baep Rian Kor Kai Anubaan* (แบบเรียน ก. ไก่ อุนบาล) (meaning pre-school Kor Kai alphabet primer) was published after 1976/2519 by Pittayaakaan Press (สำนักพิมพ์พิทยาคาร). The publishing year is not indicated but the publisher's telephone number has seven figures, which dates it to a time after 1976/2519. Its price was six baht per copy. The rhyming words used to characterize the woman are *Suay Ngam* (สวยงาม) (meaning beautiful), which is the general term used in daily life. The illustration portrays a woman who is sitting or standing in front of a colorful background. It is filled with many shades of cream, pink and orange colors. She wears snipped short hair parted down the center and a blue blouse with a white decorated collar. Light cosmetics are applied to her face and she looks straight at the viewer while smiling in a mild manner.



Figure 81 Yor #23 Yor Ying Sopa (1977/2520) unknown edition, published by Prachachang Press

Source: **Baep Rian Kor Kai Anubaan** (Bangkok: Prachachang, 1977), 13.

Besides Baep Hat Aan Kor Kai Duay Paap (แบบหัดอ่าน ก ไก่ ด้วยภาพ) (meaning illustrated alphabet primer) with painted illustrations by Prachachang Press, this is the most recognizable primer with photographic illustrations. It is named Baep Rian Kor Kai Anubaan (แบบเรียน ก. ไก่ อนุบาล) (meaning pre-school alphabet primer). This 1977/2520 copy with no information about its edition is the oldest primer that is yet to be collected and it retailed at the low price of just five baht per copy. Considering this and the publisher's address that mentions Phra Nakhon (พระนคร), Bangkok's former name, this version was probably published before 1971/2514. The exact design of this primer has been published consistently and in numerous editions and copies up until present. The latest edition discovered was printed in 1996/2539 and retailed at the price of fifteen baht each.

The big letter Yor (ญ) is placed at the top left corner of the page. The gigantic letter functions as a tracing guide for children to drag their fingertips along the letterform. It is a form of practice that is beneficial for them and helps one to learn how to write as early as they can. The accompanying word, Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman), is smaller in size and is positioned at the top right. The rhyming word, Sopa (โสภ) (meaning beautiful, usually in literature), is located at the bottom left corner of the page. In the center, a photographic image of a Thai woman

standing and posing while holding a red vinyl umbrella over her right shoulder is shown. Her left arm is placed on her left leg that overlaps her right thigh. The pink costume with golden embellishments she dresses in is an applied style of Thai Chakri (ไทยจักรี), one of the eight formal dress patterns for women proclaimed and designated by Her Majesty Queen Sirikit as Thai traditional costumes back in 1960/2503. She wears Thai-styled accessories such as a golden necklace and belt, and a pair of white high-heeled shoes. Moreover, it is noteworthy that she wears a curly short hairstyle influenced by the West instead of long hair with a topknot that is typical for Thai women dressing in a traditional costume.

By looking at the background and using the sculpture and building constructions behind the woman as clues, historical research indicates that the location of this setting is in front of the main ubosot of Benjamaborpit Temple (อุโบสถวัดเบญจมบพิตรฯ) or The Marble Temple in Bangkok. The connotation of this specific site will be explained later in Chapter 5.



Figure 82 Yor #24 Yor Ying (1986/2529) published by Sermwit Bannaakaan Press  
Source: Sirada Gate-iam, **Nangseu Paap Kor Kai Rian Reo** (Bangkok: Sermwit Bannaakaan, 1986), 14.

This Yor (ญ) page was published by Sermwit Bannaakaan Press (เสริมวิทท์บรรณาการ) in 1986/2529. It displays the letter Yor (ญ) with its accompanying word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) without any rhyming word. This primer was named

Nangseu Paap Kor Kai Rian Reo (หนังสือภาพ ก ไก่ เรียนเร็ว) (meaning quick-learning illustrated alphabet primer) and was composed by Sirada Gayt-iam (สิริฎา เกตุเอี่ยม). The illustrations made by Team Bpakbpao (ทีมปักเป้า) are done in a realistic painting style. It is priced at twelve baht per copy. The Yor (ย) page's illustration portrays the upper body of Jindtraa Sukkapat (จินตรา สุขพัฒน์), one of the most famous actresses at the time. She wears shoulder-length hair in a bob with bangs. She is dressed in a blue collared blouse and covered with a light violet long-sleeved jacket with a pocket. The only accessories visible are her round-shaped blue earrings. While turning the left side of her face to face the viewer, she smiles and looks straight at us. Her bent right arm suggests that she is probably sitting on a chair. The background is painted in shades of light red and orange.

It is interesting to notice that there is another page in this primer that depicts a portrait of a famous actor at the same time. The Khor Kon (ค คน) (meaning human being) page illustrates Ampon Lampon (อำพล ลำพูน) (see Figure 83). In 1986/2529, Jindtraa and Ampon played the leading roles together in several movies.



Figure 83 Khor Kon page with the portrait of Ampon Lampon, 1986/2529

Source: Sirada Gate-iam, **Nangseu Paap Kor Kai Rian Reo** (Bangkok: Sermwit Bannaakaan, 1986), 6.

### 3.4 Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the Digital Age in Thailand (from 1989/2532 to 2012/2555)

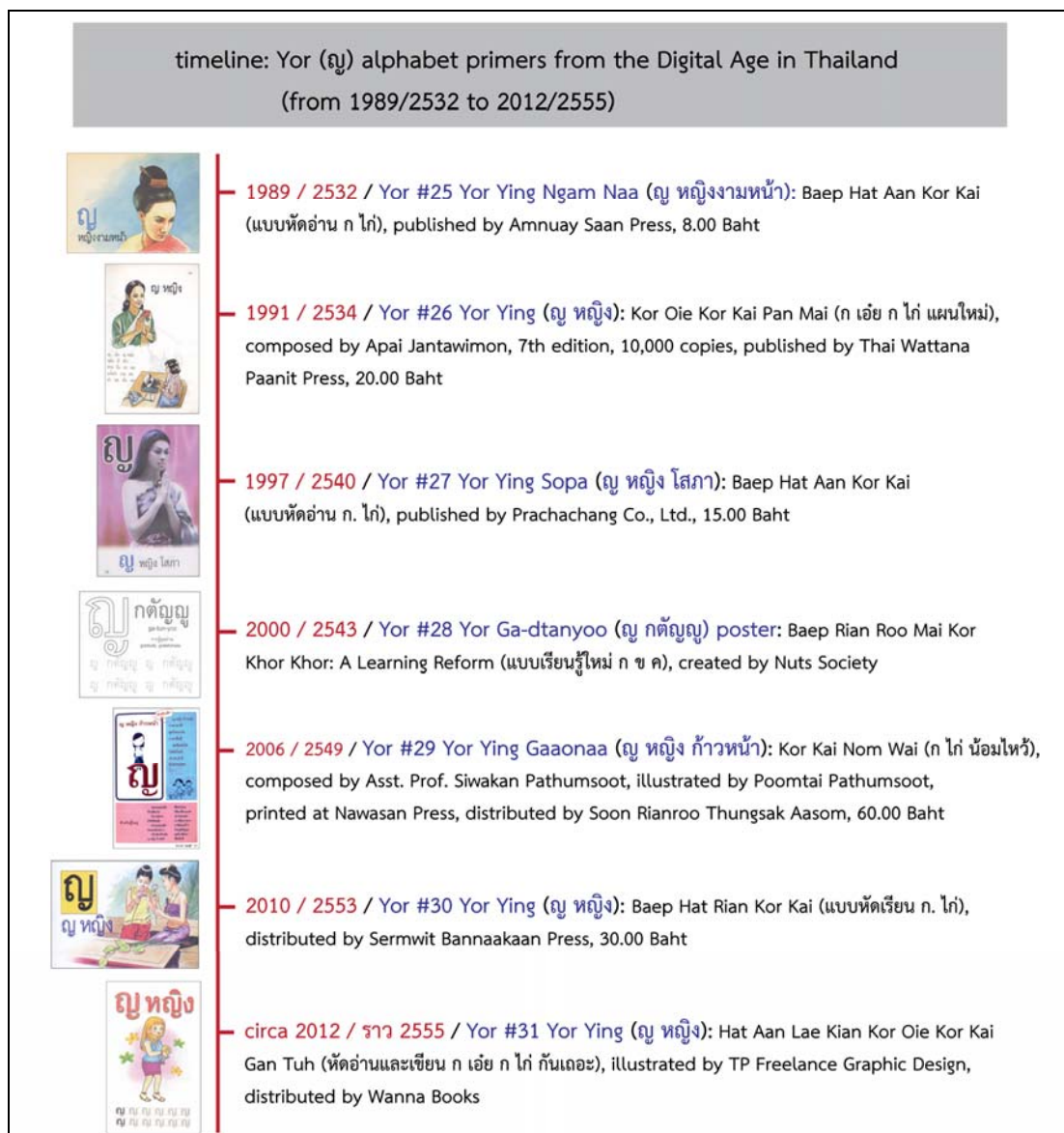


Figure 84 Timeline of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the Digital Age in Thailand  
(from 1989/2532 to 2012/2555)

Collected for this research, seven Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and posters printed during the period of twenty-four years from 1989/2532 to 2012/2555) are compiled in chronological order. The first one was published two years after the first

set of Thai digital typefaces by Dear Book Company for the Macintosh platform that was distributed to the public in 1987/2530. This was considered the starting point of The Digital Age in Thailand. The last primer was published around 2012/2555 when this research was initiated. Six out of seven primers use Ying (หญิง) as the accompanying word with the illustrations of women. Only one primer leaves out the representation by using another word that means ‘being grateful.’



Figure 85 Yor #25 Yor Ying Ngam Naa (1989/2532) published by Amnuay Saan Press  
Source: **Baep Hat Aan Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Amnuay Saan, 1989), 8.

This primer named Bab Hat Aan Kor Kai (แบบหัดอ่าน ก ไก่) (meaning the alphabet primer for practicing reading skills) was published with a copyright by Amnuay Saan Press (อำนวยการพิมพ์) in 1989/2532. The price was eight baht per copy. At the back of this primer, the English alphabet primer is printed on half of the book. Its Yor (ญ) page utilizes Ying (หญิง) as the accompanying word and Ngam Naa (งามหน้า) as the rhyming word. In general, the word Ngam Naa (งามหน้า) has a negative meaning as being shameful or deplorable. But due to the reason that it has to rhyme with the following letter and the accompanying word Dor Chada (ดู ชฎา) (meaning Thai theatrical headdress), the whole phrase should contextually mean ‘beautiful woman’.

This Yor (ญ) page depicts the upper body of a woman with her face looking downward. It is probably an expression of moderately being in a mood. This illustration portrays another famous actress, Pitsamai Wilaisak (พิศมัย วิไลศักดิ์), dressed in a traditional Thai costume and hairstyle. She wears long hair with a topknot decorated with a golden hairpin. Other visible accessories are earrings and a



matching necklace with gold and red gemstones. She wears a red pleated shawl over her left shoulder. At her back, a light blue color is applied to most of the background area.



Figure 86 Yor #26 Yor Ying (1991/2534) 7th edition, published by Thai Wattana Panit Press

Source: Apai Jantawimon, **Kor Oie Kor Kai Pan Mai**. 7th ed. (Bangkok: Thai Wattana Panit, 1991), 11.

This alphabet primer is named **Kor Oie Kor Kai Pan Mai** (ก อ้อย ก ไก่ แผนใหม่) (meaning modern alphabet primer) and was composed by Apai Jantawimon (อภัย จันทวิมล). Its seventh edition of ten thousand copies was published by Thai Wattana Panit Press (สำนักพิมพ์ไทยวัฒนาพานิช) in 1991/2534 and sold for a price of twenty baht per copy. This is the only alphabet primer where the letter Khor Khuat (ข) and Khor Khon (ค) are excluded. For the cover design, in comparison to the other primers that usually use the images of lifelike chickens, this primer's cover uses a graphic-styled rooster placed in front of a red circle representing the rising sun (see Figure 87).

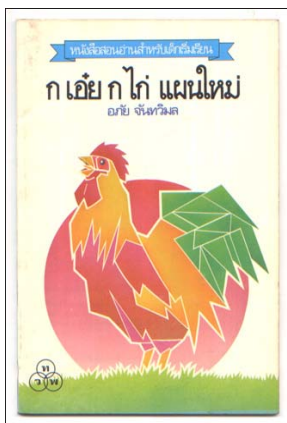


Figure 87 Modern alphabet primer's cover, 7th edition, published by Thai Wattana Panit Press, 1991/2534

Source: Apai Jantawimon, **Kor Oie Kor Kai Pan Mai**. 7th ed. (Bangkok: Thai Wattana Panit, 1991), cover.

This Yor (ญ) page utilizes the accompanying word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) and additional five-lined verses describing women's characteristics. They state that women should be diligent and beautiful, especially with charming eyes, and well dressed. It is noteworthy that the author or publisher chose to illustrate two women in order to represent preferable professions, an air-stewardess and a secretary or clerk. The top illustration depicts an air-stewardess dressed in a green-colored uniform and a long-sleeved round-necked blouse with a shawl wrapped over her left shoulder. A red corsage decorates the shawl. She has long hair and wears a bracelet on her left wrist. She is putting the palms of the hands together at her chest in salute with a greeting smile. This gesture represents the crews' welcoming actions that Thai Airways' passengers would experience when getting on board.

The illustration at the bottom of the page portrays a woman sitting on a chair and typing. On the working table beside the typewriter are a wired telephone and a notepad with a pen. She wears neck-length short hair with a hairpin and dresses in a long-sleeved pink blouse and a blue skirt.



Figure 88 Yor #27 Yor Ying Sopa (1997/2540) published by Prachachang Company

Source: **Baep Hat Aan Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Prachachang, 1997), 16.

Another version of the alphabet primer published by Prachachang Company (บริษัทประชาช่าง) in 1997/2540 is named **Baep Hat Aan Kor Kai** (แบบหัดอ่าน ก. ไก่) (meaning alphabet primer for practicing reading skills). Its price is fifteen baht per copy. This Yor (ญ) page displays a big black letter Yor (ญ) in the top left corner and a smaller one in a blue color. The accompanying word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman), and the rhyming word Sopa (โสภา) (meaning beautiful, usually used in literature) are placed on the same line at the bottom of the page. The illustration of a woman standing while pressing her hands together at the chest is a digital image depicted in a painterly style. This person is a famous Thai actress, Cathaleeyaa Macintosh (คัทลียา แมคอินทอช). She wears straight long hair and dresses in a traditional Thai costume: a shawl wrapped around her top body and over the left shoulder with a loincloth pulled up. Her face depicts a still and calm expression. The only visible accessory is a ring with a gigantic gemstone on her right hand. She presses the hands together at the chest in a sign of respect. Probably, it is an action of paying homage to the statue of Buddha or an act of supplication. The pink background behind her resembles a curtain made of shiny fabric. The illustration in this primer resembles the fashion photographs of Miss Cathaleeyaa published the same year in *Ploi Gaem Pet* magazine (นิตยสารพลอยแกมเพชร) (see Figure 89). Her

famous character, Nokyoong (นกยูง) was in the period television play named Reuan Mayuraa (เรือนมยุรา).



Figure 89 Miss Cathaleeyaa's fashion shot in Ploi Gaem Pet magazine, 1997/2540  
Source: Cathaleeyaa Macintosh, **Thai actress**, accessed February 9, 2016, available from <http://pantip.com/topic/30535930>



Figure 90 Yor #28 Yor Gatunyoo (2000/2543) poster, created by Nuts Society  
Source: Nuts Society, **Baep Rian Roo Mai Kor Khor Khor: A Learning Reform** [poster] (Bangkok: n.p., 2000).

At the turn of the century, an alternative alphabet primer naming Baep Rian Roo Mai Kor Khor Khor (แบบเรียนรู้ใหม่ ก ข ค) (meaning the alphabet learning reform) was re-created in the form of a handwriting exercise book by a Bangkok-based art and design collective, Nuts Society. It was first created as a poster in 1991/2534 for the occasion of the National Children's Day celebration. This alphabet

learning reform's concept tries to insert morality and positive thinking into the practice of language learning. It replaces all the accompanying words that are usually representative of human beings, animals, or goods with words such as generosity, patience, and peace, etc. For example, the letter Kor (ก) that is usually paired with the word Kai (ไก่) (meaning chicken) is replaced by the word Geuagoon (เกื้อกูล) (meaning to lend a hand or support).

This Yor (ญ) page utilizes Ga-dtanyoo (กตัญญู) (meaning gratitude or being grateful) as its accompanying word. The illustration is intentionally omitted in order to focus on the letter, word and meaning. A few lines of handwriting exercises are added to help with memorizing the alternative way of alphabet learning. The entire collection of posters and exercise books are printed in a gray color, so that children can use these alphabet primers as coloring exercises as well.

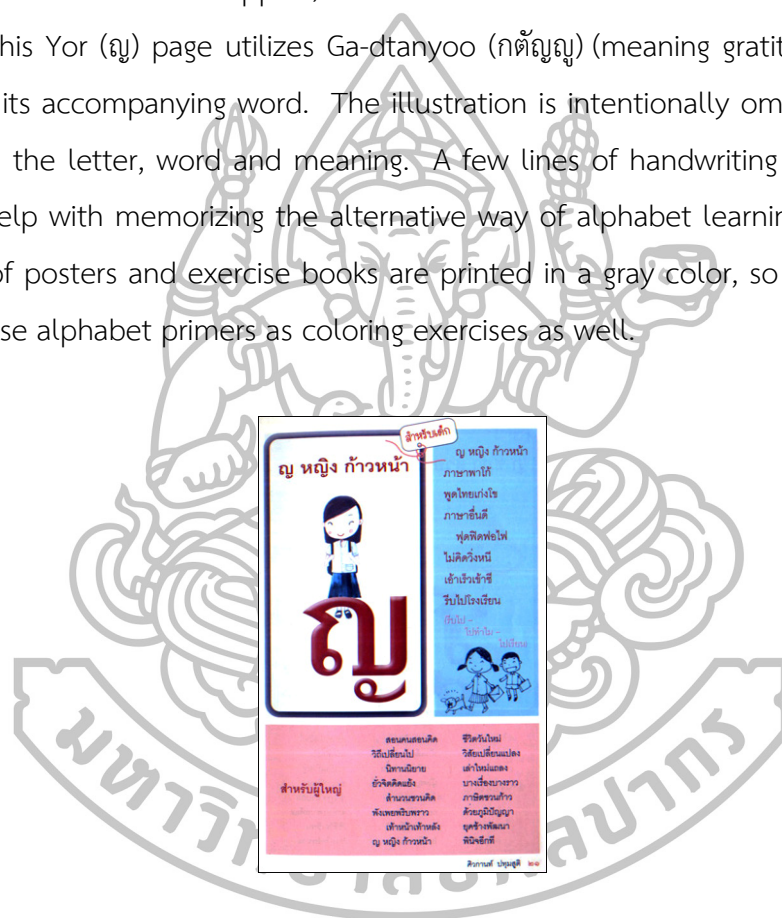


Figure 91 Yor #29 Yor Ying Gao-naa (2006/2549) distributed by Soon Rianroo

Thungsak Aasom

Source: Siwakan Pathumsoot, **Kor Kai Nom Wai** (Supanburi: Soon Rianroo Thungsak Aasom, 2006), 21.

This alphabet primer named Kor Kai Nom Wai (ก ไก่ น้อมไหว้) (meaning the letter Kor paying respect with its head bowed) was distributed by Soon Rianroo Thungsak Aasom (ศูนย์เรียนรู้ทุ่งสักอักษร) in 2006/2549 at a price of sixty baht per copy. It was composed by Assistant Professor Siwakan Pathumsoot (ผ.ศ. ศิวกานท์ ปทุมสูติ) in

order to comply with the Standard Primary Education Curriculum 2001 (หลักสูตรการศึกษาขั้นพื้นฐาน พ.ศ. 2544) proclaimed in 2001/2544. Each page is divided into three sections, the letter with its accompanying and rhyming words, a verse for children, and a verse for adults who teach them.

The top left section of the Yor (ญ) page utilizes Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) as the accompanying word and Gaaonaa (ก้าวหน้า) (meaning progress or develop toward a better condition) as the rhyming word. The big letter Yor (ญ) printed in a red color is placed at the bottom part of this section. Its illustration in a cartoon-style depicts a girl in a typical Thai student's uniform. She wears a white short-sleeved blouse with a collar and pocket, a blue skirt and a pair of black shoes with white socks. She expresses a beaming smile while standing with both hands gripping the handles of her backpack.

In the blue section on the top right corner of the page there is an eight-lined verse for children to practice reading. There is also a smaller cartoon-styled illustration of a smiley boy and a girl chasing after a barking dog while holding their schoolbags in their left hands. In the verses, schoolgirls are encouraged to be fluent in both Thai and other languages, and not afraid of communicating with foreigners. In order to be as described, they need to get to school on time and study hard.

At the bottom of the page in the pink section there is another eight-lined verse for adults, either the parents or teachers, who use this primer to teach the children. The verse urges them to adapt new ways of teaching in order to cope with the modern society. The parents or teachers have to prepare the children to be able to see different viewpoints and not be afraid to question old beliefs, especially those related to gender issues. One Thai proverb defines a woman as the elephant's hind legs, or the followers, while men are the front legs, or the leaders. At the end of the verse, the adults are encouraged to rethink this proverb in the context of modern society.



Figure 92 Yor #30 Yor Ying (2010/2553) published by Sermwit Bannakarn

Source: **Baep Hat Rian Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sermwit Bannaakaan, 2010), 9.

This Yor (ญ) A4-size page in *Baep Hat Rian Kor Kai* (แบบหัดเขียน ก. ไก่) (meaning alphabet primer) was published in 2010/2553 by Sermwit Bannakarn Press (เสริมวิทย์บรรณาการ) for the price of thirty baht per copy. It utilizes Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) as the accompanying word without any rhyme. The big letter Yor (ญ) in a black color is placed in a yellow square at the top left corner of the page. Under it, a smaller Yor (ญ) letter with arrowhead lines indicating how to write this letter is printed. The accompanying word Ying (หญิง) shown in a blue color is placed next to it.

The painterly-styled illustration portrays a woman on the right and a girl on the left. Both of them are smiling and enjoying their activities together. They kneel on the wooden floor while folding the lotuses' petals. This is a traditional way of preparing the petals for Buddhist offerings. The woman wears her hair long and in a topknot decorated with a hairpin. She dresses in a breast cloth and a sarong of a purple color with an orange cloth wrapped around her waist. Another accessory she wears is a yellow beaded necklace. The girl wears a childish-styled topknot with an ornamental hoop. She dresses in a yellow round-necked sleeveless blouse decorated with lace and a red Thai-styled loincloth. Five unprepared lotuses sit in front of them, placed on a short-legged wooden table. The background behind them features a garden view with some shrubs and a palm tree-like twig. The shadows on the floor indicate that both of them are spending their time outdoors, probably on the terrace of a Thai-styled house.



Figure 93 Yor #31 Yor Ying (circa 2012/2555) distributed by Wanna Books

Source: **Hat Aan Lae Kian Kor Oie Kor Kai Gan Tuh** (Bangkok: Wanna Books, n.d.).

This alphabet primer distributed by Wanna Books (วรรณานุกูลส์) around 2012/2555 is named **Hat Aan Lae Kian Kor Oie Kor Kai Gan Tuh** (หัดอ่านและเขียน ก เอ๋ย ก ไก่ กั้นเถาะ) (meaning let's practice reading and writing the alphabet). The illustrations are made by TP Freelance Graphic Design. Its Yor (ยฺ) page displays a big letter Yor (ยฺ) with arrowhead lines inside for practicing handwriting. The accompanying word Ying (หยฺง) (meaning woman) shown in a red color is placed at the top. At the center, the cartoon-styled illustration portrays a smiley woman walking while holding a garland on her left hand. On her right hand, she wears a pink bracelet on her wrist. Her long hair with bangs is dyed blond. She dresses in a blue sleeveless blouse, a short pink skirt and a pair of pink high-heeled shoes with bows decorating the ankles. In the background, a light pink shade is displayed with four floating flowers in green and yellow colors. At the bottom part of the page are two lines of repetitive Yor (ยฺ) letters in a light gray color for children to practice handwriting.

### Summary

In conclusion, the historical and contextual research in this chapter explicates the chronological order of thirty-one Yor (ยฺ) alphabet primers in the Thai political, economical, and cultural contexts. During the four periods: (1) from the era of the monarchy and Western influence, (2) from the beginning of the democratic



reform, (3) from the beginning of the National Economic Development Plan in Thailand, and (4) from the Digital Age in Thailand, the basic Thai language learning pedagogy has evolved through the usage of various state primers and language readers in each era. Even though the first accompanying word to the alphabet character Yor (ญ) was Yart (ญาติ) (meaning relative), it was not printed in the primers and officially used until the word Poo-ying (ผู้หญิง) (meaning woman) was accompanied with the Yor (ญ) character in the state primers that were used throughout the kingdom in 1899/2442. From that time up until present, according to the thirty-one Yor (ญ) pages found, only four Yor (ญ) pages are paired with other words and only two Yor (ญ) pages have no word attached with the alphabet character Yor (ญ). Accordingly, the learning of the alphabet character Yor (ญ) has been fixed with the notion of 'woman' for a hundred and fifteen years. Moreover, different rhyming words are added and most of them refer to the beauty characteristics of women. Besides the verbal language, images of women in the illustrations of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers depict the representative characters of women from each era.

The letterform displayed in each Yor (ญ) alphabet primer also demonstrates how the printing technologies evolved, from woodblock, letterpress, lithograph and offset press to digital press. Prominently, the form of the letter Yor (ญ) was changed by political incident during the Second World War. It was replaced by the letter Yor (ย) in the initial consonant, but retained in the final consonant without its lower base under the command of Field Marshall Plaek Phibunsongkram who proclaimed the Thai spelling reform; however, this continued for only a two-year period. Nowadays in the digital era, the letterform of the Yor (ญ) alphabet character in each typeface has two variations, one with the lower base attached to the main letterform and one with the lower base separately placed beneath it.

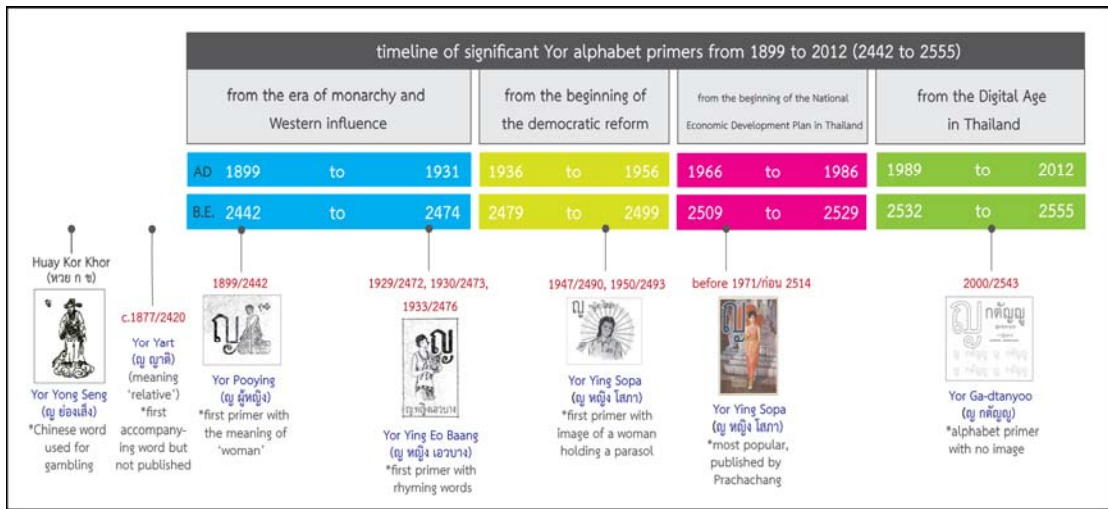


Figure 94 Timeline of Yor’s accompaniments and significant Yor alphabet primers



## Chapter 5

### Visual semiotics analyses of Yor (ຽ) alphabet primers and the findings

Semiotics, or semiology, is widely recognized as the general science of 'signs.' In Saussure's terms, the signified and the signifier are the components of the sign. "The plane of signifiers constitutes the 'plane of expression' and that of the signifieds the 'plane of content'." (Barthes, 1986: 39) Besides its root in linguistics, Semiotics was later extended as an approach to analyze visual images and raise questions as to how images make meanings. Hence, the terminology, 'visual semiotics analysis,' is mixed with critical discourse analysis approach and employed as the major analytical tool throughout this research.

According to Roland Barthes, "connotation, being itself a system, comprises signifiers, signified, and the process which unites the former to the latter (signification), ..." (Barthes, 1986: 91) This process of signification, or 'semiosis,' involves how we make meaning and interpret these signs, and also, how we participate in specific social and cultural contexts. Every sign refers to a 'wider system' of meanings, which are called the 'codes' or 'referent systems.' According to Gillian Rose, "a code is a set of conventionalized ways of making meaning that are specific to particular groups of people." (Rose, 2001: 88) The 'connotators,' or the signifiers of connotation, are naturalized by the denoted language that carries them. Thus, for this research, the process of decoding is utilized in order to understand the meanings and the signification of meanings in thirty-one Yor (ຽ) alphabet primers, which are called 'the corpuses.' In Barthes' term, a corpus is "a finite collection of materials, which is determined in advance by the analyst, with some (inevitable) arbitrariness, and on which he is going to work." (Barthes, 1986: 96)

In this chapter, the decoding process using a visual semiotics framework is utilized. Then, the connotative meanings that are discovered are contextually discussed along with the discourse analyses about Thai femininity. Additionally, in

comparison to other visual resources, the transformations of meanings are revealed. Consequently, the process of visual semiotics analysis and all research findings discloses the ‘intertextuality’ of social ideologies about Thai women. At the end of this chapter, the design implementations of three Yor (ญ) alphabet learning reform tools are presented.

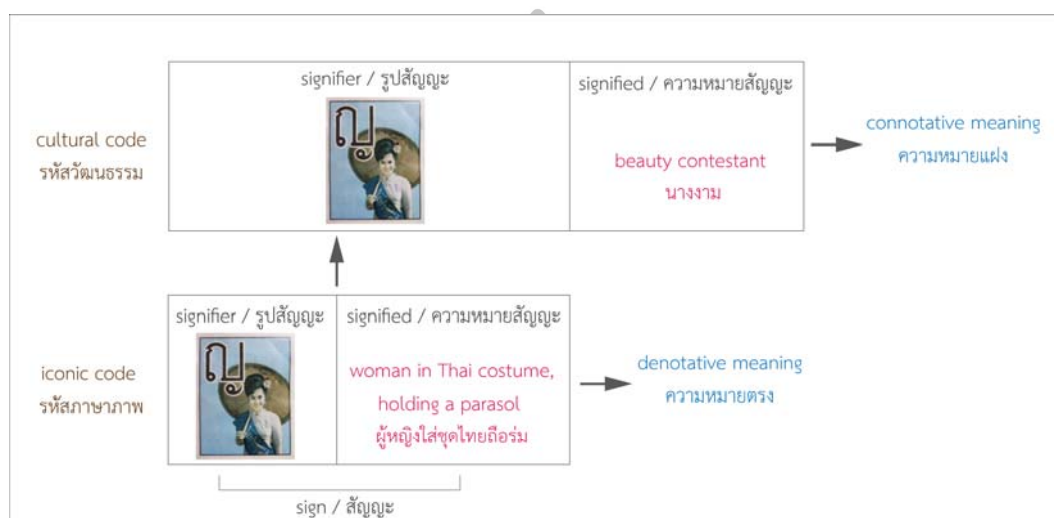


Figure 95 The denotative and connotative meanings of an image of a woman holding a parasol in Yor #14

The ‘sign’ is the most fundamental unit in any visual image. In order to understand the meaning of signs, the ‘signifiers’ and the ‘signifieds’ are examined. In Yor #14 alphabet primer with the image of a woman holding a parasol and a letter Yor (ญ) (see Figure 95), the first ‘signifier’ is ‘ญ’, while its ‘signified’ is the thirteenth character of the forty-four characters of the Thai alphabet. The second signifier is the image of a woman, while its ‘signified’ is a ‘woman in a Thai costume holding a parasol.’ The denotative signs in the image describe what the viewer sees. At this point, the denotative meanings of the signs are understood. Then, by looking closely at another set of signifiers in this image, the ‘parasol, sash, and costume’, it can be understood that these signifiers are acting as cultural codes. They represent ‘the beauty contestant’ in a pageant, which is then the connotative meaning of this image. This process clarifies that signs always work in relation to other signs.

In this Yor #14 alphabet primer that has no accompanying word, the image of ‘a beauty contestant holding a parasol’ fixes the meaning of the alphabet Yor (ญ). But in the others primers where the word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman) and its rhyme are accompanied with the alphabet Yor (ญ), these words together with their illustrations fix the meaning of the alphabet Yor (ญ). To summarize, in Thai alphabet primers that aim to teach children the letterforms of the Thai alphabet, the accompanying words, rhymes and illustrations, when added, are significant to the meaning of the alphabet. For example, the meanings of the alphabet Yor (ญ) are fixed by the word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman), the rhyming word Sopa (โสภา), and the image of a woman holding a parasol.

There are two kinds of signs, (1) syntagmatic and (2) paradigmatic signs. The syntagmatic signs gain their meaning from the signs that surround them in a particular image. This relationship is called the syntagmatic relation between signs. For example, in this primer, the combination of a woman, a parasol, a sash, a costume, and a letter ‘ญ’ constructs the meaning. The paradigmatic signs gain their meanings from a contrast with all other possible signs. For example, we understand a sign in Figure 95 as ‘a woman,’ not ‘a man’ or ‘a chair.’

Fundamentally, the interrelationships between signs are investigated in two aspects, syntagmatic, or linear, and paradigmatic, or categorical relations. For this research, the analytical tools are specifically developed to reveal the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers. On the Yor (ญ) page of each alphabet primer, the letterform and the accompanying and rhyming words are the verbal codes that will be textually analyzed. The image on the Yor (ญ) page is the non-verbal code that will be pictorially analyzed.

To exemplify the procedures of investigating the connotative meanings of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and interpreting them, two Yor (ญ) alphabet primers are analyzed. The first one is Yor #27 alphabet primer and the second one is Yor #21 alphabet primer.



Figure 96 The verbal and non-verbal codes in Yor #27 alphabet primer (1997/2540)

The verbal codes in Yor #27 alphabet primer (see Figure 96) are the Yor (ย) letterform, the accompanying word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman), and the rhyming word Sopa (โสภา) (meaning beautiful). The non-verbal codes dominantly seen are the representation of a woman and the background. All verbal and non-verbal codes in Yor #27 alphabet primer gain meaning from each other. By thoroughly analyzing the syntagmatic relations of signs: the letterform, the words, the image of the upper half of a woman dressed in a traditional Thai costume, her gesture of putting the palms of her hands together at her chest, and the pink background, these signs signify ‘a beautiful woman in the context of Thai society in 1997/2540.’



Figure 97 Yor #27 alphabet primer (1997/2540) and Yor #21 alphabet primer (after 1976/2519)

Source : Prachachang, **Alphabet Primer for Practicing Reading Skills** (Bangkok: Prachachang, 1997), 16; Seriphan Ltd., **Children Read ‘Hello Kor Kai’** (Bangkok: Seriphan, after 1976), n.p.

In order to compare and identify the paradigmatic relations of signs, at least two sets of signs or syntagms are investigated (see Figure 97). The Yor #21 alphabet primer is analyzed. The similarities among the syntagms of both images are the same letterform Yor (ย), same accompanying word Ying (หญิง), and same rhyming word Sopa (โสภา). The differences among the syntagms of both images are the illustrations. They constitute a substituting set or paradigm of ‘a beautiful woman,’ which is the ‘first-level meaning,’ but each of them also implicitly conveys its specific ‘second-level meaning.’ In Yor #27 alphabet primer, the representation of the upper half of a woman dressed in a traditional Thai costume, the gesture of putting the palms of her hands together at her chest, and the pink background connote a beautiful woman who represents Thai femininity in conservative aspects of sweet and gentle manners. In contrast, in Yor #21 alphabet primer, a woman sitting on a couch and reading a book in a relaxed manner connotes a beautiful woman who represents the modern aspects of a well-educated and liberated Thai femininity. In Yor #21 alphabet primer, which was published after 1976/2519, the ‘absences’ can be contextually analyzed. The sign that may clarify the meaning of this image is the absence of the title and details on the cover of the book that this woman is holding. She might be reading a textbook for studying or a novel during her leisure time. For the Yor #27 alphabet primer, the absences are found when the intertextuality is later discussed.

The illustration in a painterly style in the alphabet primer realistically portrays a famous Thai actress, Miss Cathaleeya Macintosh (คัทลียา แมคอินทอช). It resembles fashion photography shots of herself published in a magazine in 1997/2540, the same year that the alphabet primer was published. Hence, similarities between the signs in the Yor #27 alphabet primer and the other resources are found. At the time of publishing, it was not typical for a Thai woman to wear a traditional costume in everyday life. Actually, Miss Cathaleeya was dressed in the famous period television play’s costume. And probably, her gesture was part of her acting in the play (see Figure 89 in Chapter 4). Contextually analyzed, the ‘absences’ in Yor #27 alphabet primer are probably the props of the period television play in the background. In identifying the intertextual relations of signs in both the alphabet primer and the photograph in the magazine, the ‘intertextuality’ is revealed. It

indicates that every ‘sign’ is the product of the one that previously occurred and relates to the others that subsequently happen.

These procedures of visual semiotics analysis are conducted throughout the investigation of thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, as the main resources, and the other graphic design artifacts, as the secondary resources. Feminist and critical discourse analysis frameworks are applied in order to discuss how the meanings of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers are related to Thai femininity discourses. Later in this chapter, the visual analyses are explained in six sub-topics along with the five research findings as follows:

1. Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers
2. Textual analysis in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers/Finding 1: beauty ideologies
3. Pictorial analysis in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers/Finding 2: the ‘absences’ of mother and housewife
4. The representations of ‘a woman holding a parasol’/Finding 3: parasol: the visual trope of cultural meanings
5. The representations of ‘a woman reading a book’/Finding 4: literacy of women
6. The representations of ‘a woman typing at a desk’/Finding 5: women in the workforce

### **1. Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers**

One Yor-thirty, analysis visual semiotic the By using (ญ) alphabet primers are examined as the visual images ‘decoded’. The visible basic structure or the grammar of the visual languages shown in any visual image are normally constructed by the combination of the verbal codes, or words, and the non-verbal codes, or images. Syntagmatic relations between these codes focus on ‘the presence’ or ‘things that we can see’ in a visual image or, in this study, the Yor (ญ) alphabet primer. Specifically developed for this research, by applying and modifying the visual methodologies and the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) frameworks, each Yor (ญ) alphabet primer is analyzed through the use of seven categories of syntagms: (see figure 5-4)



1. participants/people
2. attributes/objects: object, costume, accessories, hairstyle and decoration
3. transitivity/action
4. pose: body and face
5. eye direction: of the subject and/or of the viewer
6. settings/background
7. modality/truth: choice of medium

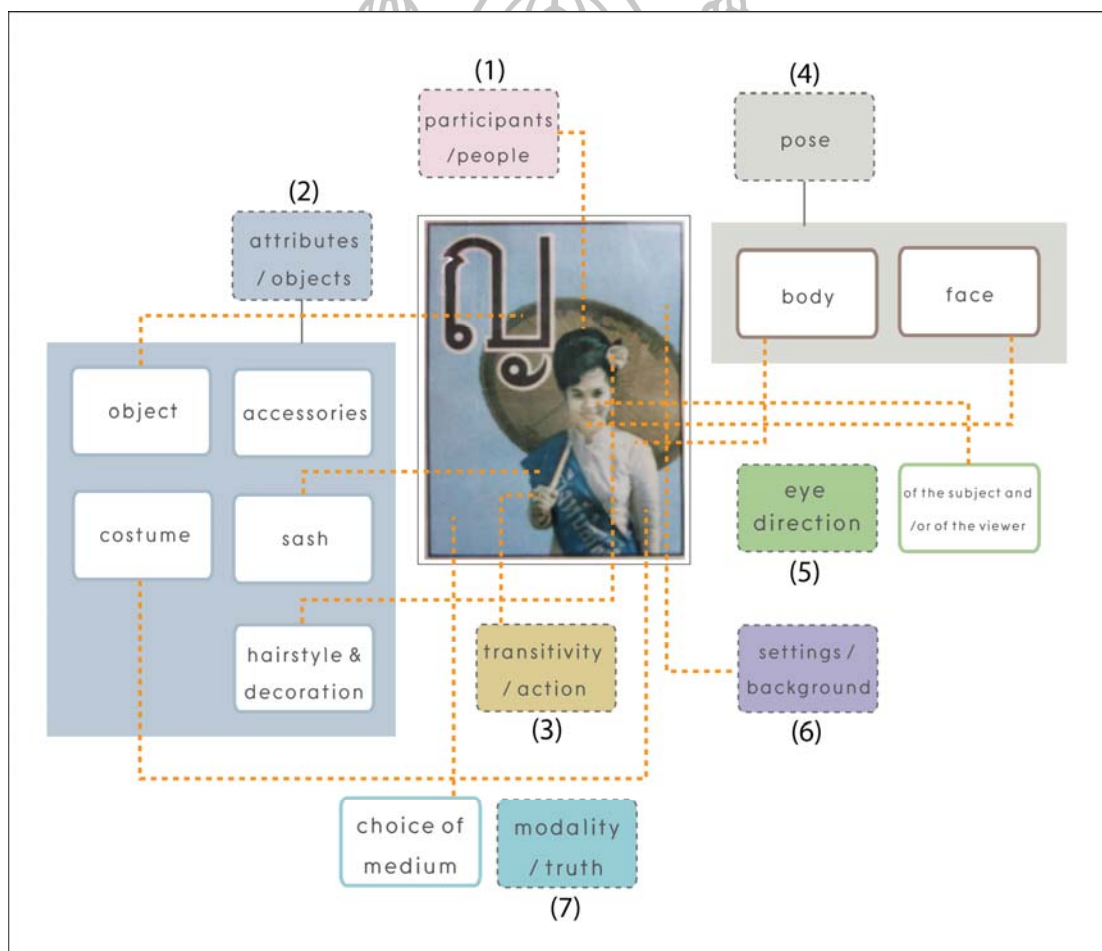


Figure 98 The diagram illustrating the seven categories of the syntagmatic structure analysis

The syntagmatic structure analysis is presented in the form of tables (see Table 3). The ‘presence’ of every visual unit in the images is dissected and then

listed in accordance with each category of syntagm. The horizontal rows indicate how the visual units form the syntagmatic structure of each Yor (ย) alphabet primer and construct its specific meaning. Additionally, the juxtaposition of all visual units in the same table vertically reveals the ‘paradigmatic relations.’ They define different sets of visual language combinations that can be substituted within the particular context. In order to understand the semiotic system of relationships and the rules of combination, all visual units are classified, according to their similarities and differences.

The syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in all thirty-one Yor (ย) alphabet primers and the structural analysis of the visual units that constitute their meanings are visually analyzed and verbally described in words in the following tables:

1. table 2 Yor alphabet primers from the era of the monarchy and Western influence (Yor #1 – Yor #9) (1899/2442 to 1931/2474)
2. table 3 Yor alphabet primers from the beginning of the democratic reform (Yor #10 – Yor #13) (1936/2479 to 1956/2499)
3. table 4 Yor alphabet primers from the beginning of the National Economic Development Plan in Thailand (Yor #14 – Yor #24) (1966/2509 to 1986/2529)
4. table 5 Yor alphabet primers from the Digital Age in Thailand (Yor #25 – Yor #31) (1989/2532 to 2012/2555)

Table 3 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ꠘ) alphabet primers from the era of the monarchy and Western Influence (Yor #1 - Yor #9) (1899/2442 to 1931/2474)




visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		action	body			
Figure 46 Yor #1 	Yor Pooying (=woman) (alphabet primer)	1899/2442	woman	none	none	tradit. Thai (shawl, loincloth)	none	short	none	full body / sitting / facing the reader	X	X	none	line drawing / wood-cut print
Figure 47 Yor #2 	Yor Pooying (=woman) (alphabet primer)	1907/2450	woman	none	earrings, bracelet	tradit. Thai (long-sleeve blouse, sarong)	none	short	holding a flower	full body / sitting / turning her left side to the viewer	X	straight	none	line drawing / wood-cut print
Figure 48 Yor #3 	Yor Pooying (=woman) (alphabet primer)	1910/2453	woman	chair	none	tradit. Thai (shawl, loincloth pulled up)	none	short	none	full body / sitting on a chair	X	direct to the viewer	none	line drawing

Table 3 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ꠘ) alphabet primers from the era of the monarchy and Western Influence (Yor #1 - Yor #9) (1899/2442 to 1931/2474) (continue)







visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		action	body			
Figure 50 Yor #4 	Yor Yuan (=Vietnamese people) (alphabet primer)	1915, 1920/2458, 2463	woman	fan	Hair decorations	Vietnamese style	none	bun	walking toward the left side of the viewer	full body / walking, holding a fan by her right hand	X	straight	outdoor, the ground is covered with some weeds	line drawing / wood-cut print
Figure 52 Yor #5 	Yor Yeepoon (=Japanese people) (alphabet primer)	1922/2465	woman	paper parasol	none	Kimono	none	Japanese style	walking toward the left side of the viewer	full body / walking, holding a parasol by her left hand on the left shoulder	X	toward her right side	ground	wood-cut print
Figure 53 Yor #6 	Yor Yaa (=grass) (alphabet primer)	1922/2465	none	grass-es with some insects	none	none	none	none	some insects flying	none	none	none	pond	lithograph print

Table 3 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ꠘ) alphabet primers from the era of the monarchy and Western Influence (Yor #1 - Yor #9) (1899/2442 to 1931/2474) (continue)

visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		action	body			
Figure 54 Yor #7 	Yor Ying (=woman) (cigarette card)	c.1922/ c.2465	woman	something on the floor near her right arm	none	short-sleeved blouse, probably sarong	none	short	sitting	full body / sitting	smile	straight	brick wall with some trees behind	painting/color or print
Figure 57 Yor #8 	Yor Ying Eo Baang (-slim-waisted woman) (alphabet primer)	1929, 1930, 1933/ 2472, 2473, 2476	woman	a flower bouquet	none	Western-influenced style (King Rama VII)	none	curly	holding a bouquet of flowers	nearly full body / standing	smile	straight	none	line drawing
Figure 58 Yor #9 	Yor Ying Eo Baang (-slim-waisted woman) (cigarette card)	1931/ 2474	woman	none	none	sleeveless-blouse	none	curly short	Probably sitting or standing	almost half body / turning her left side to the viewer	X	X	none	line drawing

x = the details cannot be clearly seen

Table 4 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ꠘ) alphabet primers from the beginning of the democratic reform (Yor #10 - Yor #13) (1936/2479 to 1956/2499)





visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		action	body			
Figure 61 Yor #10 	Yor Ying (woman) (alphabet primer)	1936/2479	four women	book (main image)	none	sleeveless-blouse (main image) / tradit. Thai / short-sleeved blouse	none	curly short (main) / long	reading in relaxing manner (main) / standing or sitting	half body (main image)	still	downward to the book (main image)	very tall building or temple (main image)	paint-ing
Figure 62 Yor #13 	Yor Ying Ngam Taa (-beautiful woman) (alphabet primer)	c. 1957/ c. 2500	woman	table, chair, typewriter, paper	hair clip	Western style (blouse with collar, long skirt or sarong)	none	short	sitting on a chair and typing	almost full body / turning her left back part to reader	X	downward to the typewriter	yellow & red colors background	painting

Table 4 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (Ṛ) alphabet primers from the beginning of the democratic reform (Yor #10 - Yor #13) (1936/2479 to 1956/2499) (continue)

visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		action	body			
Figure 64 Yor #11 	Yor Ying Sopa (-beautiful woman) (alphabet primer)	1947, 1950/2490, 2493	woman	parasol	none	Western style (blouse with collar)	none	curly long	probably walking while holding a parasol	half body / facing the reader	X	downward	none	painting
Figure 68 Yor #12 	Yor Ying Sopa (-beautiful woman) (card in box)	1956/2499	woman	parasol	X	Western style (blouse with collar, skirt)	none	curly long	probably walking while holding a parasol	almost full body / Standing / facing the reader	smile	direct	garden or hillside with solid blue background	painting

x = the details cannot be clearly seen

Table 5 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ย) alphabet primers from the beginning of the National Economic Development Plan in Thailand (Yor #14 - Yor #24) (1966/2509 to 1986/2529)



visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action			5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration	action	body	face			
Figure 70 Yor #14 	Yor (poster)	1966/2509	woman	paper parasol	none	tradit. Thai style (long sleeve blouse with upright collar)	blue sash	bun With flower	may be walking white holding a parasol	half body / Walking, holding parasol on shoulder by her right hand	smile	Toward the reader	None (solid light blue background)	photo
Figure 71 Yor #15 	Yor Ying San Ngon (=woman with petulant manner) (primer)	1969/2512	woman	none	neck-lace	Western style (may be a dress)	none	curly short	smiling	top part body / smiling, turning her right side to the reader	smile	Down right to the reader	none	Line drawing



Table 5 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ยฺ) alphabet primers from the beginning of the National Economic Development Plan in Thailand (Yor #14 - Yor #24) (1966/2509 to 1986/2529) (continue)




visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		body	face			
Figure 72 Yor #16 	Yor Ying Samai Mai (=modern woman) (primer)	1970/2513	woman	none	high-heeled shoes	a swimming suit	none	curly long	sitting	full body / sitting on the ground in relaxing manner	smile	straight	Ground (may be covered with grass)	Line drawing
Figure 74 Yor #17 	Yor Ying Sopa (-beautiful woman) (primer)	b.1971/ b.2514	woman	none	none	Western-influenced style	none	curly long	smiling	half body	smile	Downward	none	May be wood-cut print
Figure 75 Yor #18 	Yor Ying Ngam Wilai (-beautiful woman) (primer)	b.1971/ b.2514	woman	none	Necklace, earrings, hairpin	tradit. Thai style (long sleeve blouse with shawl or sabai)	none	bun	Standing or sitting	half body	Silent-ly	Direct to the reader	none	painting

Table 5 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the beginning of the National Economic Development Plan in Thailand (Yor #14 - Yor #24) (1966/2509 to 1986/2529) (continue)



visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		action	body			
Figure 76 Yor #19 	Yor (poster)	b.1976/ b.2519/ c.1973 c.2516 Grung Siwilai	woman	Blue paper para-sol with floral decorations	none	tradit. Thai style (yellow long sleeve blouse)	none	bun with orchid flowers decoration	Waving her right hand and holding parasol by her left hand while walking	almost half body / turning her right side to the reader	smile	Straight to the right	None (shades of green background)	painting
Figure 78 Yor #20 	Yor Ying Sopa (=beautiful woman) (primer)	1974/ 2517	woman	none	earrings	X	none	curly long	smiling	almost half body	smile	leftward to the reader	none	Line drawing

Table 5 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ยอ) alphabet primers from the beginning of the National Economic Development Plan in Thailand (Yor #14 - Yor #24) (1966/2509 to 1986/2529) (continue)





visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		action	body			
Figure 79 Yor #21 	Yor Ying Sopa (=beautiful woman) (primer)	a. 1976/ a. 2519	woman	book, sofa, cushion, shelves with books	none	Western style (short-sleeved blouse with collar, and probably long skirt)	none	curly short	reading while sitting in relaxing manner on a sofa	almost full body / sitting and turning her right side to the reader / putting her left hand on the cheek	smile	Downward to the right (but not at the book)	Indoor / probably at home	Line drawing
Figure 80 Yor #22 	Yor Ying Suay Ngam (=beautiful woman) (primer)	a. 1976/ a. 2519	woman	none	none	Western style (blouse with collar)	none	curly short	standing or sitting	almost half body / facing the reader	smile	Direct to the reader	none (shades of orange and pink background)	painting

Table 5 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the beginning of the National Economic Development Plan in Thailand (Yor #14 - Yor #24) (1966/2509 to 1986/2529) (continue)

visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		action	body			
Figure 81 Yor #23 	Yor Ying Sopa (=beautiful woman) (primer)	1977/2520	woman	red plain vinyl umbrella	Necklace, belt, white high-heeled shoes	tradit. Thai style (Thai Chakri-influenced / pink color)	none	short	posing while holding an umbrella on the shoulder by her right hand	full body / facing the reader	Smile (rather still)	Direct to the reader	Benjamborpit temple	photo
Figure 82 Yor #24 	Yor Ying (=woman) (poster)	1986/2529	woman (actress named Jintara Sookpipat)	none	earrings	Western style (long-sleeved jacket and blouse with collar)	none	shoulder-level long hair	probably sitting	half body / smiling while sitting and turning her left side to the reader	smile	Toward the reader	None (shades of light red and orange background)	painting

x = the details cannot be clearly seen

Table 6 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ยฺ) alphabet primers from the Digital Age in Thailand  
(Yor #25 - Yor #31) (1989/2532 to 2012/2555)



visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		body	face			
Figure 85 Yor #25 	Yor Ying Ngam Naa (=beautiful woman) (primer)	1989/2532	woman (actress named Pitsamai Wilaisak)	none	neck-lace, earrings and hairpin	tradit. Thai style (red pleated shawl)	none	bun	bending down her head white sitting or standing	top part body / turning her left side to the reader	silent	downward to the right	shades of light blue	painting
Figure 86 Yor #26 	Yor Ying (=woman) with some verses (primer)	1991/2534	two women (top: air stewardess / bottom: probably secretary)	top: none / bottom: desk, chair, typewriter, telephone, papers, pen	top: bracelet / bottom: hairpin	top: air stewardess uniform (green long-sleeved blouse and shawl with flowers pinned on shoulder) / bottom: pink long-sleeved blouse and blue skirt	none	top: long hair / bottom: neck-length hair	top: standing while putting the palms together in salute / bottom: sitting while typewriting	top: half body, turning her right body to the reader / bottom: almost full body, turning her left body to the reader	top: smile / bottom: silent	top: rightward / bottom: downward to the typewriter	none	painting

Table 6 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the Digital Age in Thailand  
(Yor #25 - Yor #31) (1989/2532 to 2012/2555) (continue)



visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		action	body			
Figure 88 Yor #27 	Yor Ying Sopa (=beautiful woman) (primer)	1997/ 2540 (พระนคร)	woman (actress named: Cathaleeya Macintosh)	none	ring	tradit. Thai style (shawl with sarong)	none	long	putting the palms together in worship	half body	silent	downward to the right	probably pink cloth curtain	painting
Figure 90 Yor #28 	Yor Ga-dtanyoo (=be grateful) (primer)	2000/ 2543	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	typo-graphy only

Table 6 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the Digital Age in Thailand  
(Yor #25 - Yor #31) (1989/2532 to 2012/2555) (continue)




visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		action	body			
Figure 91 Yor #29 	Yor Ying Gao-naa (=woman who loves making progress) (primer)	2006/2549	main: school-girl / minor: school-girl, school-boy and dog	school-bags	none	school uniforms	none	short	main: standing / minor: running after the dog	full body	main: smile / minor: smile and laugh	closed eyes	none	cartoon style
Figure 92 Yor #30 	Yor Ying (=woman) (primer)	2010/2553	Girl and woman	table, lotuses, wooden floor, trees	topknot decoration / neck-lace, hairpin	tradit. Thai style (sleeveless top with loincloth / sleeveless top with sarong)	none	bun / bun	sitting on wooden floor while preparing lotuses for religious offering	full bodies	smile / smile	downward to the lotuses	outdoor with garden	painting

Table 6 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers from the Digital Age in Thailand  
(Yor #25 - Yor #31) (1989/2532 to 2012/2555) (continue)

visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		action	body			
Figure 93 Yor #31 	Yor Ying (=woman) (primer)	2012/2555	woman	garland, green and yellow flowers	bracelet, high-heeled shoes	blue sleeveless blouse with pink skirt	none	dyed in golden color long hair	walking and holding garland in her left hand	full body	smile	direct to the reader	light pink organic-shaped background with four floating flowers in the air	cartoon style

x = the details cannot be clearly seen



## 2. Textual analysis in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers

### 2.1 Analysis of the rhyming words in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers

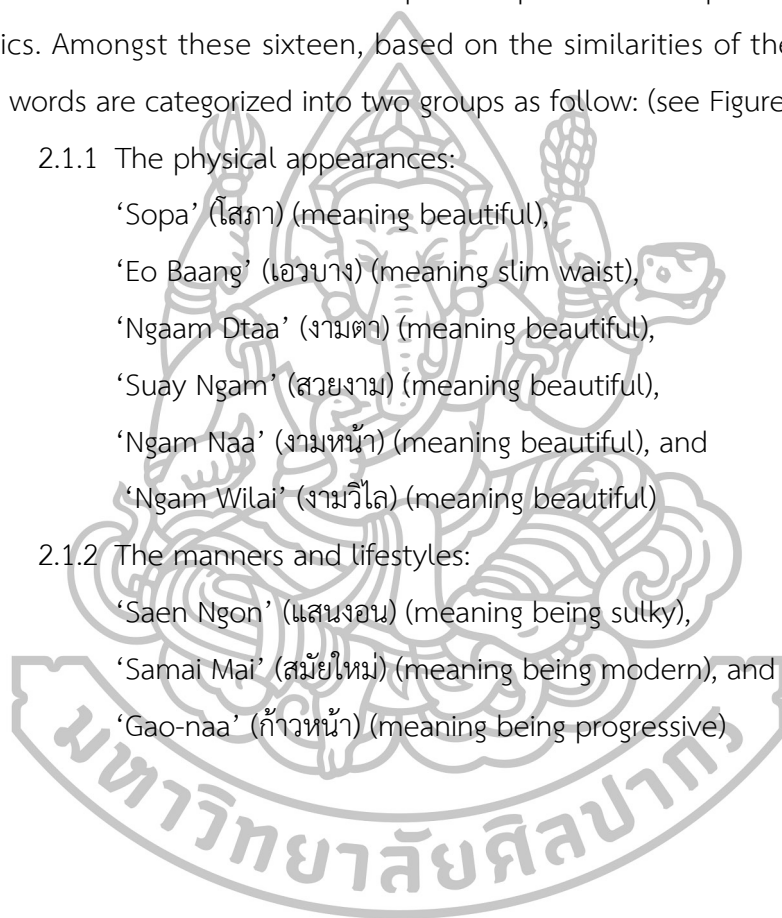
By focusing on the textual analysis in thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, it can be seen that there are twenty-five Yor (ญ) alphabet primers that use the words ‘Ying’ (หญิง) (meaning woman) as the accompanying word. In addition, the rhyming words are added to sixteen alphabet primers to represent women’s characteristics. Amongst these sixteen, based on the similarities of their meanings, the rhyming words are categorized into two groups as follow: (see Figure 88)

#### 2.1.1 The physical appearances:

- ‘Sopa’ (โสภา) (meaning beautiful),
- ‘Eo Baang’ (เอวบาง) (meaning slim waist),
- ‘Ngaam Dtaa’ (งามตา) (meaning beautiful),
- ‘Suay Ngam’ (สวยงาม) (meaning beautiful),
- ‘Ngam Naa’ (งามหน้า) (meaning beautiful), and
- ‘Ngam Wilai’ (งามวิไล) (meaning beautiful)

#### 2.1.2 The manners and lifestyles:

- ‘Saen Ngon’ (แสนงอน) (meaning being sulky),
- ‘Samai Mai’ (สมัยใหม่) (meaning being modern), and
- ‘Gao-naa’ (ก้าวหน้า) (meaning being progressive)



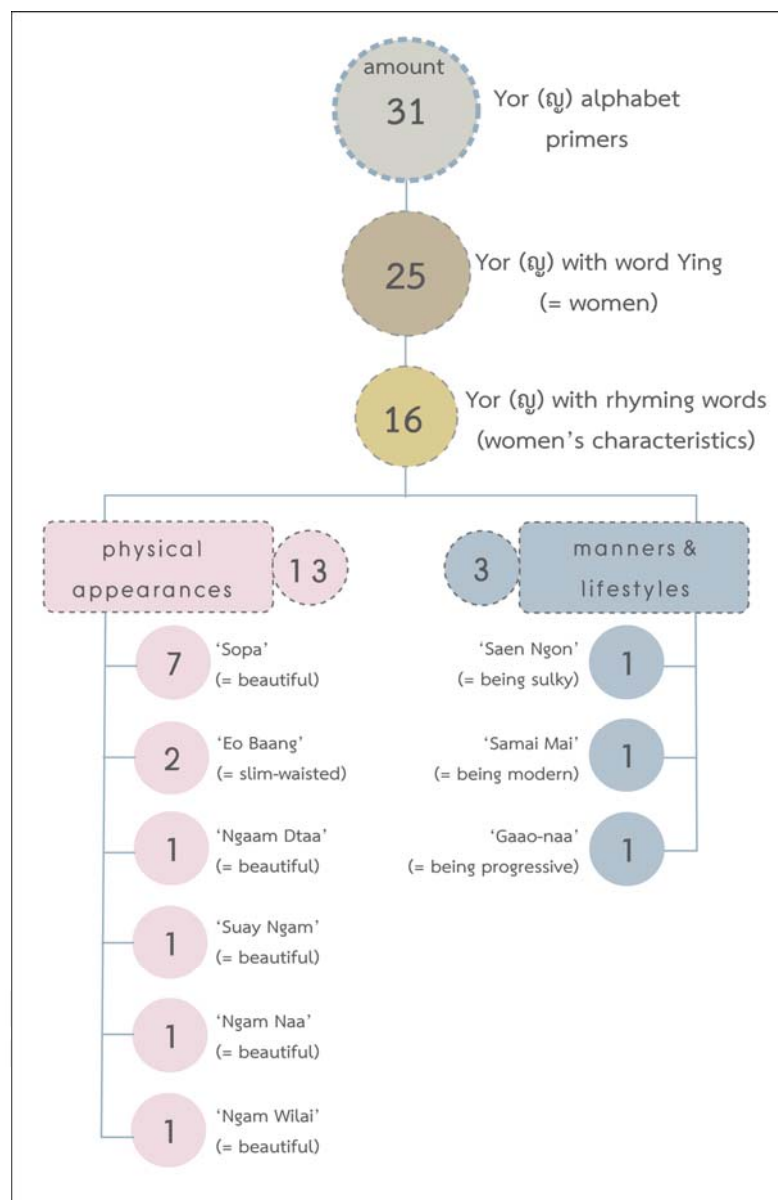


Figure 99 The diagram illustrating the textual analysis of the rhyming words in Yor (ឲ្យ) alphabet primers with the accompanying word Ying (អឿង)

Generally, the ‘first-level connotative meanings’ of the images are ‘fixed’ by the accompanying and rhyming words, which means that these words literally communicate their fixed meanings. But when the words are placed with the juxtaposing illustrations, the new set of syntagms consequently constitute more complex meanings and initiate the ‘second-level connotative meanings.’

For example (see Figure 100), when the letter Yor (ญ) is paired with the accompanying word Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman), its association is ‘fixed’ thus the reader cannot relate its meaning to anything else but a ‘woman.’ Furthermore, the rhyming word Samai Mai (สมัยใหม่) (meaning modern) is added thus another layer of meaning is attached. At this point, the meaning of womanhood is ‘fixed’ by the rhyming words. Hence, she cannot be anything else but ‘modern.’ Finally, when the illustration is provided, the third layer of meaning is added. This modern woman cannot be anything else but ‘modern’ as represented in the image. In this case, smiling and posing to be photographed on the ground while wearing a swimsuit.

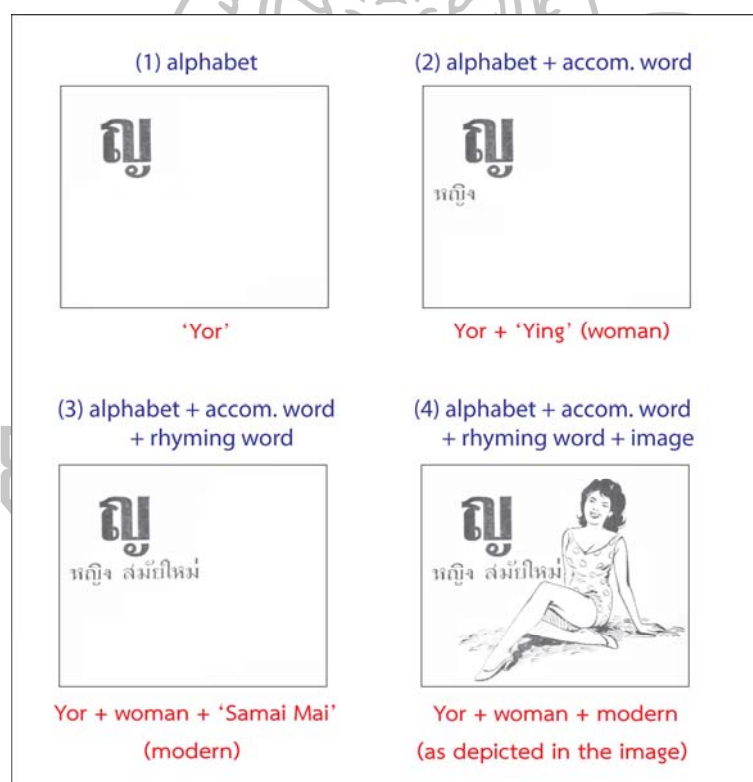


Figure 100 The meaning of the letter Yor (ญ) is ‘fixed’ by the words and illustration

This process of signification constitutes the multilayers of fixed meanings. Even though its meaning is already fixed by the author, the visual semiotics analysis will further expose many implicit meaning potentials and their relations to the ‘intertextuality’ with the other artifacts.

In other cases, when the image does not precisely illustrate the meaning of the word, the connotations may differ from their literal meanings. For example, Yor #13 alphabet primer (see Figure 101) displays the image of a woman typing and sitting by turning her back towards the viewer. This representation is not, to any extent, illustrating the meaning of its rhyming words, Ngam Dtaa (งามตา) (meaning beautiful). By looking at the angle of the viewer's eye direction, presumably, there is a missing person behind her. Hence, the narrative meaning of this representation can be decoded as 'a female clerk who is doing her typing duty, and at the same time is being admired for her beauty by the male employer,' which in this case, is the missing person or 'the absence.'

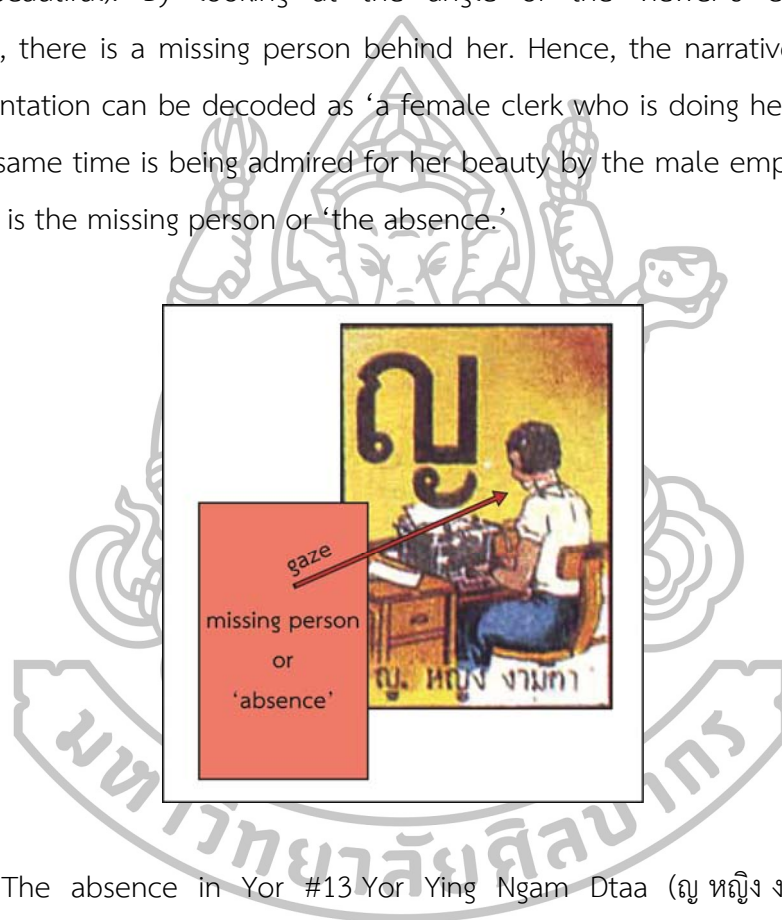


Figure 101 The absence in Yor #13 Yor Ying Ngam Dtaa (ณ หอรับ งามตา) (before 1957/2500)

## 2.2 Finding 1: beauty ideology

One of the most renowned books on the teachings on Thai women's manners and etiquette is "Supaasit Son Sat-dtree" (สุภาพจิตสอนสตรี) (meaning proverbs on teaching women), which is believed to have been composed by Sunthorn Phu (สุนทรภู่) (living from 1786/2329 to 1855/2398 during the early Rattanakosin Period). He was honored by UNESCO as a great world poet in 1986/2529. But recently, some researchers discovered that he was not the author of

“Supaasit Son Sat-dtree.” Its author might be a man named “Phu” (ฟู), who was a poet as well, living during the reign of King Rama V and famous for his *Jakaka* (ชาดก) titled “Nok Gra-jaap” (นกกะจาบ). (The Fine Arts Department, 2012: 159) “Supaasit Son Sat-dtree” was once called “Supaasit Son Ying” (สุภาสิตสอนหญิง) or “Supaasit Thai” (สุภาสิตไทย). It comprises two hundred and one verses in the form of a Thai octameter poem describing the proper conducts and behaviors that Thai women should follow. According to Patompaun Chinapan, who analyzed the ethical values for women in two of Sunthorn Phu’s works: “Supaasit Son Ying” and “Pra A-pai manee” (พระอภัยมณี), there are two types of values: ‘True Value’ and ‘Artificial Value.’ When a woman begins to conduct herself according to these principles, “she will experience inner peace and happiness. She will feel a sense of well-being and will not be adversely affected by the changing conditions.” This is the True Value, while the Artificial Value is “the happiness that is derived from being well accepted and respected by others.” It is “simply a by-product of having conducted herself in the proper and right manner according to social norms.” (Patompaun Chinapan, 2002: abstract) Referring to beauty ideologies, the third part of the verses in “Supaasit Son Sat-dtree” teaches women how to properly dress, put on make-up and tidy their hair by describing the smart way of taking care of one’s appearance as a swanlike behavior.

In Thai literature, according to Bunyong Gatetate’s (บุญยงค์ เกศเทศ) analysis of women ideologies in Thai literature during the early Rattanakosin period, these ideals are categorized by many aspects: physical appearances, manners, possessions, and marriage. In consideration of physical appearances, women have to be delicate and beautiful, so that men can protect and cherish them. Their figures should be slim and of a good proportion. Interestingly, Bunyong insists that, the most important qualifications for Thai women mentioned in Thai literatures are their manners, especially the ways that they behave, and the responsibility of being a housewife.

But the textual analysis in sub-topic 2.1, in which the rhyming words in sixteen Yor (ยอ) alphabet primers are used to fix the meanings of women, reveals that, thirteen primers utilize ‘beauty’ in terms of physical appearances, including

‘beautiful’ and ‘slim waist.’ This finding argues that ‘beauty’ is embedded in childhood language learning via Yor (ยอ) alphabet primers and unnoticeably constitutes Thai women ideologies.

According to Kongsakon Kawinraweekun’s research, the statistics of the body proportions between the beauty queens from the United Kingdom, the U.S.A., and the Kingdom of Siam show that Miss U.S.A. 1921/2464 had a height of about 155 centimeters, almost the same height as Miss Siam 1938/2481, which is quite short for Westerners. But seventeen years later, in 1938/2481, Miss U.S.A. had a height that was fifteen centimeters taller. This statistic confirms that Westerners used to consider the qualification of beauty as being ‘plump and tiny’ but later changed to ‘slender and tall.’ Further regarding body proportions, the bust and hip must be of an equal size. (Kongsakon Kawinraweekun, 2002: 193) These stereotypes of beauty might be influenced by the look of the American Gibson Girls, the series of illustrations created by Charles Dana Gibson from the decade of the 1890s up until the early 20th century. The ideal feminine figure has the S-curve torso shape with an ample bust, hips and buttocks. She must be slender and tall, with a thin neck and wear her hair in the famous pompadour hairstyle (see Figure 102).



Figure 102 ‘Gibson Girls’ in beach attire, illustration by Charles Dana Gibson, circa 1900/2443

Source: Wikipedia, **Gibson Girl**, accessed February 24, 2016, available from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gibson\\_Girl](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gibson_Girl)

The first Miss Siam beauty pageant in 1934/2477 used the international body proportions as the standard but allowed for a slight difference. The beauty of the contestants was judged by the beauty of the face and the body being of a good proportion, which emphasized a look of healthiness. Moreover, the state under the administration of Field Marshal Plaek Phibunsongkhram tried to force Thai women to take charge of their bodies. They believed that being healthy was significant for women because it prepared them for their upcoming duties of being a good wife and mother.

Kongsakon Kawinraweekun also explains that, women's stereotypes of beauty changed over time. In the famous Thai novel, "Neung Nai Roi" (หนึ่งในร้อย) by Dok Maai Sot (ดอกไม้สด), which was first published in 1934/2477, the beautiful women characters must have an oval-shaped face, white refined complexion, big round eyes and a prominent nose. These notions differed from the traditional ideals of beauty upheld during the reign of King Rama V specifying that women must have shiny black teeth and a clear, white, round-shaped face like the full moon. (Kongsakon Kawinraweekun, 2002: 112)

Benja Ganlayaanee (เบญจกัลยาณี) (meaning woman who has five beauty characteristics) is one of the prominent qualifications of Thai beauty. It is comprised of: beautiful hair, beautiful lips, beautiful teeth, a beautiful complexion, and a beautiful age, meaning remaining forever young. During the Second World War, the Thai state propagandized women as 'the nation's flower' (ดอกไม้ของชาติ). They must be beautiful and strong, in order to support their husbands who were fighting in the war. These ideologies were expressed in the lyrics of the song, 'The Nation's Flower' composed by Madame Phibunsongkhram. In addition, beautiful women, especially from the northern parts of Thailand, are associated with flowers. For example, beautiful women from Chiang Mai province are known as Euang Wiang Phing (เอื้องเวียงพิงค์) (meaning Chiang Mai's orchid) and beautiful women from Lamphun province are known as Gu-laap Lamphun (กุหลาบลำพูน) (meaning Lamphun's rose).

### 3. Pictorial analysis in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers

#### 3.1 Analysis of the images of women in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers

By focusing on the images or illustrations in thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, it has been found that there are twenty-nine Yor (ญ) alphabet primers that use images of women as their illustrations. These representations are categorized into nine groups, based on the similarities of the syntagms found in the ‘participants/people’ vertical column and their combinations with other visual units. The nine groups of women representations categorized by pictorial analysis are as follow (see Figure 103):

##### 3.1.1 the visual representations of middle-class women

There are eight images: Yor #7, Yor #8, Yor #9, Yor #15, Yor #17, Yor #20, Yor #22, and Yor #31, which are grouped based on their costumes and hairstyles.

##### 3.1.2 the visual representations of traditional Thai women

There are five images: Yor #1, Yor #2, Yor #3, Yor #18, and Yor #30, which are grouped based on their costumes and hairstyles.

##### 3.1.3 the visual representations of a woman holding a parasol

There are five images: Yor #11, Yor #12, Yor #14, Yor #19, Yor #23, which are grouped based on their actions and objects found.

##### 3.1.4 the visual representations of famous Thai actresses

There are three images: Yor #24, Yor #25, Yor #27, which are grouped based on recognition of their faces as famous actresses.

##### 3.1.5 the visual representations of a working woman

There are two images: Yor #13, Yor #26, which are grouped based on their actions.

##### 3.1.6 the visual representations of a woman of a foreign nationality

There are two images: Yor #4, and Yor #5, which are grouped based on their costumes.

##### 3.1.7 the visual representations of a woman reading a book

There are two images: Yor #10, and Yor #21, which are grouped based on the actions and objects found.



### 3.1.8 the visual representations of modern women

There is one image, Yor #16 which is grouped based on its pose and action.

### 3.1.9 the visual representations of a schoolgirl

There is one image, Yor #29 which is grouped based on its costume.

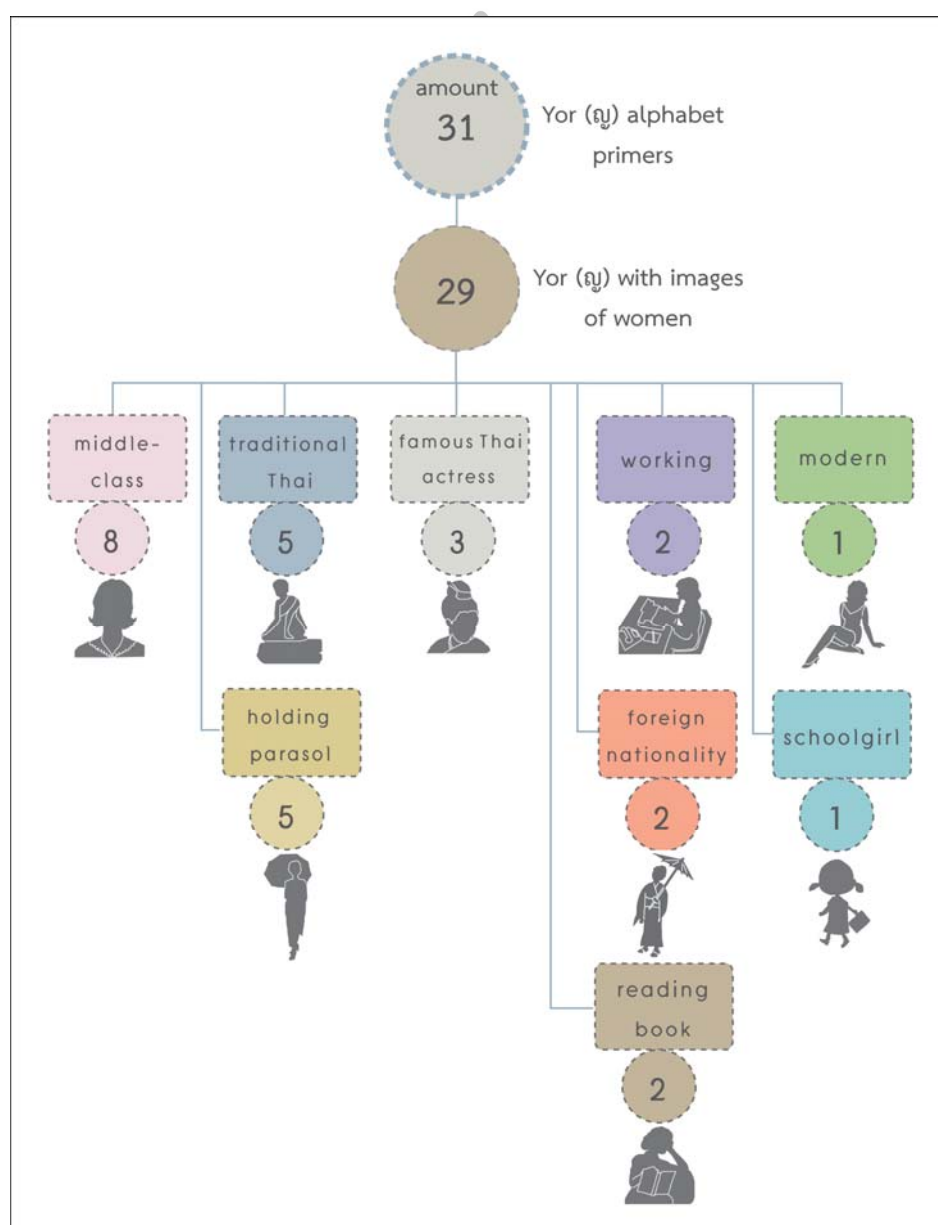


Figure 103 The diagram illustrating the pictorial analysis of thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers

### 3.2 Finding 2: the ‘absences’ of mother and housewife

From the pictorial analysis of the images of women in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers in sub-topic 3.1, the visual representations of women in twenty-nine Yor (ญ) alphabet primers are categorized into eight groups: middle-class women, traditional Thai women, a woman holding a parasol, famous Thai actresses, modern women, working women, women of foreign nationalities, and the schoolgirl. This analysis reveals that ‘the absences’ in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers are the representations of the ideal and significant roles and statuses of women as the mother and housewife.

#### 3.2.1 Woman’s role as the mother

From the historical research of Thai alphabet primers during the period of a hundred and fifteen years, only one image of a mother is found on the primer’s cover. It is the illustration of a mother with her daughter and son on the cover of Baep Rian Kor Kai Chantriam (แบบเรียน ก ไก่ ชั้นเตรียม), of which its seventh edition was published in 1950/2493 by Prachachang (see Figure 104). Other than the cover, its advertisement published in the same year also illustrates a mother with her young boy (see Figure 66 in Chapter 4). On the contrary, most Thai alphabet primers’ covers display a chicken to illustrate the word Kai (ไก่), which is the accompanying word of the first character of the alphabet character Kor (ก) that is typically used in the primers’ titles. However, another version of Prachachang’s alphabet primers, which is the most renowned copy up until present, Baep Rian Kor Kai Anubaan (แบบเรียน ก ไก่ อุนบาล), eliminates the image of the mother on the cover (see Figure 105).



Figure 104 The cover of Prachachang's Baep Rian Kor Kai Chantriam, 7th edition, 1950/2493

Source: Anake Navigamune, *Tracing Kor Kai* (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 11.



Figure 105 The cover of Prachachang's later editions of Baep Rian Kor Kai Anubaan, unknown edition, published in 1977/2520 up until present

Source: *Baep Rian Kor Kai Anubaan* (Bangkok: Prachachang, 1977), cover.

It is interesting to find out that the representation of a ‘mother’ which comes with the ‘mother’s voice,’ the ‘mother’s body,’ and the ‘mother’s role’ are absent from all Yor Ying (ยอ ยิง) pages. Even though the maternal characteristics are socially associated with femininity, the authors of Thai alphabet primers chose the other roles to represent ‘Thai women.’ Actually, besides being the nurturer, the mother is also the home-instructor who teaches the children the characters of the alphabet. The ‘mother’s voice’ is heard when she reads out the letters’ pronunciations and words while the ‘mother’s body,’ her fingers, point and lead her child through the primers’ pages. This is the close relationship that exists between ‘a teacher, a book, and a student’ during the earliest lessons of language learning at home. The mother is the most significant person facilitating the child’s progress in terms of learning. But surprisingly, since the first one published a hundred and fifteen years ago, she is not represented in any Yor (ยอ) alphabet primers.

The absence of the representation of the ‘mother’ in Thai alphabet primers, especially on the Yor Ying (ยอ ยิง) page, is of quite a contrast to the American primers. According to Patricia Crain’s book, “The Story of A,” that looks at gender and the alphabet as represented in American ABC books and primers published between 1800/2343 and 1850/2393, women were “newly represented in relation to the alphabet—in visual images and in written discourses—across a range of genres.” (Crain, 2000: 104) Her historical research reveals that the woman’s status as the ‘mother’ and representation of the maternal voice and body were significant in the new ‘reading world’ era when reading had become ‘a necessity of existence’ as a human being. For example, the image of ‘three old wives’ on the cover of “The Comical Hotch Potch or the Alphabet Turn’d Posture Master” book, published in 1814/2357, are decoded as ‘The Fates,’ which are the three goddesses in Greek and Roman mythology who preside over the birth and life of humans. These three old wives connote their roles in domesticity that relate to the ‘letter-fellows,’ posing to form each alphabet, probably as ‘the mothers’ of these children.

In Thai society, according to Kiitisak Jermsittiprasert, the main duty of female commoners is that of the mother’s role in comparison to the duties of middle-class and upper-class women, whose responsibilities are mainly to take

care of their husbands. Moreover, the mother's status in early Thai extended families is very important because Thai society is customarily, like other Asian countries, a 'Matrilocal Residence' where the husband goes to live with the wife's community. Considerably, the women are highly expected to be responsible for the reproductive roles.

The representations of mother are found in some elementary school textbooks, such as page 38 in Baep Rian Reo Mai Lem Neung Dton Dton Bpratom 1 (แบบเรียนเร็วใหม่ เล่มหนึ่ง ตอนต้น ป.1), a Thai language reader originally published in 1937/2480. This page is from an unknown edition, published in 2002/2545. The content is about 'a father and a mother who love their child' and depicts a representation of an ideal middle-class family consisting of a father, a mother, a son, and a daughter. The father wears a long-sleeved shirt, a pair of trousers and a necktie. He is embracing his son and daughter near a sofa. The mother is sitting and doing the needlework on the sofa (see Figure 106).

Another sample of the representations of the mother are found on page 52 and 53 in Baep Rian Reo Mai Lem Neung Dton Glaang Bpratom 2 (แบบเรียนเร็วใหม่ เล่มหนึ่ง ตอนกลาง ป.2), a Thai language reader originally published in 1937/2480. This page was taken from the 33<sup>rd</sup> edition, published in 1963/2506. On Page 52, the content is about 'a perfect family' with an illustration of a big banyan tree. On Page 53, the content is about the duties of each family member, of which the husband's role as the head of the family is explained. The illustration shows a representation of an ideal middle-class family consisting of a father, a mother, a son, and a daughter. The father wears a uniform while tucking a cap by his body. Probably, he works as a government officer (see Figure 107).



Figure 106 Page 38 in Baep Rian Reo Mai Lem Neung Dton Dton Bpratอม 1  
Source: Luang Darungit Vitoon and Chan Kamwilai, **Baep Rian Reo Mai Lem Neung Dton Dton Bpratอม 1** (Bangkok: Krungthep Gaanpim, 1979), 38.



Figure 107 Page 52 and 53 in Baep Rian Reo Mai Lem Neung Dton Glaang Bpratอม 2  
Source: Luang Darungit Vitoon, **Baep Rian Reo Mai Lem Neung Dton Glaang Bpratอม 2** (Phra Nakorn: Kurusapaa, 1963), 52-53.

### 3.2.2 The woman's role as the housewife

From historical research of Thai alphabet primers during a period of a hundred and fifteen years, no image of a housewife is found, either on the cover or inside the primers. But, the representations of the housewife are found in some elementary school textbooks, such as Pages 42 and 43 in Baep Rian Reo Mai Lem Neung Dton Glaang Bpratom 2 (แบบเรียนเร็วใหม่ เล่มหนึ่ง ตอนกลาง ป.2), a Thai language reader originally published in 1937/2480. This page is taken from the 33<sup>rd</sup> edition, published in 1963/2506. The left page illustrates the father working on the terrace and the right page illustrates the mother doing the housework in the kitchen (see Figure 108).

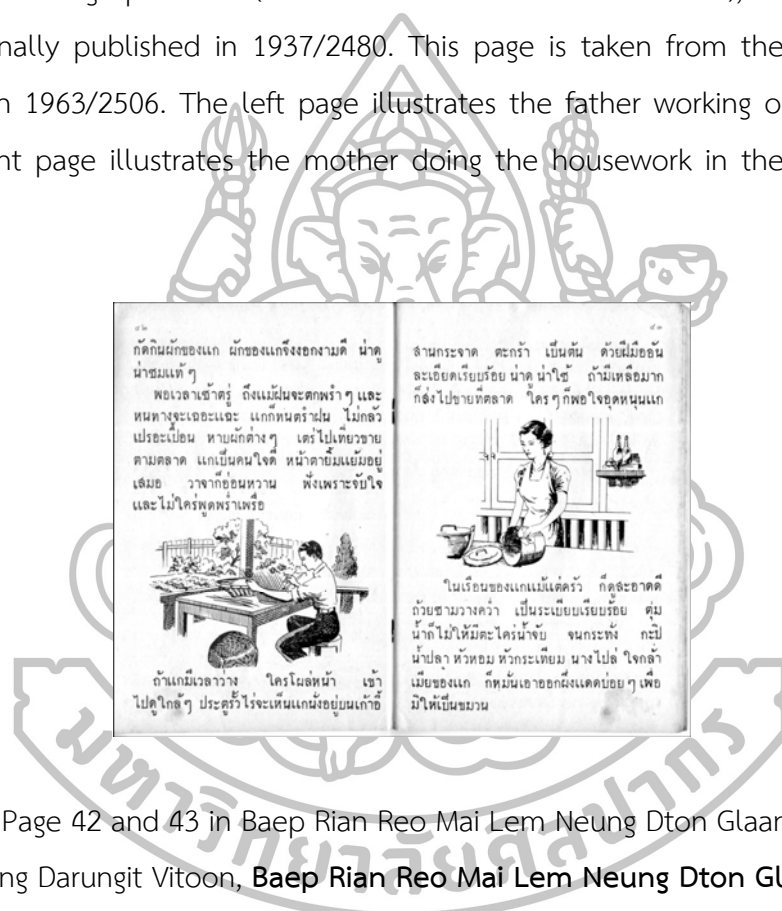


Figure 108 Page 42 and 43 in Baep Rian Reo Mai Lem Neung Dton Glaang Bpratom 2  
Source: Luang Darungit Vitoon, **Baep Rian Reo Mai Lem Neung Dton Glaang Bpratom 2** (Phra Nakorn: Kurusapaa, 1963), 42-43.

Another sample that shows representations of the housewife is a health education textbook, Sukka Seuksaa Lem Song Bpratom 2 (สุขศึกษา เล่มสอง ป.2) originally published in 1951/2494. This page is taken from the 33<sup>rd</sup> edition, published in 7,000 copies in 1958/2501. It illustrates a woman doing step-by-step laundry (see Figure 109). In addition, in Sukka Seuksaa Lem See Bpratom 4 (สุขศึกษา เล่มสี่ ป.4) originally published in 1951/2494, there is an illustration of a woman doing hygienic housework including cooking, cleaning the dishes, and serving the meals (see Figure 110).



Figure 109 A page in a health education textbook, Sukka Seuksaa Lem Song Bpratom 2  
 Source: Jamlong Sa-ngaa Mangkang, **Sukka Seuksaa Lem Song Bpratom 2**  
 (Phra Nakorn: Thai Wattana Panit, 1958), 57.

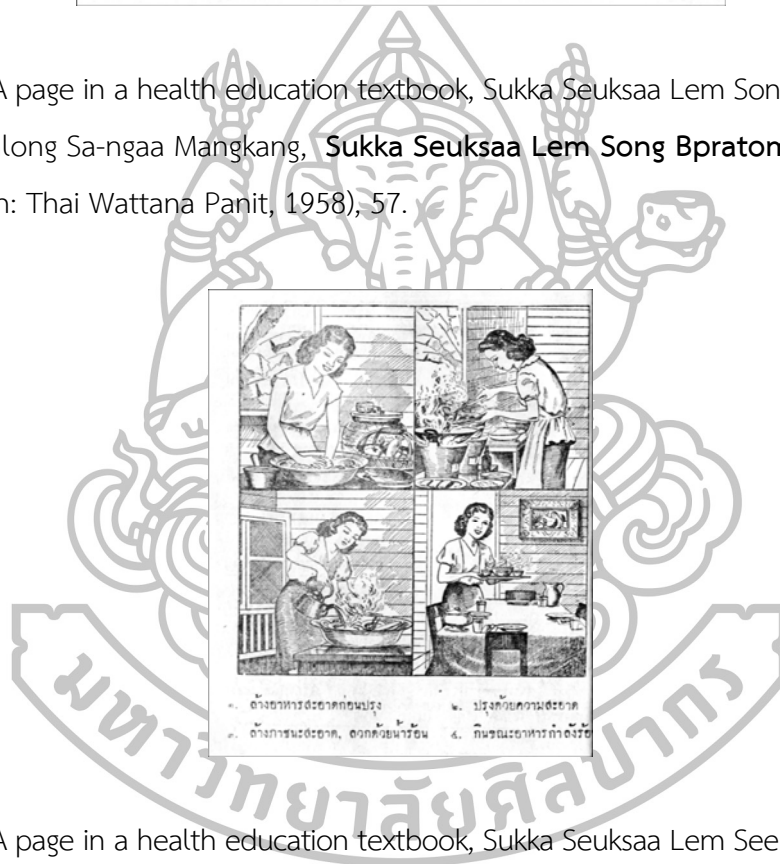


Figure 110 A page in a health education textbook, Sukka Seuksaa Lem See Bpratom 4  
 Source: Jamlong Sa-ngaa Mangkang, **Sukka Seuksaa Lem See Bpratom 4**  
 (Phra Nakorn: Thai Wattana Panit, 1953), 18.

From the 2004/2547 statistics about women and household maintenance published in the Report on Thailand Gender-Disaggregated Statistics 2008/2551, the hours spent on household maintenance are considered ‘unpaid’ work, which means that the labor spent on these tasks is considered to be non-productive economically. According to the report, the definition of household maintenance is provided as:



“The household maintenance includes (1) meal preparation and house cleaning (2) cleaning and routine maintenance around the house (3) home decoration, minor repair and maintenance (4) laundry and ironing, shoe shining (5) other house works (6) taking care of pets (7) grocery shopping and related activities (8) procurement of relevant services (9) transport related to these activities (10) household management.” (Office of Women’s Affairs and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, 2008: 152)

On average, women spent 2.7 hours per day compared with 1.5 hours by men on household maintenance (Office of Women’s Affairs and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, 2008: 152). This statistic shows that Thai women spend more time doing housework even though they have to also work and earn the family income as men do. Besides the housework, Thai women are also the main caregivers in the family. They spend more time than men taking care of children and the elderly. This work is considered ‘unpaid’ as well. In conclusion, historical research and the pictorial analysis of this study reveal that, the most significant roles of women, the mother and the housewife, are the absences in Thai alphabet primers, especially on the Yor (ญ) pages in which the letter Yor (ญ) is accompanied by the word Ying (หญิง), meaning woman.

#### 4. The representations of “a woman holding a parasol”

##### 4.1 Typification: beauty contestants

From the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, based on the similarities of syntagms in the ‘people, objects and action’ columns, the images of ‘a woman holding a parasol’ are predominantly found. The syntagmatic relations of ‘people: woman,’ ‘objects: parasol,’ and ‘action: holding a parasol’ construct the denotation of a ‘woman holding a parasol.’ There are six Yor (ญ) alphabet primers: Yor #5, Yor #11, Yor #12, Yor #14, Yor #23, and Yor #19. Furthermore, by investigating the ABC primers printed in the back of Thai alphabet primers of Yor #16 and Yor #20, there are two ‘Umbrella’ pages that also use the representations of ‘a woman holding a parasol’

(see Figure 111 and Figure 112). Thereby, six Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and two ‘U Umbrella’ pages from the ABC primers are simultaneously analyzed (see Figure 113 and Table 7).



Figure 111 U Umbrella (1970/2513) in a Thai alphabet primer published by Niyom Wittaya Press

Source: Wirat Boonchai, **Baep Rian Kor Kai Baep Mai** (Phra Nakhon: Niyom Wittayaa Press, 1970), n.p.



Figure 112 U Umbrella (1974/2517) in a Thai alphabet primer published by Siam Paanit Stationery

Source: Sayree Sattayataadaagoon, **Baep Hat Aan Kor Kai Duay Paap** (Bangkok: Siam Paanit Stationery, 1974), n.p.

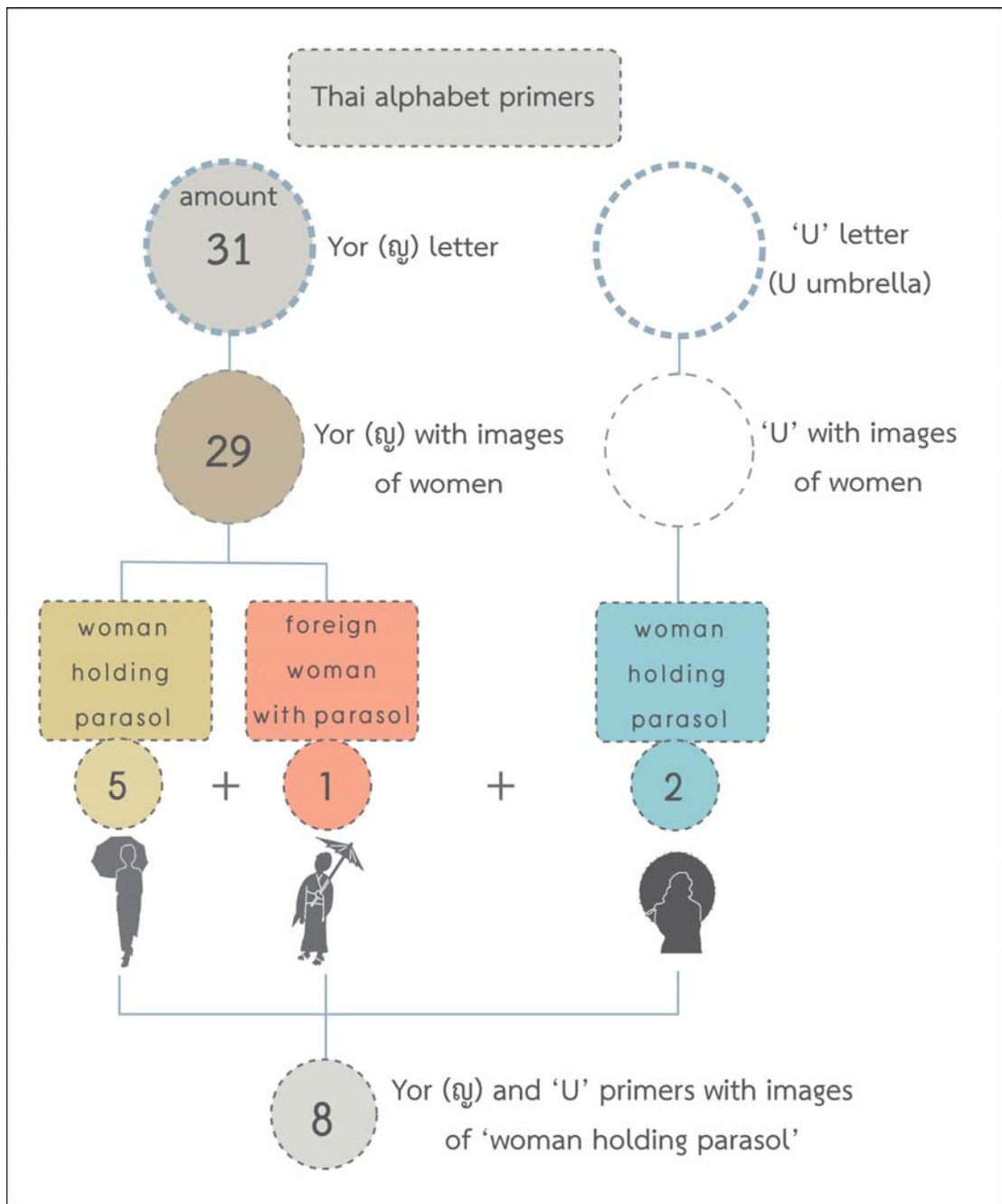


Figure 113 The diagram illustrating six Yor (ญ) and two 'U Umbrella' alphabet primers

Table 7 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in eight Yor (ຽ) alphabet primers with the images of ‘a woman holding a parasol’ (1922/2465 – 1974/2517)



visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		body	face			
Figure 52 Yor #05 	Yor Yeepoon (=Japan-ese people) (primer)	1922/2465	woman	paper parasol	none	Kimono (stripe pattern)	none	Japanese style	walking toward left, holding a parasol over her head by her left hand	full body	X	toward her right side	ground (defined by shadow)	woodcut / printed in black color
Figure 64 Yor #11 	Yor Ying Sopa (=beauty ful woman) (primer)	1947, 1950/2490, 2493	woman	paper parasol	none	Western style (blouse with collar, an embroidery on the left side)	none	curly long	probably walking while holding a parasol on her right shoulder	half body / facing the viewer	X	downward	none	painting / actual-printed in four-color process

Table 7 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in eight Yor (ຽ) alphabet primers with the images of ‘a woman holding a parasol’ (1922/2465 – 1974/2517) (continue)



visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
Images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		action	body			
Figure 68 Yor #12 	Yor Ying Sopa (=beautiful woman) (card in box)	1956/2499	woman	paper Parasol	X	Western style (blouse with collar, floral skirt)	none	curly long	standing while holding a parasol on her right shoulder	almost full body / facing the viewer	smile	direct	garden or hillside with solid blue background	painting / printed in four-color process
Figure 70 Yor #14 	Yor (poster)	1966/2509	woman	paper parasol with line and pattern	none	tradit. Thai style (long sleeve blouse with upright collar)	blue sash with sponsor's name	bun with pink flower on the left side	probably walking while holding a parasol on her right shoulder	half body / facing the viewer	smile	toward the viewer	none (solid light blue background)	photo / printed in four-color process

Table 7 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in eight Yor (ṣ) alphabet primers with the images of ‘a woman holding a parasol’ (1922/2465 – 1974/2517) (continue)





visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		body	face			
Figure 111 U Umbrella 	U umbrella (primer)	1970/2513	woman	paper parasol with pattern	Button-liked earrings	sleeveless-blouse with upright collar	none	bun	probably walking while holding a parasol on her right shoulder	half body / turning her left side to the reader	smile	leftward of the reader	none	line drawing / printed in blue color
Figure 81 Yor #23 	Yor Ying Sopa (=beautiful woman) (primer)	before 1971 /2514	woman	red plain vinyl umbrella	Thai-styled neck-lace, breast chain, belt, white high-heeled shoes	tradit. Thai style (applied Thai Chakri style / pink and gold weaving silk)	none	short	posing while holding an umbrella on her right shoulder, left hand rested on the thigh, left leg in front of the right	full body / facing the reader	smile (rather still)	direct to the reader	Benjamborpit temple / in front of the marble ubosot's entrance	photo / printed in four-color process

Table 7 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in eight Yor (ຸ) alphabet primers with the images of ‘a woman holding a parasol’ (1922/2465 – 1974/2517) (continue)

visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		body	face			
Figure 76 Yor #19 	Yor (poster)	c. circa 1973/2516	woman	blue paper parasol with floral pattern	none	tradit. Thai style (yellow long sleeve blouse with upright collar)	none	bun with yellow orchid flowers on the right side	probably walking and waving her right hand while holding a parasol on her left shoulder	almost half body / turning her right side to the viewer	smile	straight to the right side of the viewer	none (shades of green background)	painting / printed in four-color process
Figure 112 U Umbrella 	U umbrella (primer)	1974/2517	woman with umbrella in the background	two umbrellas (one in the background)	X	Western style (light color short sleeves blouse with dark color skirt)	none	curly short hair	standing while holding an umbrella in the background	almost full body / turning her left side to the viewer	X	X	none (very light green color)	drawing / printed in green color

x = the details cannot be clearly seen

From Table 7, the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in eight images of a 'woman holding a parasol' in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and 'Umbrella' in the ABC primers are analyzed. According to the syntagmatic relations of 'people: woman' and 'objects/costume: kimono,' there is an image of woman holding a parasol in Yor #5 that represents her nationality, the Japanese. In addition, according to the syntagmatic relations of 'people: woman' and 'objects/costume: traditional Thai style,' there are three images of a woman holding a parasol in Yor #14, Yor #23, and Yor #19 that represent their Thai nationality.

Moreover, three groups of the syntagmatic relations are thoroughly analyzed:

4.1.1 the syntagmatic relations of the 'words Ying Sopa (หญิง โสภา) (meaning beautiful woman),' 'people: woman,' 'objects: parasol,' and 'action: holding parasol' (Yor #11, Yor #12, and Yor #23) (see Table 8 and Figure 114)

4.1.2 the syntagmatic relations of the 'people: woman,' 'objects: parasol,' 'action: holding parasol,' and 'settings/background: Benjamaborpiti temple' (Yor #23 and an image of Miss Apasra Hongsakula holding a parasol at Benjamaborpiti temple) (see Table 9 and Figure 118)

4.1.3 the syntagmatic relations of 'the letter Yor (ญ),' 'people: woman,' 'objects: parasol,' 'objects/hairstyle & decoration: bun decorated with flowers' and 'action: holding parasol' (Yor #14 and Yor #19) (see Table 10 and Figure 119)





Figure 114 Yor #11, Yor #12, and Yor #23 alphabet primers with ‘Ying Sopa’ words  
 Source : Anake Nawigamune, **Tracing Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 198; Anake Nawigamune, **Photography and Prints** (Bangkok: Matichon, 2006), 190; **Baep Rian Kor Kai Anubaan** (Bangkok: Prachachang, 1977), 13.

4.1.1 the syntagmatic relations of ‘words Ying Sopa (หญิง โสภา) (meaning beautiful woman)’, ‘people: woman,’ ‘objects: parasol,’ and ‘action: holding parasol’ (Yor #11, Yor #12, and Yor #23) (see Table 8 and Figure 114)

Table 8 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor #11, Yor #12, and Yor #23 alphabet primers




visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects				5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth	
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	costume	hairstyle & decoration	3. transitivity / action				4. pose
Figure 64 Yor #11 	Yor Ying Sopa (=beautiful woman) (primer)	1950/ 2493	woman	paper parasol	Western style (blouse with collar, an embroidery on the left side)	curly long	posing while holding a parasol on her right shoulder	half body / slightly turn her face to her left side & smile	not clearly seen	none	painting / printed in four-color process (only B&W is obtained)
Figure 68 Yor #12 	Yor Ying Sopa (-beaut-ful woman) (card in a box)	1956/ 2499	woman	red paper parasol with decorating lines	Western style (blouse with collar, floral skirt)	curly long	posing while holding a parasol on her right shoulder	almost full body / slightly turn her face to her left side & fully smile	direct to the reader	garden or hillside with solid blue back-ground	painting / printed in four-color process

Table 8 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor #11, Yor #12, and Yor #23 alphabet primers (continue)

visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects			3. transitivity / action	4. pose	5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	costume	hairstyle & decoration					
Figure 81 Yor #23 	Yor Ying Sopa (-beautiful woman) (primer)	before 1971 /2514	woman	red plain vinyl umbrella	tradit. Thai style (applied Thai Chakri style / pink and gold weaving silk) & Thai-styled necklace, breast chain, belt, white high-heeled shoes	short	posing while holding an umbrella on her right shoulder, left hand rested on the thigh, left leg in front of the right	full body / directly facing the reader & smile rather still	direct to the reader	Benjamborpit temple / in front of the marble ubosot's entrance	photo / printed in four-color process

gray area = similarities / blue & pink area = differences

The first set of three visual images, Yor #11, Yor #12, and Yor #23, and the words Ying Sopa (หญิง โสภา) (meaning beautiful woman) are visually analyzed and described in words in accordance to the seven categories of syntagms. The similarities of syntagmatic relations are ‘the word Sopa,’ ‘people: woman,’ ‘objects: parasol,’ and ‘action: holding a parasol.’ All three women are posing while holding a parasol or umbrella on her right shoulder. They are smiling and looking straight to the viewer. These main visual units are the ‘choices,’ or the visual units, selected by the authors to transmit the meaning of the representations of ‘beautiful women’ that are ‘fixed’ by the word Ying Sopa (หญิง โสภา). Even though some visual units are different; such as the style of the parasols or umbrellas, the costume, the hairstyle and decoration, the background, and the choice of medium; these syntagmatic relations of signs connote the meaning of ‘beautiful women.’

Considering the differences among these Yor #11, Yor #12, and Yor #23 alphabet primers, the most salient one is the setting/background. In Yor #11, the image of a woman holding a parasol is displayed on a blank background. Compared to Yor #12 that portrays an almost identical woman in the same gesture and costume, this woman is posing amid the garden or hillside scenery. This Yor (หญิง) alphabet primer is the only one amongst the twenty-nine primers that uses the natural environment as the setting/background. There are tall green trees on the right side and two trees on the left in an orange color. The green and yellow sloping area behind her suggests the grassland on the hillside. On the contrary, the background in Yor #23 is the marble ubosot’s entrance in the Benjamaborpit temple. The ‘absence’ of the background in Yor #11 makes this representation appear flat without indicating any specific place. While the choice of the Benjamaborpit temple as the background will be later discussed, the natural environment of Yor #12 is found to be similar to many historical photographs of the early Thai beauty pageants organized both locally and nationally in outdoor public spaces (see Figure 115 and Figure 116). Big trees are frequently found in the setting/background of these photographs.



Figure 115 The beauty contestants with a parasol in the early Miss Thailand pageants  
 Source : Thai Film Foundation Forum, **Latdaa Suwan Bprapaa**, accessed September 26, 2012, available from <http://www.thaifilm.com/forumDetail.asp?topicID=3737&page=1&keyword=>; Thai Film Foundation Forum, **Amara Atsawaanon**, accessed September 26, 2012, available from <http://www.thaifilm.com/forumDetail.asp?topicID=3737&page=1&keyword=>



Figure 116 The beauty contestants with a parasol in the early Miss Thailand pageant and Miss Thin Thai Ngam (ถิ่นไทยงาม) pageant

Source: Thai Film Foundation Forum, **Sucheelaa Sisombun**, accessed September 26, 2012, available from <http://www.thaifilm.com/forumDetail.asp?topicID=3737&page=> &keyword=; Coke Thai Club Forum, **Seup Neuang Ganpai**, accessed September 26, 2012, available from <http://www.cokethai.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=95&t=22817>

In comparison to these historical photographs of a woman holding a parasol or an umbrella in early Thai beauty pageants, the ‘second-level connotative meaning’ of Yor #11 and Yor #12 alphabet primers can be decoded as the ‘beauty contestants’ and the parasol or umbrella as the most salient ‘visual trope.’ Being set on the shoulder of the beautiful woman, the parasol generates a visual narration of these women parading and posing on the platform. They look straight toward the ‘viewer’ of the primer as if they are in front of the judges and the actual audience at the pageants. They are smiling while the cameramen are taking photographs of them. In many instances of historical photographic evidence, it seems normal that the parasols or umbrellas are used by the beauty contestants to protect them from sunlight while walking on the outdoor platform during the daytime event or attending the parade on the vehicles in the procession. However, thorough investigation shows that most photographs illustrate no shadows on the faces of the contestants. The parasols are usually rested against their right or left shoulders rather than hung over their heads. This could imply that the function of the parasol to provide protection from sunlight is not the main purpose of the action of ‘holding a parasol’ in the beauty pageants.

Interestingly, the background in the Yor #23 alphabet primer is the Benjamaborpiti temple (วัดเบญจมบพิตร) or the Marble temple, which is not directly associated with beauty pageants. The Marble temple is actually a place that Miss Apasra Hongsakula, Miss Thailand 1964/2507, visited prior to leaving for Miami, U.S.A. where she was crowned as the first Miss Universe from Thailand in 1965/2508. This interconnection is discovered through finding of the similarity of the setting/background in the Yor #23 alphabet primer and the photographic images of Miss Apasra (see Figure 117). The details of the syntagmatic relations will be explained in the next sub-topic. At this point, this finding proves that the ‘second-level connotative meanings,’ or the ‘implicit meaning potentials,’ of the representations of a woman holding a parasol in all three Yor #11, Yor #12, and Yor #23 alphabet primers are the ‘beauty contestants.’

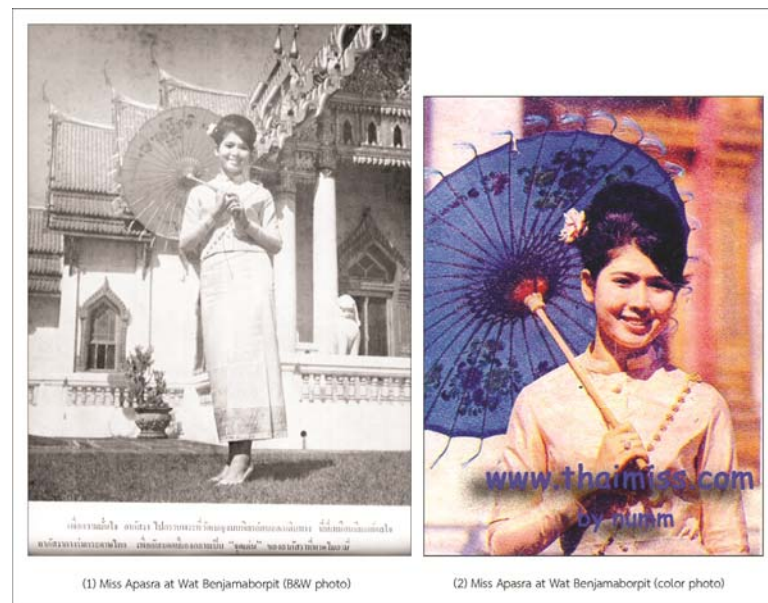


Figure 117 The photographs of Miss Apasra Hongsakula at the Benjamaborpit temple in 1964/2507

Source : **Miss Thailand 1964 and Miss Universe 1965 Photo Album** (Bangkok: Krungthon Publisher, 1965); Thai Film Foundation Forum, **Apasra Hongsakula**, accessed September 26, 2012, available from <http://www.thaifilm.com/forumDetail.asp?topicID=5035&page=1&keyword=>

4.1.2 the syntagmatic relations of the ‘people: woman,’ ‘objects: a parasol,’ ‘action: holding a parasol,’ and the ‘setting/background: the Benjamaborpit temple’ (Yor #23 and an image of Miss Apasra Hongsakula holding a parasol at the Benjamaborpit temple) (see Table 9 and Figure 118)





Figure 118 Yor #23 alphabet primers and the photograph of Miss Apasra at the Benjamaborpit temple

Source : **Baep Rian Kor Kai Anubaan** (Bangkok: Prachachang, 1977), 13; Thai Film Foundation Forum, **Apasra Hongsakula**, accessed September 26, 2012, available from <http://www.thaifilm.com/forumDetail.asp?topicID=5035&page=1&keyword=>





Table 9 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor #23 alphabet primer and the photograph of Miss Apasra Hongsakula

visual resources			2.attributes / objects		3.transitivity/ action		4.pose		5.gaze	6.settings / background	7.modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)	object	costume	Hairstyle & decoration	action	Body & face	eye direction		choice of medium	
Figure 81 Yor #23 	Yor Ying Sopa (-beautiful woman) (primer)	before 1971 /2514	red plain vinyl umbrella	tradit. Thai style (applied Thai Chakri style / pink and gold weaving silk) & Thai-styled necklace, breast chain, belt, white high-heeled shoes	short	posing while holding an umbrella on her right shoulder, left hand rested on the thigh, left leg in front of the right	full body / directly facing the reader & smile rather still	direct to the r viewer	Benjamaborpit temple / in front of the marble ubosot's entrance	photo / printed in four-color process	
Figure 117 Miss Apasra at Benjamaborpit temple 	(photographs)	1964/ 2507	blue paper parasol with floral decorations	tradit. Thai style (applied Thai Reunton style / light pink silk) & Thai-styled breast chain	bun with flower decoration	posing while holding a parasol on her right shoulder	full body / slightly turn her face to her left side & fully smile	direct to the viewer	Benjamaborpit temple / on the lawn, in front of the marble ubosot	photo / found printed in B&W color and color files on the internet	

gray area = similarities / blue & pink area = differences

Besides their similarity in terms of the setting/background, the representation of a woman in the Yor #23 alphabet primer and the photographs of Miss Apasra at the Benjamaborpit temple have more similar visual units and syntagmatic relations. The ‘action, body and face, and the eye-direction’ are almost identical. Simultaneously, in comparison to the syntagms in the ‘object, costume, and hairstyle and decoration’ columns, the different choices of the visual units are uncovered. The vinyl umbrella in a red color and short hairstyle are chosen to represent a modern-styled woman, while the coated paper parasol in a blue color and long hair in a bun decorated with a pink flower represent a traditional-styled woman. In the context of being the representative of a nation, Miss Apasra, the beauty representative of Thailand, should portray the distinctive traditional characteristics and cultural identity of Thailand. In addition, both images use color photographs as the choice of medium to best represent the ‘truth,’ or naturalistic modality.



4.1.3 the syntagmatic relations of ‘the letter Yor (ญ),’ ‘people: woman,’ ‘objects: parasol,’ ‘objects/hairstyle & decoration: bun decorated with flowers’ and ‘action: holding a parasol’ (Yor #14 and Yor #19) (see Table 10 and Figure 119)



Figure 119 Yor #14 and Yor #19 alphabet primers with the letter Yor (ญ)

Source: Photographed by Piyaluk Benjadol, House of Museum Bangkok, December 3, 2013; Siam Stationery, **Kor Kai Samrap Kunnoo** [poster] (Bangkok: Gim Sayng Huat, c1973).

Table 10 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor #14 and Yor #19 alphabet primers

visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects				5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth	
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	costume	hairstyle & decoration	3. transitivity / action				4. pose
Figure 70 Yor #14 	Yor (poster)	1966/2509	woman	brown paper parasol with line and pattern	traditional Thai style (long sleeve blouse with upright collar) with Blue sash and the sponsor's name	long hair in a bun with Pink flower on the left side	posing while holding a parasol on her right shoulder	half body / directly facing the reader and fully smile	toward the viewer	none (solid light blue background)	photo / printed in four-color process
Figure 76 Yor #19 	Yor (poster)	c. circa 1973/2516	woman	blue paper parasol with floral pattern	traditional Thai style (yellow long sleeve blouse with upright collar)	long hair in a bun with yellow orchids on the right side	posing and waving her right hand while holding a parasol on her left shoulder	almost half body / turning her right side to the reader and fully smile	straight to the right side of the viewer	none (shades of green background)	painting / printed in four-color process

gray area = similarities / blue & pink area = differences

The two Yor (ย) alphabet primers, Yor #14 and Yor #19 in the form of the learning posters, are visually analyzed and described in words in table 5-8. The similarities of the syntagmatic relations between these two alphabet primers are ‘the letter Yor (ย),’ ‘people: woman,’ ‘objects: parasol,’ ‘objects/hairstyle & decoration: bun decorated with flowers’ and ‘action: holding a parasol’ with an illustration of a woman holding a parasol. Probably due to the limited spaces for forty-four alphabets to be arranged on the poster, only the Yor (ย) alphabets are displayed while the accompanying word Ying (หญิง) and the rhyming word Sopa (โสภา) are absent. Both women are dressed in the same style of traditional Thai costume and with a similar hairstyle. The different syntagms are the direction of their faces and bodies. In the small details, their long hair set in buns are decorated with different types of flowers, probably a rose in Yor #14 and orchids in Yor #19. The other differences are the sides of the shoulder that they put the parasols over and the waving hand gesture of the woman in the Yor #19 alphabet primer. One salient object that signifies the meaning of the woman in the Yor #14 alphabet primer is the blue sash hanging across her torso. The visible words on the sash indicate the name of her sponsor, not her own name. Among the images of a ‘woman holding a parasol’ in Yor (ย) alphabet primers, the sash is shown only in this Yor #14 alphabet primer. It is the most significant ‘syntactic unit’ that discloses the ‘second-level connotative meaning’ of the beauty contestant. Simultaneously, the sash itself is the absence in most images of the ‘woman holding a parasol’ in the other Yor (ย) alphabet primers.

In searching for the absences in these Yor (ย) alphabet primers, they are the audiences who were seen in many historical photographs of beauty pageants. At times when telecommunications via live television broadcastings were not efficient, people often participated in the actual entertainment events. In the early beauty pageants that were organized as entertainment programs in many public events, many historical photographs manifested a huge crowd of men and women standing close to the outdoor platforms, while some of them were holding a parasol or an umbrella as well. Later, during the era of live broadcasting communication, the

beauty contestants are smiling and gazing at the ‘actual’ cameramen in front of them and the ‘virtual’ audiences sitting in front of their televisions at home.

In conclusion, by utilizing the decoding procedures, the variations and patterns of syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs amongst Yor (ญ) alphabet primers with the representation of a ‘woman holding a parasol’ are revealed. Together with the analyses of the secondary visual resources, the findings of intertextual relations between Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and Miss Apasra’s photographs with the setting/background of the Benjamaborpit temple are discovered. Even though there are the absences of the beauty pageants’ audiences in all Yor (ญ) alphabet primers with the representation of a ‘woman holding a parasol,’ their narrative meanings connote the parading and posing gestures of the beauty contestants on the outdoor platform. And the most salient object, the parasol or umbrella, is found as the ‘visual trope’ of the beauty contestants. It typifies the beauty contestant, which transfers the meaning of beautiful woman to the ‘woman holding a parasol.’ Culturally, social ideologies about the ‘beauty’ of Thai women have been changing to those emphasizing a white complexion since the Westernization period in the early Rattanakosin era. During the beauty pageants, the parasols do not merely function as shields for sunlight, but also conceptualize ‘whiteness’ as a desirable characteristic for women. The beauty pageants set the ideological standards of “beauty” that have undoubtedly affected the formation of Thai womanhood.

#### **4.2 Attraction: object of male gaze**

From the syntagmatic relations of signs in the images of (1) the ‘woman holding a parasol’ which connotes the beauty contestants on the pageant’s platform and the absences of male audiences, (2) the ‘woman working and typing at a desk’ which connotes a beautiful clerk and the absence of her male boss,’ and (3) the ‘modern woman posing while wearing a swimsuit and high-heeled shoes’ which connotes a beautiful woman who is probably a beauty contestant posing to be photographed with the absences of the male cameramen, these three connotations undoubtedly expose the female status as the ‘object of male gaze.’



Figure 120 A photograph of Miss Apasra Hongsakula at the Miami Beach, 1965/2508  
 Source: **Miss Thailand 1964 and Miss Universe 1965 Photo Album** (Bangkok: Grunton Publisher, 1965).



Figure 121 A cover of the Thai Rath newspaper's Sunday issue, 1965/2508  
 (Photographed by Piyaluk Benjadol, Nonthaburi, August 8, 2012)

From the analyses in the sub-topic 4, the images of 'a woman holding a parasol' typify the beauty contestants and show the intertextual relations with the photographs of Miss Apasra Hongsakula, the first Thai representative who was crowned Miss Universe in 1965/2508 at Miami Beach in the U.S.A. The syntagmatic relations of signs between the image of Miss Apasra after being crowned Miss Universe (see Figure 120) and the image of a cover girl on the Thai Rath newspaper's

Sunday issue (see Figure 121) published in the same year, are analyzed. The similarities of the syntagmatic relations are the ‘people: woman,’ ‘object/costume: swimsuit,’ ‘action: holding a parasol,’ and ‘pose: standing and putting one leg in front of another.’ Both are depicted wearing a swimming suit and high-heeled shoes while holding a parasol over their heads. Their poses and gestures are obviously for the purpose of being photographed. Hence, the absences are the male photographers. The differences of the syntagmatic relations are the sash, the trophy, the style of the parasol, the arm that holds the parasol, the transparent raincoat, and the setting/background.

The similarities of the missing ‘males’ from these images emphasize the implicit meaning potentials of the ‘woman being the object of the male gaze’ and lead to the femininity discourse that women were objectified by men and men have the power of the gaze. The audiences including the beauty pageant attendees, the boss in the office, and the photographers behind the photographic shots, are, according to feminist theory, assumed to be heterosexual men. Laura Mulvey introduced ‘the male gaze’ concept, which considered men as the ‘watchers’ and women as being ‘watched.’ This concept was part of a film theory developed in 1975/2518 but has later been applied to various criticisms and media studies such as advertisements, television, popular culture, visual culture, and the fine arts.

Contextually analyzing the cover of the Thai Rath newspaper’s Sunday issue, the so-called ‘Colorful Thai Rath,’ the model is exploited to attract the newspaper readers in order to increase circulation. In Thailand in 1965/2508, it was the first time in the newspaper’s history that the covers were printed in a four-color process. This strategic marketing was so successful that it increased the Thai Rath’s circulations to 140,000 copies per day. Many famous Thai actresses, singers, models, and celebrities were portrayed on the Thai Rath’s covers while most of them were photographed in sexually attractive poses. During the decade of the 1960s at the beginning of the mass media era, Thai Rath was a thriving media company that aimed to reach every small village in Thailand. These cover girls were objectified into the ‘objects of male gaze’ and, at the same time, exploited as advertising products. In the same way, many beauty queens were used in commercial advertisements. For

example, a photograph of Miss Apasra was displayed on a beauty guidebook published by a cosmetic company in 1967/2510 (see Figure 122) and on an American soft drink advertisement (see Figure 123).



Figure 122 Miss Apasra on the cover of a beauty guidebook, 1967/2510

Source: Coke Thai Club Forum, **Miss Thailand 1967/2510 Photo Book**, accessed February 24, 2016, available from <http://www.cokethai.com/forum/viewtopic.php?p=579609>

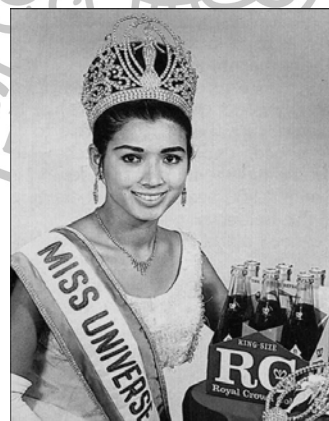


Figure 123 Miss Apasra in an American soft drink advertisement, 1965/2508

Source: Coke Thai Club Forum, **Black and white photographs of the beauty queens**, accessed February 24, 2016, available from <http://www.cokethai.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=95&t=22817&start=90>



Moreover, the decoding process reveals the intertextual relations between the beauty contestants, the male audiences, and ‘the male gaze’ in the way that the sexualized portrayal of the beautiful women is for the pleasure of the heterosexual male. These femininity discourses also led to one of the most scandalous liaisons in Thai history between a politician and some beauty queens and beauty contestants. It was published in a renowned book titled “Jompon Kong Kun Noo Noo” (จอมพลของคุณหนูๆ) (meaning the field marshal of the mistresses) (see Figure 124).



Figure 124 The cover of the book, “Jompon Kong Kun Noo Noo,” 1967/2510

Source: Dome Danthai et. al. **Jompon Kong Kun Noo Noo** (Phra Nakorn: Mit Jarern, 1964), cover.

### 4.3 Identification: race and nationality

Besides the discussions about the syntagmatic relations of signs in the images of a ‘woman holding a parasol’ that typify the beauty contestants in sub-topic 4.1, and the notion of attraction and the feminist theory regarding the ‘object of male gaze’ considered in sub-topic 4.2, the images of a ‘woman holding a parasol’ are also decoded as an identification of race and nationality. There are two analyses of the parasol as the visual trope of: (1) the identity of exotic women and (2) the identity of the nation.

#### 4.3.1 Parasol as the identity of exotic women

In comparison to the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs between Yor #5 Yor Yeepoon (ญู ญี่ปุ่น) (meaning Japan or Japanese people), the pages of Yor Ying Sopa (ญู หญิง โสกา) (meaning beautiful woman), and some secondary visual resources that portray images of a ‘woman holding a parasol,’ the similar set of syntagms that illustrate the images of women representing their identities of race and nationality are found.

Japan or Japanese people have been considered ‘exotic’ in the eyes of Westerners, especially Europeans, since the nineteenth century. The images of a woman wearing the national costume were typical for representing Japan on the illustrations of collectible cards (see Figure 125), cigarette cards, or candy cards printed in Europe during the nineteenth century. These rare items might have been brought into Siam by royalty and nobles who traveled to Europe, or imported by foreign trading. During the reign of King Rama V, the world famous opera, Madame Butterfly was adapted into a Thai-styled musical drama, Saa Kreua Faa (สาวเครือฟ้า). The images of the two main female characters, Cho-Cho-San (โจโจ้ซัง) and Kreua Faa (เครือฟ้า), were typically recognized as a ‘woman holding a parasol’ (see Figure 126 and Figure 127). From the ‘male gaze’ of the foreigners, an officer from Bangkok in Saa Kreua Faa and a U.S. naval officer in Madame Butterfly, the beauty of a ‘woman holding a parasol’ is an exotic symbol of Lanna or the northern part of Thailand and the Far Eastern Japanese, respectively.



Figure 125 A collectible card with an image of a Japanese woman wearing the national costume and holding a parasol, circa 1900

Source: Museum Victoria Collections, **Card - National Costume, Japan Female, circa 1900**, accessed September 29, 2013, available from <http://collections.museumvictoria.com.au/items/1822398>



Figure 126 Geraldine Farrar in the role of Madame Butterfly, 1908/2451

Source: Wikimedia Commons, **Geraldine Farrar as Madame Butterfly**, accessed December 3, 2013, available from [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Geraldine\\_Farrar\\_as\\_Madame\\_Butterfly\\_cph.3a40625.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Geraldine_Farrar_as_Madame_Butterfly_cph.3a40625.jpg)



Figure 127 A movie card of Saao Kreua Faa, 1965/2508

Source: Dome Sukkawong, **A Century of Thai Cinema** (Bangkok: River Books, 2002), 73.

In Thailand, women from Lanna or the northern provinces are considered the most beautiful women with a neutral white and delicate complexion. The first local beauty pageant was held in the residence of the Lanna royalty in Lamphun province (จังหวัดลำพูน) in 1929/2472. Probably, the beauty pageant was influenced by the Westerners who lived there and worked in the lumber industry in the areas of Lanna and Burma. At the time, Lanna had not made contact with central Siam as the railways between the two regions were not yet connected. The parasol or the umbrella making in the northern part of Thailand might be influenced by the Burmese, Chinese, or Westerners, especially the British traders and missionaries. Up until present, paper parasols are well-known souvenirs from the village of Bor Sang (บ้านบ่อสร้าง) in Chiang Mai province. In 2009/2552, the Department of Intellectual Property of Thailand registered the Bor Sang umbrella as a 'geographical indication.' Interestingly, during the Miss Universe 1965/2508 pageant, Miss Apasra Hongsakula, the representative from Thailand, chose to represent traditional Thai culture by wearing both the Rattanakosin Period's costume and the Saao Kreua Faa or Lanna costume and hairstyle (see Figure 128).



Figure 128 Miss Apasra Hongsakula wearing costumes of the Rattanakosin and Lanna styles, 1965/2508

Source: Miss Universe Pageant Thai Fanpage, **Miss Universe 1965**, accessed February 24, 2016, available from <https://m.facebook.com/notes/miss-universe-pageant-thaifanpage/miss-universe-1965>

#### 4.3.2 The parasol as the national identity

In international beauty pageants, besides Miss Apasra Hongsakula who made the Thai parasol to be a memorable costume accessory during the Miss Universes 1965/2508 pageant at Miami Beach (see Figure 129), many countries had been using parasols to represent their national identities. For example, the Japanese representatives used it as the national identity in 1954/2497 (see Figure 130) and 1956/2499 (see Figure 131). Later, representatives from the Republic of the Philippines, Belgium, and Mauritius used the parasols as accessories for their national costumes (see Figure 132, Figure 133, and Figure 134).



Figure 129 A photograph of Miss Apasra holding a parasol amongst the other competitors in the Miss Universe Pageant, 1965/2508

Source: *Miss Thailand 1964 and Miss Universe 1965 Photo Album* (Bangkok: Grunton Publisher, 1965)



Figure 130 An image of Miss Japan holding a parasol with the other representatives in the Miss Universe Pageant on the cover of a Thai book, 1954/2497

Source: Thai Film Foundation Forum, **Amara Atsawaanon**, accessed February 24, 2016, available from <http://www.thaifilm.com/forumDetail.asp?topicID=5182&page=2&keyword=>



Figure 131 A photograph of Miss Japan holding a parasol in the parade of the Miss Universe Pageant, 1956/2499

Source: Japanese American National Museum, **Miss Japan in the Miss Universe parade 1956**, accessed February 24, 2016, available from <http://www.janm.org/collections/item/96.267.399/>



Figure 132 A photograph of Miss Philippines holding a parasol in the Miss Universe Pageant, 2005/2548

Source: Miss Universe 2005, **Miss Philippines Gionna Cabrera**, accessed February 24, 2016, available from <http://www.theage.com.au/ftimages/2005/05/26/1116950817257.html>



Figure 133 A photograph of Miss Belgium holding a parasol in the Miss Universe Pageant, 2012/2555

Source: Getty Images, **Miss Universe National Costume Show**, accessed April 3, 2015, available from <http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/miss-belgium-laura-beyne-displays-her-national-costume-at-news-photo/158423104>



Figure 134 A photograph of Miss Mauritius holding a parasol in the Miss Universe Pageant, 2013/2556

Source: Business Mega, **Costume of Miss Mauritius Criticized**, accessed April 3, 2015, available from <http://business.mega.mu/2013/11/06/costume-miss-mauritius-criticized/>



A parasol or an umbrella is used as an accessory to the national costume by many countries, such as Japan, the Republic of the Philippines, and etc. But in the case of Thailand, Miss Apasra was the first representative who successfully used the parasol to attract the audience and photographers during her participation in the Miss Universe 1965/2508 pageant. Many photographs of Miss Apasra depict her wearing many different styles of costumes, such as a swimming suit, the traditional Thai-styled dress, and a western outfit, but she always held a paper parasol from the village of Bor Sang in her hand. Contextual research discovered that the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) who supported Miss Apasra's participation in the Miss Universe pageant, had a policy to promote the northern parts of Thailand for international mass tourism at the time. Hence, the 'presence' of Miss Apasra holding a parasol during the 1965/2508 pageant and her photographs that were spread across the world via various media might signify a clever marketing strategy to promote Thai tourism. Three years later in 1968/2511, the first local office of TAT was established in Chiang Mai province.

#### **4.4 Finding 3: parasol: visual trope of cultural meanings**

In the past, a parasol or an umbrella was a powerful political symbol of a King or a male ruler in many cultures. According to Stewart Gordon, the 'royal umbrellas' were invented in four different cultures: Egypt, China, Mesopotamia and India, and later spread out across the world. For cultural purposes, the umbrellas were used during various occasions such as Dai people's funerals, the Yao minority group's betrothal, Chinese and Rajasthani wedding ceremonies, and etc. In Greece, Rome and 18<sup>th</sup> century England, a sense of 'femininity' was attached to the umbrella. Even though nowadays, the general use of the umbrella is accepted for both men and women as a tool for protection against sunlight and rain, the cultural meanings in some cultures still deem the umbrella 'feminine.'

The analyses of the images of a 'woman holding a parasol' in Thai alphabet primers, ABC primers, and other visual resources reveal that a 'parasol' is not merely used as a sun or rain protection tool. In general, the images that portray either men or women holding a parasol are assumed to be used as protection against sunlight or rain. In order to 'denaturalize' the meaning of the parasol as

merely a protective tool and find other connotations related to various cultural meanings, an investigation of syntagmatic relations of signs is utilized. When these images are thoroughly decoded and compared to other visual resources by looking for similarities of syntagmatic relations, various second-level meanings of the parasol and their intertextual relations are discovered (see Figure 135).

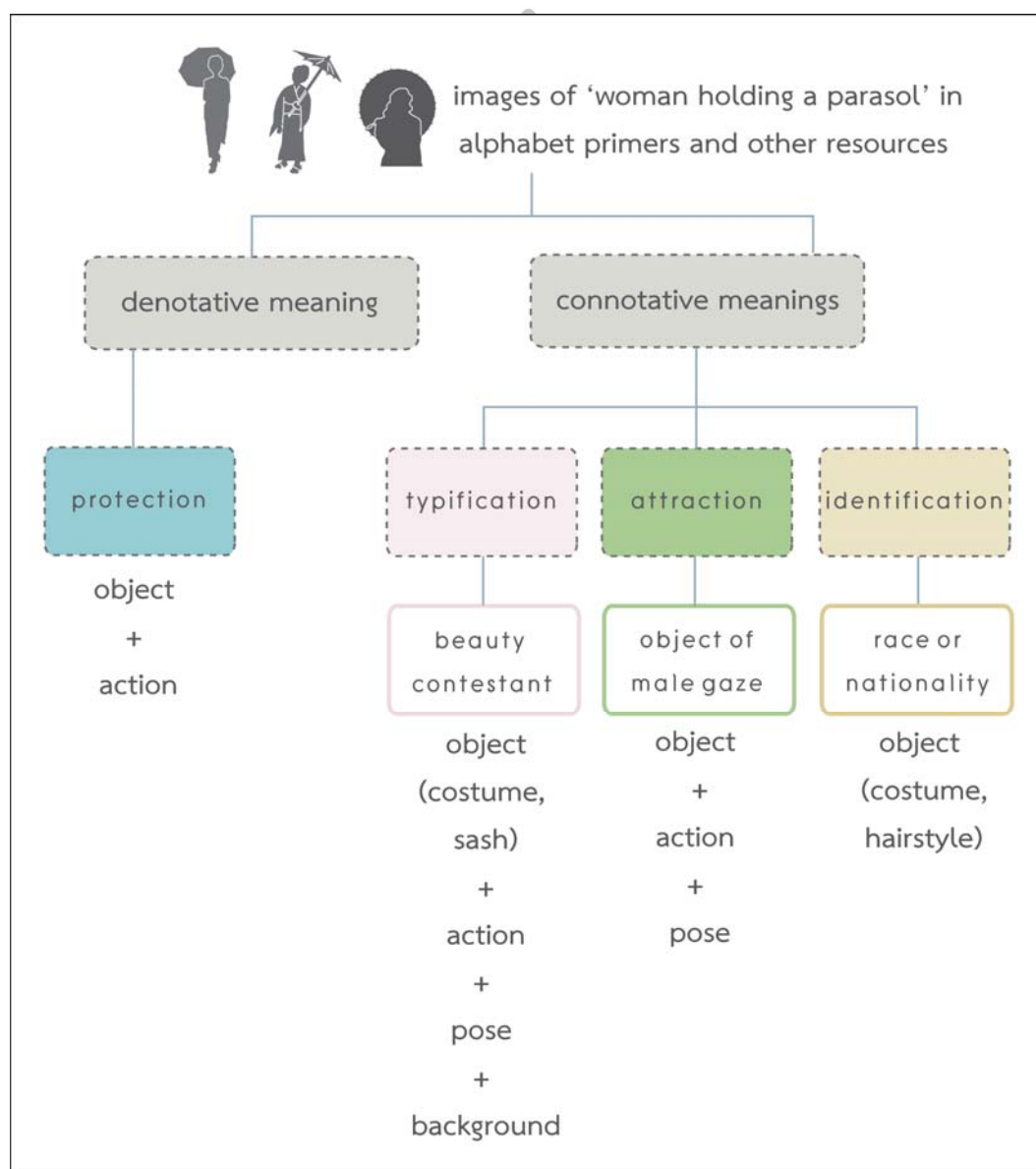


Figure 135 The diagram illustrating the denotative and connotative meanings of the images of a 'woman holding a parasol' in alphabet primers and other resources

First, the similar sets of the syntagms: the ‘people: woman,’ ‘object: parasol/sash/costume,’ ‘action: holding a parasol,’ ‘pose: to be photographed,’ and ‘background: outdoor platform’ connote the implicit meaning potentials of ‘beauty contestants.’ These syntagmatic relations signify the narration of these women parading on the outdoor platform. Even though the setting shows that they may need the parasol to protect them from the sunlight, the action of holding it on the shoulder, not over the head, implies the second meaning of the ‘attraction.’ The absences of the audience found in many images of the ‘woman holding a parasol’ relate to the feminist theory of ‘the male gaze.’ The beauty contestants are being ‘watched’ by the heterosexual men, both the real persons who attend the event and the audiences at home who watch them via mass media.

Besides the beauty contestants who use the parasol to attract the audience, women also use it to attract men in many occasions. Sometimes, their appeal is exploited as the ‘objects of male gaze,’ especially in terms of commercial uses, such as the cover girls used to increase the newspaper’s circulation. The third cultural meaning of the parasol found in this research is the ‘identification.’ Many beauty contestants use the parasols as an accessory to their national costumes, such as the representatives from Japan, the Republic of the Philippines, Thailand, Belgium, and Mauritius. They try to make the identity of the nations by displaying the parasols with their national costumes.

## 5. The representations of a “woman reading a book”



### 5.1 Women’s education



Figure 136 Yor #10 Yor Ying (1936/2479) and Yor #21 Yor Ying Sopa (after 1976/2519)  
 Source : Anake Nawigamune, **Tracing Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sarakhadee, 1993), 191; **Noo Aan Sawatdee Kor Kai** (Bangkok: Sayreepan, 1976), 7.

From the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in thirty-one Yor (ยฺ) alphabet primers, based on the similarities of syntagms in the ‘people, objects, action, background’ vertical columns, two images of a ‘woman reading a book’ are found (see Figure 124). The syntagmatic relations of the ‘people: woman,’ ‘objects: book,’ and ‘action: reading,’ in Yor #10 and Yor #21 construct the first-level meaning of a ‘woman reading a book’ (see Table 11). But by thoroughly investigating every visual unit, this set of syntagms: the ‘people: woman,’ ‘objects: book and cushions,’ ‘costume: casual dress at home,’ ‘action: reading in a relaxed manner,’ and ‘background: probably at home’ signifies the implicit meaning potentials or the ‘second-level meanings.’

Table 11 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor #10 and Yor #21 alphabet primers

visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose		5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration		body	face			eye direction
Figure 61 Yor #10 	Yor Ying (-woman) (alphabet primer)	1936/2479	four women (one in the main image)	book, cushion (main image)	none	sleeveless-blouse / traditional Thai / short-sleeved blouse (main image)	none	curly short (main image) / long hair in other images	reading in a relaxed manner (main image) / standing or sitting	half body (main image) / half body	still (main image)	downward to the book (main image)	very tall building or temple (main image)	painting
Figure 79 Yor #21 	Yor Ying Sopa (-beautiful woman) (alphabet primer)	after 1976/ after 2519	woman	book, sofa, cushion, shelves with books	none	Western style (short-sleeved blouse with collar, and probably long skirt)	none	curly short	reading while sitting in a relaxed manner on a sofa	almost full body / sitting and turning her right side to the viewer / putting her left hand on the cheek	smile	downward to the right (but not at the book)	indoor / probably at home	line drawing

gray area = similarities / blue & pink area = differences

In the main image of Yor #10, a woman is dressed in casual wear and reads a book in a relaxed manner. The dominant signifier is her gesture. There is a cushion under her right arm that supports the half of her body lying on the sofa. Presumed by what appears to be a tall building or temple in the vague background, she is spending her leisure time at home on the balcony near the riverside. In contrast, the other three tiny images of women displayed below her with the three characters of the alphabet Yor (ญ) appear to be representing Thai female ‘pre-moderns’ in traditional and casual costumes, depicted in standstill half-figure images. In Yor #21, another alphabet primer published about forty years later in 1976/2519, the accompanying word ‘Sopa’ (meaning beautiful) is juxtaposed with an image of a ‘woman reading a book.’ The image represents a young woman who must be both ‘beautiful,’ for which its meaning is fixed by the rhyming word ‘Sopa,’ and ‘literate,’ for which its meaning is fixed by the illustration. From the previous analysis of this image at the beginning of chapter 5, the syntagmatic relations in Yor #21 construct the second-level meaning of a beautiful woman who represents the modern aspects of a well-educated and liberated Thai femininity. Interestingly, the implicit meaning potentials of both images are ‘reading for pleasure’ rather than ‘reading for study.’ If the substituting set or paradigms of the ‘object, costume, action, background’ in these images are replaced with the ‘objects: book, studying table and chair,’ ‘costume: student uniform,’ ‘action: sitting upright, reading and writing,’ and ‘background: classroom,’ the narrative meaning of these primers would totally change. Instead, these women may represent the intellectuals or the scholars.

Contextually analyzed, the Yor #10 alphabet primer was printed by the private publisher and permitted by the Ministry of Education to be used in primary schools when the new National Educational Plan was proclaimed in 1936/2479. She illustrates a ‘modern’ woman living in the reign of King Rama VIII, who is literate and probably of the upper or middle class status. According to the look of the young girl, she might be representing the first group of Thai women who studied in the early elementary convent schools in Bangkok, for example, the “Wattana Wittayalai School” (โรงเรียนวัฒนาวิทยาลัย) established in 1914/2457, or the early girl boarding schools in Bangkok, for example, the Rajinee School (โรงเรียนราชินี).

The Christian community and the convent schools established in Siam during the early Rattanakosin period exemplified how religious practices influenced the literacy of Thai women. According to the research by Runchana P. Suksod-Bargar about the “Religious Influences in Thai Female Education (1889-1931)” (2432-2474), particularly the Protestants and their beliefs that literacy could help one to read the Bible, opened up opportunities for Thai girls in formal education. (Suksod-Bargar: 2014, 116) The educational reform in Siam during the reign of King Rama V was beneficial to the illiterate female commoners and the middle class. The literacy rate of Thai girls and women increasingly improved.

#### **5.2 Finding 4: literacy of women**

From the Sukhothai period to the early period during the reign of King Rama V, primary education in Thailand relied on the non-school informal learning system. Hired scholars (ปราชญ์) taught members of the royal families, both male and female aged between three to seven years old, in the Royal Palace. In 1892/2435, King Rama V established the Royal School for Boys (โรงเรียนราชกุมาร), and a year later, the Royal School for Girls (โรงเรียนราชกุมารี). For wealthy families, the children were taught by hired teachers at home or learned from their parents how to run the family business. The girls in wealthy families had the opportunity to study and learn about housework, craft skills, cooking, weaving, or practicing the family business. For commoners and poor families, all the boys were brought to the Buddhist temples to serve as monks’ attendants. They studied and learned the Buddhist doctrine with the monks as boarders or non-boarders. Most girls were not appointed to study. Instead, they just learned and helped their mothers to do the housework. In rural areas, most female commoners worked hard in agriculture fields while taking care of their children. Unfortunately, most of them were illiterate. As a part of early Thai customs, girls were not supported to study because if they were literate, their parents were afraid that they would write love letters to men, an activity that might lead to misbehavior. In conclusion, during the period before the educational reform, Thai literacy was restricted to boys, especially in the royal and wealthy families.

The famous poem from a Thai language primer, “Ni-dtisaan Saatok Volume 1” (นิตินสารสาธก เล่ม 1) composed by Phraya Srisunthornvohan in 1873/2416 reflects how literacy was extremely important for Thai men. Its content is about encouraging children to be eager to study and emphasizing that being Siamese illiterate men, without referring to women, could bring shame to their families. As a consequence, women lacked opportunities to gain access to knowledge and were unable to read. Hence, they had to rely on men. According to Sao Bunsaner (เสาว์ บุญแสนอ), a renowned writer during the golden era of Thai newspapers and publishers during the reign of King Rama VI and VII, illiterate old women at the time had to rely on the boys who could read for their entertainment activities. He recalled “the custom of hiring the children (mostly the boys) to read aloud the novels.” (S. Bunsaner, 1989: 29) He recounted instances in his childhood where he was hired by a group of elderly females who agreed to share rent and make payments to him in exchange for walking to the rental bookstore, renting books, and bringing them back to read aloud to the group. The rented books were mostly their favorite rhymed novels, which were usually remade into classical Thai dramas or traditional Thai musical folk dramas played on the stage at the time.

In 1884/2427, royal schools for the commoners were set up in many Buddhist temples in order for the royalty to save on the annual government statement of expenditure for buying property and constructing school buildings. Later, after the establishment of the Education Department (กรมศึกษาธิการ) in 1898/2441, the “Moolsuksa Schools” (โรงเรียนมูลศึกษา) for primary learning were established as a part of the elementary schools without any formal curricula or learning procedures. After study trips to Japan by the senior government officials, the formal primary educational system was set up and later developed into the schools or classes known as the kindergartens. Most children in the primary schools were boys, probably because of the roles of women who were socially expected to serve as wives and mothers not needing any literacy qualifications.

The relations between Thai women, the primary education, literacy, and Christian organizations were formed when Mrs. Harriet M. House set up the first boarding school for Thai girls, the “Koolasatri Wanglang School” (โรงเรียนกุลสตรีวังหลัง),



an American Presbyterian boarding school for girls, in 1874/2417. Later, Miss Edna Sarah Cole set up the first kindergarten in 1911/2454 as a division of this school, which was later relocated and named the “Wattana Wittayalai School” (โรงเรียนวัฒนาวิทยาลัย) in 1914/2457. The second and third kindergartens in Thailand were set up in the Rajinee School (โรงเรียนราชินี) and the Materdei School (โรงเรียนมาแตร์เดอี) in 1923/2466 and 1927/2470, respectively. These early kindergartens in the private schools were influenced by the childhood educational systems from Japan and Great Britain.

In Western countries, according to Patricia Crain’s research about the alphabetization of America between the Revolution and the Civil War, “it is well documented that women played an increasingly central role in the nation’s literacy, as readers, writers, students, and teachers.” (Crain, 2000: 105-106) She also quotes Nancy Cott’s opinion that American “women’s literacy had ‘approximately doubled’ between 1780 and 1840” (in Siam, between B.E. 2323 and 2383 during the reign of King Rama I and King Rama II). In elementary education during this period, women’s roles as instructors and mothers’ roles as home-instructors increased. Besides being teachers, American women also contributed to education by writing conduct books and educational treatises. (Crain, 2000: 106) They were praised for their intellect and academic qualifications.

Literacy makes women to be self-reliant and not solely dependent on men. It gives them more opportunities to obtain jobs and earn their own money. They can live by themselves and are simultaneously able to take care of their parents. As discussed by Crain, women’s roles in American literacy vary from being readers and writers to students or teachers. These roles could be categorized into two groups: the ‘readers and students’ who are considered non-productive of knowledge, and the ‘writers and teachers’ who are considered productive of knowledge. Interestingly, Thai women represented in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers through the images of a ‘woman reading a book’ are merely the ‘readers for pleasure.’ The representations of the female students, writers, and teachers are the absences that were discovered.

In Thailand, since the democratic reform, the Thai tradition of being an extended family has changed to a single family. As a result, the mothers, who also work to earn the family income, are mostly too tired after working for five days and are therefore dependent on the kindergartens. Due to the fact that these mothers could not possibly succeed in the roles of home-instructors, the pre-school teachers, who are usually female, have taken on and replaced both the role of the children's mothers and home-instructors. Furthermore, the middle and upper class families usually hire nannies at home, mostly with the full-time responsibility of nurturing the child. In the case of single families, most children are brought up completely by strangers because there are no longer grandmothers or relatives to help with taking care of them. Consequently, the maternal home education and the domestic ideologies have totally changed.

At this point, the absences of the 'mother' in Finding 2 and the 'teacher' in Finding 4 are interconnected. In the private space like the home, where domestic ideologies are expected, the roles of the 'mother as a nurturer and home-instructor' are absent. In the public space where the social ideologies are highly expected, the role of the 'teacher as an intellectual in formal education' is also absent from Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, even though the representations of a 'woman reading a book' are chosen to communicate the literacy of women.

## 6. The representations of a "woman typing at a desk"

### 6.1 Workers as clerks

From the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, based on the similarities of the syntagms in the 'people, object, action' columns, two images of a 'woman typing at a desk' are found. The syntagmatic relations of the 'people: woman,' 'objects: desk, chair, typewriter,' and 'action: sitting and typing,' construct the first-level meaning, or denotation, of a 'woman typing at a desk.' The first Yor (ญ) alphabet primer is Yor #13 and the second one is Yor #26 (see Figure 137). The syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs are visually analyzed and described in words in accordance to the seven categories of the syntagms (see Table 12).





Figure 137 Yor #13 Yor Ying Ngaam Dtaa (before 1957/2500) and Yor #26 Yor Ying (1991/2534)

Source : Anake Nawigamune, **Photography and Prints** (Bangkok: Maticchon, 2006), 15; Apai Jantawimon, **Kor Oie Kor Kai Pan Mai**, 7th ed. (Bangkok: Thai Wattana Panit, 1991), 11.



Table 12 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of signs in Yor #13 and Yor #26 alphabet primers

visual resources			1. participants / people	2. attributes / objects					3. transitivity / action	4. pose	5. gaze	6. settings / background	7. modality / truth	
images	words (medium)	year (published)		object	accessories	costume	sash	hairstyle & decoration						body
Figure 62 Yor #13 	Yor Ying Ngam Taa (-beautiful woman) (alphabet primer)	c. 1957/ c. 2500	woman	table, chair, typewriter, paper	hair clip	blouse with collar, long skirt or sarong	none	short	sitting on a chair and typing	almost full body / turning her left back part to the viewer	X	downward to the typewriter	none (yellow & red background)	painting
Figure 86 Yor #26 	Yor Ying (-woman) with some verses (alphabet primer)	1991/ 2534	two women (top: air stewardess / bottom: clerk)	desk, chair, typewriter, telephone, paper, pen	hair clip	pink long-sleeved blouse and blue skirt	none	short curly hair	sitting on a chair and typing	almost full body, turning her left body to the viewer	still	downward to the typewriter	none	painting

x = the details cannot be clearly seen / gray area = similarities / blue & pink area = differences

From Table 12, the similarities of the syntagmatic relations among the ‘people: woman,’ ‘objects: desk, chair, typewriter,’ and ‘action: sitting and typing’ in these two primers connote the meaning of the female workers. The action of typing, as part of the routine work responsibilities, connotes the duty of a ‘clerk.’ Unexpectedly, instead of being accompanied by words such as ‘busy,’ ‘diligent,’ or ‘hard-working,’ the meaning of the image in Yor #13 is fixed by the word ‘Yor Ying Ngaam Dtaa’ (ญ หญิง งามตา) (meaning beautiful woman). This meaning potential of this word acts as a compliment to her beauty. Previously analyzed through the searching for ‘the absence’ in this image, the angle of the viewer reveals that a male employer is the absent person who is looking at her and admiring her beautiful appearance in the workplace (see Figure 101). As a result, this female clerk is the ‘object of male gaze.’

Another image of a ‘woman typing at a desk’ in Yor #26 published about thirty-five years later, shows the same syntagmatic relations. Instead of using a rhyming word, the five-lined verses are utilized to describe the characteristics of this woman: diligent, beautiful, especially with charming eyes, and well dressed. Therefore, her male boss is also missing from the scene. Although there are some differences between these two sets of syntagmatic relations, such as the features of the desk, chair, typewriter, telephone, costume, and the angle of the viewer to the women’s positions, they connote the ‘workers as clerks.’ At this point, contextually analyzed, even though the profession of a ‘clerk’ is transformed into an updated ‘secretary,’ the position of the female workers had not been changed from being the ‘object of male gaze.’

## 6.2 Finding 5: women in the workforce

In the context of being a part of the workforce, the social position of being a female clerk or secretary signifies ‘the employee’ in a low ranking work status. The implicit meaning potential in both images are identical, although the two women work in different social contexts almost thirty-five years apart. After the democratic reform, Thailand’s economic development needed more laborers. When female workers were embraced as a part of the workforce previously dominated by men, many single women and housewives, especially of the middle-class status, had

to get jobs to earn more money. The literate Thai women who had opportunities to study in higher education started their careers primarily as clerks, teachers, or nurses. According to the oral histories (ประวัติศาสตร์บอกเล่า) of the Diploma Program (แผนกเตรียมปริญญา) at the University of Moral and Political Sciences (มหาวิทยาลัยวิชาธรรมศาสตร์และการเมือง) (which is now Thammasat University) during the period from 1938/2481 to 1947/2490, M.R. Thanadsri Svasti (มรว. ถนัดศรี สวัสดิวัตน์) recalled that most male and female students who passed this two-year program started working as ‘clerks.’ Many of them started their careers from the lowest level and gradually made their ways up to higher positions in government services, taking on roles such as director-generals, ambassadors, prosecutors, or judges. (Osatharom, 2011: 77, Volume Two). Another alumni of this program, Ms. Jambpoon Naam Bprataan (คุณจำปูน นามประทาน) recounted that many students simultaneously worked when taking this diploma program or continuing their studies for Bachelor Degrees, either in the field of law or accountancy. After they received the diploma, many of them started working as ‘clerks’ and later became high ranking or the chief officers (Osatharom, 2011: 50, Volume Two). More oral histories inform us that the salary of the clerks in the Ministry of Finance at the time were twenty Baht, the same amount of the tuition fee of this program per year, while the low-ranking government officials (ข้าราชการชั้นตรี) such as a sergeant in the Ministry of Justice (เจ้าศาล) were paid eighty Baht per month (Warunee Osatharom, 2011: 64).

From this information, before 1957/2500, the ‘clerks’ were generally the first low-level jobs for most graduates, either men or women, who chose to work in government services. Interestingly, the ‘typing’ course, as well as the stenography course, was a unique and required subject in the diploma programs at the University of Moral and Political Sciences, while other universities did not offer these courses. These two skills were essential for most jobs, thus the graduates from this university had an advantage over others (Osatharom, 2011: 98, Volume Two).

On the contrary, according to Ai-daa A-runwong’s feminist viewpoint, Thai literature around the same period including “Rao Li-kit” (เราลิขิต), a novel by R. Jantapimpa (ร. จันทพิมพะ), reflects the real situation in Thai society around the changing time from the reign of King Rama VIII to King Rama IX. The ‘modern’

women, like the novel's leading character, Jit-tree (จិតรี), preferred working as clerks or accountants because they were considered highly paid. The other profession mentioned in this novel and referred to as a 'complicated-level profession' is that of working in a bank, therefore a few of the bank employees were women. Another main character, Gaandaa (กานดา), works as an elementary school teacher and, while at home, does the housework and needlework. Ai-daa A-runwong's (ไอลดา อรุณวงศ์) wrote a critique about the two novels by R. Chantapimpa, "Rao Li-kit" (first edition published in 1951/2494) and "Bon Lumsop Waa-sidtee" (บนหลุมศพวาสิฏฐี) (first edition published in 1953/2496). They both illustrate Thai society at the end of the Second World War. At the time, the traditional Thai family was transforming into an 'updated' one among the 'modern society.' Thai women started to join 'the world of literacy' and gained access to the formal knowledge system, both in the schools and universities. Simultaneously, when they worked, they were entering into a new environment of 'outside the home' lifestyles, that was previously ruled and dominated by men.

Comparing the facts and fictions during the period since the democratic reform to the decade of 1957/2500, jobs like 'clerks' indicated various statuses. For the law and accountant graduates from the University of Moral and Political Sciences, of both genders but a very small amount of female graduates, this job was of the lowest ranking, but it was necessary for them to take this job as a starting career before moving on to higher positions, especially if they worked in government services. On the contrary, from the viewpoint of the female main characters in R. Jantapimpa's novels, the 'clerk or accountant' jobs were high in pay and preferable for 'modern' women who were literate and able to make their own living. Presumably, in comparison to the other 'female jobs,' either teachers or nurses, the salaries of the clerks or accountants are paid at higher rates.

Almost thirty-five years apart, two images of the 'woman typing at a desk' are utilized to illustrate Thai working women as a part of the workforce. In Yor # 26, besides the image that connotes a female worker as a clerk, another image of a woman on the top part of the page illustrates an air-stewardess. In the American terminology, this profession is one of the so-called 'pink-collar workers.' It refers to

the women who work in the service industries, including nurses, secretaries, and elementary school teachers as well. In Thailand, working as an air-stewardess is preferable for many women, especially if they work for the nation's state enterprises like Thai Airways International (see Figure 138). They are proud of being 'cultural icons' of the country.



Figure 138 A poster advertisement for Thai Airways International, 1960/2503

Source: Teakdoor The Thailand Forum, Siam, **Thailand & Bangkok Old Photo Thread - Page 63**, accessed February 24, 2016, available from <http://teakdoor.com/famous-threads/39970-siam-thailand-bangkok-old-photo-thread-63.html>

According to Sanor Jaremporn's studies about Thai literature during the decade of B.E. 2530 to 2540 (around 1987 to 1997), the quickly-expanded Capitalist economy in Thailand needed much more workers and laborers, both in government services and private companies. Consequently, Thai society embraced the discourses that the women had to 'work and be successful in their jobs' and, at the same time, 'be a good wife and a good mother.' These discourses conformed with Thai feminist movements in regards to women's rights since the decade of B.E. 2510 (1967s). Gender equality had been applied in constitutional laws, which in consequence, affected the women's lives and working conditions. In order to prove that women had equal abilities to men, they had to work in the same professions that were once



dominated by men. Moreover, women had to earn money and make a living by themselves. Sanor also analyzes that the tension of the social ideologies between the two opposites, Patriarchy and Feminism, did not occur equally and adapted to one another in order to coexist. Actually, the patriarchic system learned to cope with its opposition, by absorbing and accepting some ideas and not totally rejecting it. This situation lead to the updated social ideology that, the women had to be excellent in both the domestic and public spaces, in other words, both at home and at work. Simultaneously, they are socially and highly expected to be responsible for their roles as the wife and the mother and also the successful worker. Undoubtedly, from the interviews of the fifty successful female business executives, which was published in the book “50 Female Executives” (50 นักบริหารหญิง) by the Business and Professional Women’s Association of Thailand (BPW) in 1991/2534, they are proud of being good wives and mothers. And at the same time, they feel the success and accomplishment in their works. (Sanor Jarempon: 2005, 260)

In conclusion regarding Thai women in the workforce, the representations of the female clerks in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers signify two gender-related aspects. The first one illustrates the ‘modern’ women who are literate and choose to appoint their work statuses in order to make a living by themselves, not depending on men. Another aspect illustrates female employees who are not aware of being their bosses’ ‘objects of male gaze.’ More femininity discourses about women’s roles and statuses relating to their jobs are examined. In the patriarchal society, even though the women’s status seem equal to that of men in Thai society, due to the opportunities to gain equal rights in formal education and occupations, but their roles as nurturers at home cannot be overlooked. While most husbands leave their wives with all the housework, women have a double responsibility to work hard both at home and in the workplace.

According to Sanor Jarempon, Thai women represented in the novels portrayed an equal status and role to men. Women can be the ruffians, politicians, advocates, or activists. But he questioned whether some gender discourses were hidden under the trend of being a ‘progressing woman’ (‘ผู้หญิงก้าวหน้า’) in patriarchal society. From his interview with Thai bourgeois women from various professions,

many of them were willing to admit their double roles and responsibilities as housewives and mothers. And at the same time, they are struggling with the progression and success in their jobs. The social contradictory statements of being a ‘progressing woman’ at work and a ‘good wife and mother’ at home were constructed by the masculine power in order to cope with the feminist movements. Therefore, the patriarchy still dominates in the society by harmoniously using these ‘empty signifiers’ and ‘myths’ in ways that most women are not aware of. Women still believe that the feminist movements have been successfully achieving their ultimate goals to be equal to men

### 7. The reform: Yor (ญ) Alphabet: A Learning Reform

Throughout the one hundred and fifteen years of the Thai alphabet primer’s history, from the first edition with the complete set of forty-four accompanying words in 1899/2442 up until present, we can conclude that the letter Yor (ญ) has been fixed with the meaning of Ying or Pooying (meaning woman). Even though the first Thai word chosen to accompany this letter was Yart (ญาติ) (meaning “relative”), and very few alphabet primers used other accompanying words, all Thai children and adults are embedded with the notion of Yor being connected with ‘woman.’ Thai people automatically recall Yor Ying (ญ หญิง) without hesitation, because of the method of learning the alphabet by rote during childhood. Moreover, even though the rhyming words in each version of the Thai alphabet primers differ, most of them refer to the beauty characteristics of women.

Since the educational modernization by King Rama V that was influenced by the European educational system, the usage of Baep Rian Reo (แบบเรียนเรว), which first used the word Pooying (meaning woman) as the letter Yor (ญ) accompaniment, was enforced in schools throughout the metropolitan and provincial areas. This incident of using the ‘state primers’ for mass primary education might be a reason why there has never been any other variation in terms of how the Thai alphabet characters, from Kor (ก) to Hor (ฮ) are learned and memorized. In the case of the letter Yor (ญ), the fixed accompanying word, ‘woman’ has been inserting stereotypes regarding Thai women and feminine ideologies into Thai society. For almost seventy years, Thai citizens have been

acquainted with and become familiar with the use of ‘Sopa’ (โสฬส) (meaning beautiful) as the rhyming word for the letter Yor (ย). This typifies the ‘beauty’ character of Thai women rather than focusing on their abilities or potential.

Even though the Thai educational system was influenced by the European system, especially British education, there are major dissimilarities as well. In Britain, teachers and schools can choose their own primary language readers or schoolbooks from many variations printed by educational publishers. As Sue Walker (2013) explains, “In Britain, there has never been a nationally-approved single method of teaching reading and there are no ‘set books.’” She also drew a comparison between Britain and other countries, “This is unlike many countries including the U.S.A., Greece, Malaysia, and China, where children use the same national, regional, or state primer.” (Walker, 2013: 12) The variations of the British method of teaching the alphabet can be exemplified by the compilation of sixty-seven A.B.C. rag books printed before World War II by The Dean’s Rag Book Company. The texts show different words chosen to represent each letter. For example, the letter “A” is accompanied by words like, “apple,” “animals,” “army,” “ass,” “archer,” “ark,” “Aladdin,” “arcade,” “anchor,” “apricot,” “Australia,” “ape,” “alligator,” “Anne,” or “aeroplane” in each edition. (Cope, 2009: 204-207) These variations of letter and word accompaniments could help to liberate children from any rigid and inflexible ways of alphabet learning that may instill stereotypical viewpoints in them, as is the case with ‘state primers’ or ‘set books.’

To summarize, the design implementations, which is the secondary outcome of this research-based practice and not completely developed as a design-led research, aim to ‘denaturalize’ the conventional way of Yor (ย) alphabet learning that has been reproducing connotations about women by creating a learning reform that eliminates gender discourses and ideologies. Firstly, I propose the idea of replacing ‘Ying’ (หญิง) (meaning woman) with the word ‘Yart’ (ญาติ) (meaning relative) as the accompanying word of the alphabet character Yor (ย). This will be a new learning reform of the Thai pre-school alphabet primer. Secondly, I propose prototypes of the ‘Yor (ย) Alphabet: A Learning Reform,’ which consist of three learning tools. For a further pilot study in the field of language pedagogy, teachers or educators can use these prototypes to test their

performance with students at appropriate school levels. Parents can also use the tools at home for study. Both of these proposals demonstrate how learning materials can be designed with non-gender or non-sexist approaches, and conform with UNESCO's EFA (Education for All) Dakar Goals (2000): "Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015." (Blumberg, 2007: 3)

The three Yor (ญ) alphabet learning reform tools that are designed and presented as the prototypes are:

1. Yor (ญ) Alphabet Template: A Learning Reform
2. Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards: A Learning Reform
3. Yor (ญ) Interactive Set: A Learning Reform

The idea of reforming the Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and the alphabet learning tools could be applied to other Thai characters of the alphabet as well, with the consideration being made that femininity discourses are omitted from the contents and illustrations.

### 1. Yor (ญ) Alphabet Template: A Learning Reform

Dimensions, materials, and techniques:

Template: 19.8 x 9.7 cm. / 1.0 mm. clear acrylic plastic sheet / laser cut

Sheet: 20 x 10 cm. / 350 gram paper / two-sided digital print and laser die-cut

Design concept:

'Yor (ญ) Alphabet Template: A Learning Reform' replicates the look of a normal alphabet template used for tracing Thai letters, vowels, and tone marks with pencils or pens to create unlimited words; however, this template provides only 27 letters instead of 44, plus 15 vowels and tone marks. With these selected letters, vowels, and tone marks, the template facilitates the user to create a limit of 67 words that have the letter Yor (ญ) as the first or final consonant, excluding Ying (หญิง) (meaning woman), which is the conventional word that we usually learn by rote to associate with the letter Yor (ญ). The set of 67 words presents a new learning of the

Yor (ญ) alphabet character that has no relation to the representations of Thai women and their connotations. Therefore, this project aims to eliminate the femininity discourses that have been embedded in Thai alphabet primers since 1899/2442. The Galileo typeface, designed by Chatnarong Jingsuphatada, SuperStore Font in 2555/2012, is used for the laser cutouts of this template.

Details of the design:

The template is designed by arranging 27 letters and 15 vowels and tone marks that can be combined to make 67 words, each of which has the Yor (ญ) alphabet character as the first or final consonant. The outlines of the ‘Galileo’ typeface are cut out by a digital laser cut technique, while the title and information of the design are cut half way through the surface in order to create an engraved appearance (see Figure 139).



Figure 139 The design of the Yor (ญ) Alphabet Template: A Learning Reform

A paper sheet in the same size of the template is designed to accompany the clear acrylic template. On one side, it is printed in a solid black color in order to make the template visible while, on the other side, the design concept is printed along with the graphic image of the template (see Figure 140).

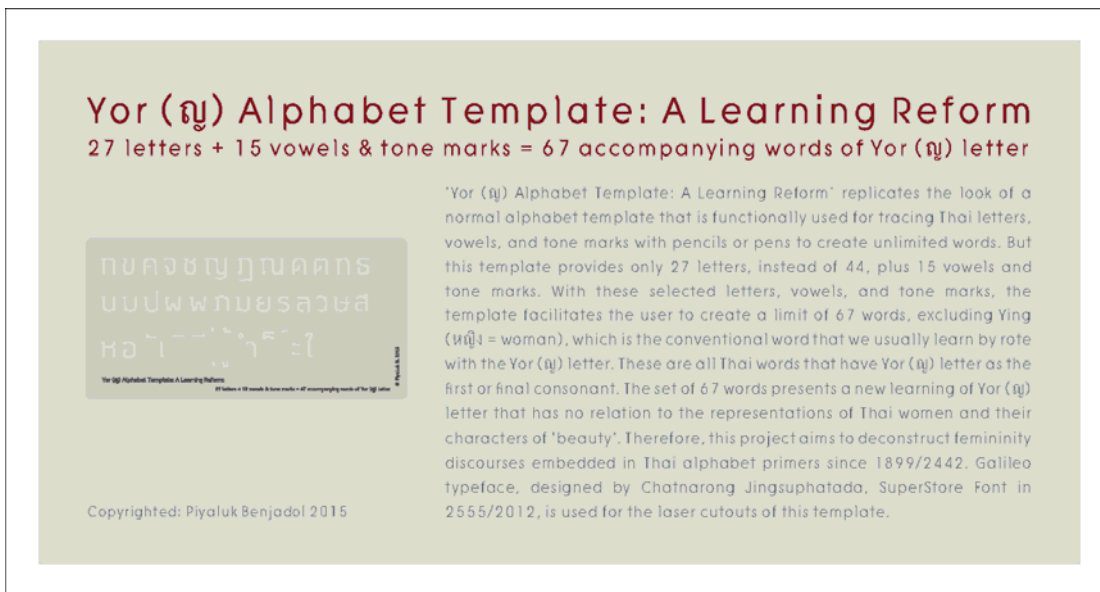


Figure 140 The design of the paper sheet accompanying the Yor (ญ) Alphabet Template: A Learning Reform

Prototype:

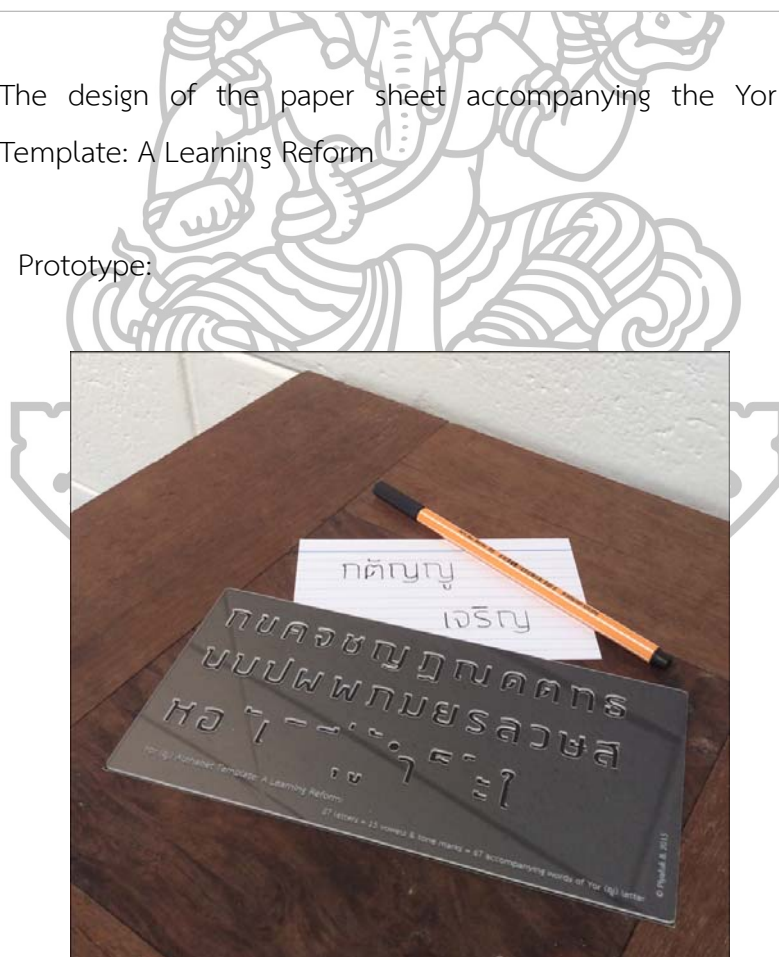


Figure 141 The Yor (ญ) Alphabet Template: A Learning Reform

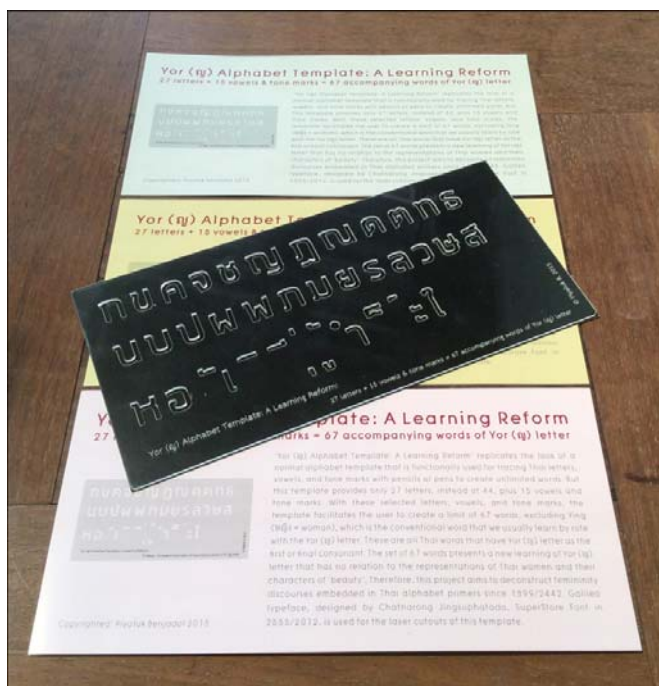


Figure 142 The template and accompanying paper sheets displaying the three color variation

## 2. Yor (ย) Alphabet Cards: A Learning Reform

Dimensions, materials, and techniques:

Cards: 6.5 x 9.5 cm. / 68 cards in a box / 350 gram paper / two-sided digital print and laser die-cut

Box: 6.7 x 9.7 x 4.2 cm. / 350 gram paper / two-sided digital print and laser die-cut

Design concept:

Yor (ย) Alphabet Cards: A Learning Reform is comprised of 67 cards plus 1 introduction card. The 67 alphabet cards display 67 accompanying words excluding “Ying” (หญิง) (meaning woman), which is the conventional word that we usually learn by rote to accompany the Yor (ย) alphabet character. These are the selected Thai words that have the letter Yor (ย) as the first or final consonant. These words are utilized to present a new learning tool that has no relation to the representations of Thai women and their connotations. This design aims to eliminate the femininity discourses embedded in Thai alphabet primers since 1899/2442, and to create a

learning tool that conforms to the idea of creating non-sexist learning materials. Additionally, this set of cards manifests the letter Yor (ญ) in 67 distinct Thai typefaces with the names of the type designers who contribute to this project. These Yor (ญ) alphabet cards are inspired by typeface memory games such as the typography memory game designed by ‘ps.2 arquitetura + design,’ a Brazilian design studio. It displays 25 variations of the letter ‘A’ in different typefaces. The player will increasingly recognize the differences in details between the letters in different typefaces (see Figure 143).



Figure 143 ‘The Quick Brown Fox Jumps Over the Lazy Dog,’ a typeface memory game by ‘ps.2 arquitetura + design’

Source: If it’s hip it’s here, **Test Your Typeface and Brand Knowledge With Two Cool Memory Games**, accessed March 13, 2016. available from <http://www.ifitshipitshere.com/test-your-typeface-and-brand-knowledge-with-two-cool-memory-games/>

Details of the design:

1. Motifs and color combinations: For this design, the selected 67 words that have the letter Yor (ญ) as the first or final consonant are divided into three groups based on three categories: noun, verb, or adjective and adverb. There are 38 nouns, 19 verbs and 10 adjectives and adverbs. Motif A and the gray color are



associated with the nouns, motif B and the pink color are associated with the verbs, and motif C and the beige color are associated with the adjectives and adverbs (see Figure 144).

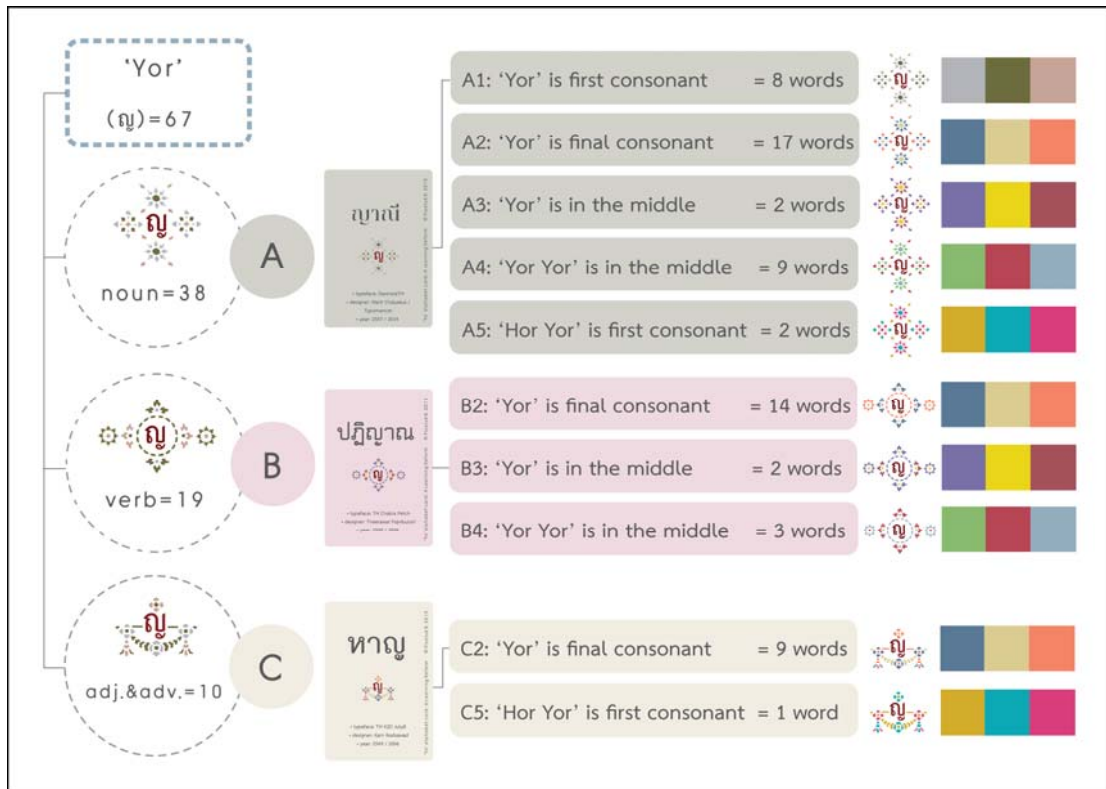


Figure 144 A diagram illustrating the motifs and color combinations of Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards: A Learning Reform

In each word, there are five possible positions of the letter Yor (ญ) and its paring with the letter 'Hor' (ห):

1. 'Yor' (ญ) is the first consonant of the word/Tri color set #1
2. 'Yor' (ญ) is the final consonant of the word/Tri color set #2
3. 'Yor' (ญ) is in the middle of the word/Tri color set #3
4. 'Yor Yor' (ญญ) is in the middle of the word/Tri color set #4
5. 'Hor Yor' (หญ) is the first consonant of the word/Tri color set #5

Each motif used in these five categories is coded with the tri-color set of five color combinations and they are all applied to the three groups of nouns, verbs, and adjectives and adverbs (see Figure 145, Figure 146, and Figure 147). The ‘ThaiTone’ colors are used in this design by providing the name of the color shade in Thai and the percentage of Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black (CMYK) colors respectively in the bracket at the end of each ThaiTone color. Each tri-color set is applied to the visual components in each motif.

1. Tri color set #1 consists of: black ดอกเลา (30-25-20-0), green ชี้น้ำ (70-60-100-0), white ควายเผือก (5-25-25-20)
2. Tri color set #2 consists of: blue มอคราม (65-40-20-15), white นวล (15-15-50-0), orange หงเสน (0-60-60-0)
3. Tri color set #3 consists of: violet ม่วงดอกผักตบ (60-60-10-0), yellow เหลืองไพล (10-10-100-0), brown กะปิ (10-70-40-30)
4. Tri color set #4 consists of: green หญ้าแพรกอ่อน (10-5-50-5), red หงชาด (20-85-60-10), blue เมฆ (40-20-15-5)
5. Tri color set #5 consists of: gold ทองคำ (20-30-100-0), blue น้ำไหล (80-10-30-0), red เกสรชมพู (10-90-25-0)

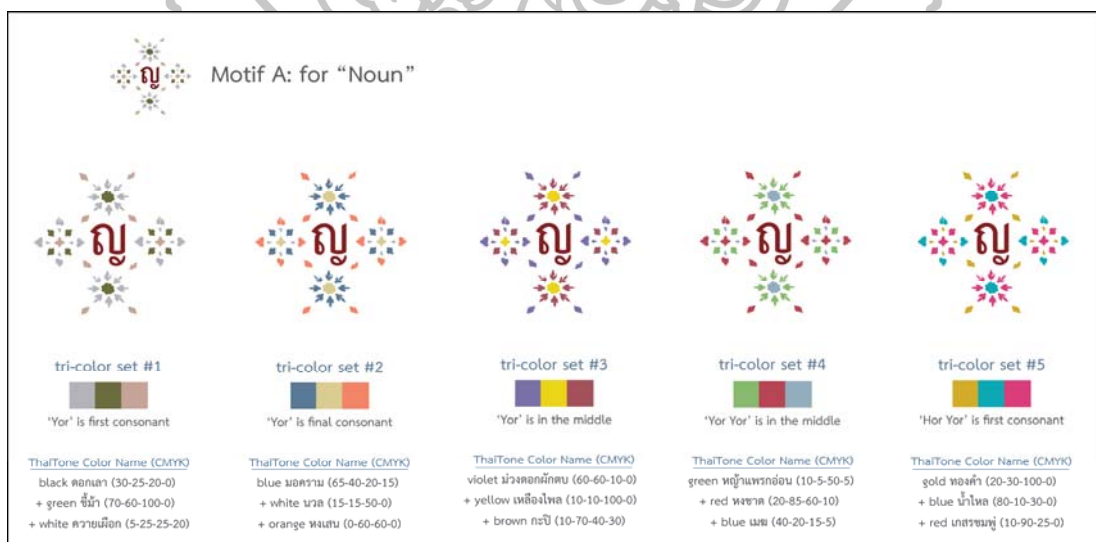


Figure 145 A picture illustrating motif A and color combinations for the ‘Noun’ group

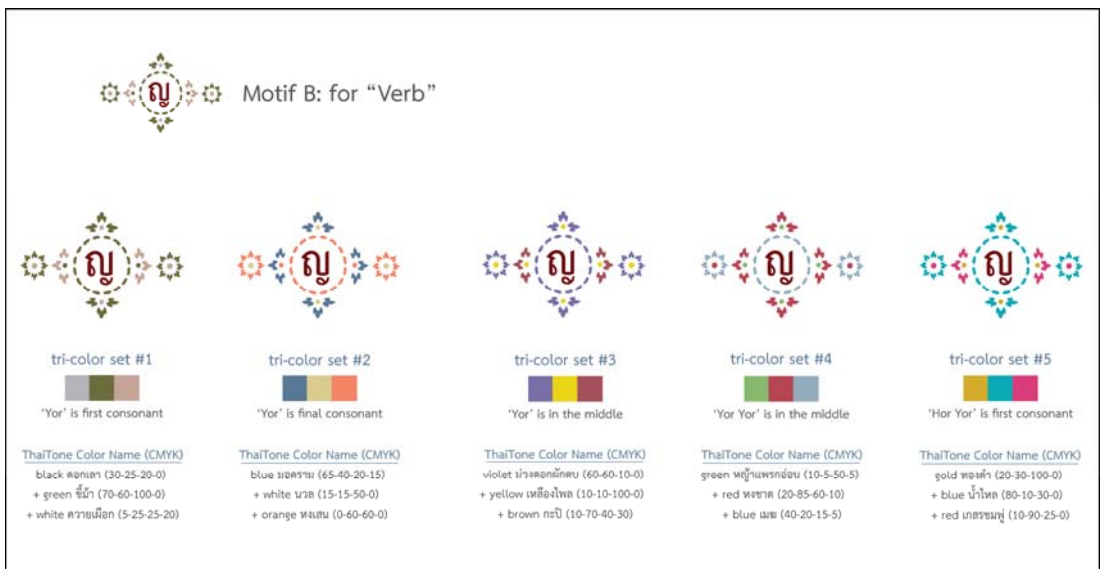


Figure 146 A picture illustrating motif B and color combinations for the 'Verb' group

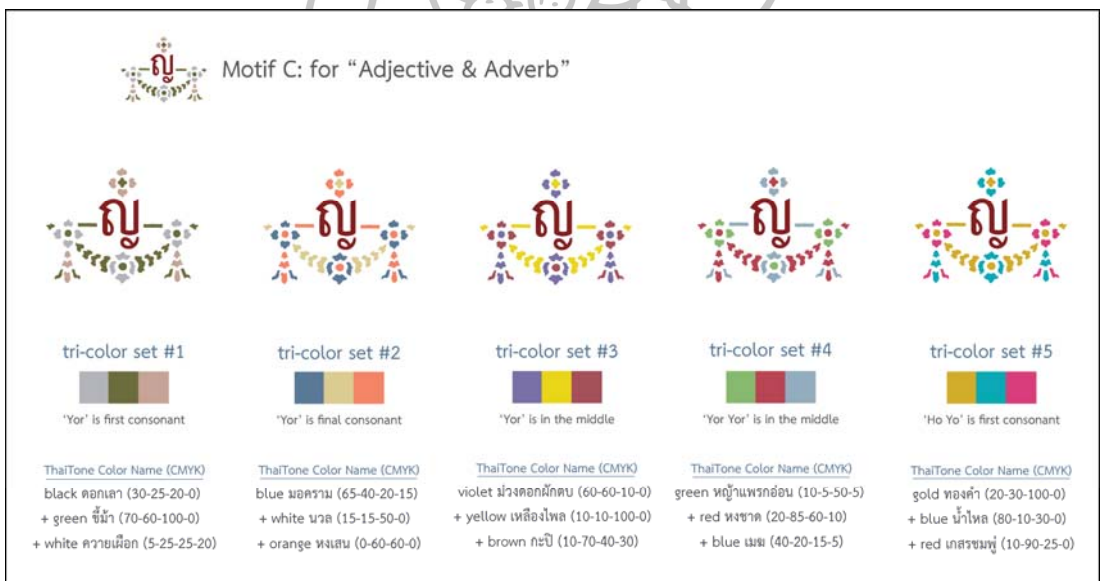


Figure 147 A picture illustrating motif C and color combinations for the 'Adjective and Adverb' group

2. Card design: On the front side of the card, the letter Yor (ญ) is placed at the center with the motif's pattern serving as the background. On the back, the word is placed at the top, the motif in the middle and the information about the typeface at the bottom. The name of the typeface, designer and type foundry and the year of distribution are provided. Sample cards of each group: noun, verb, and adjective and adverb are depicted in the following figures (see Figure 148, Figure 149, and Figure 150). Occasionally, there are no words that fall into a certain group. For example, there is no word with 'Yor' (ญ) serving as the first consonant in the 'Verb' group.



Figure 148 The front and back designs of the cards in the 'Noun' Group



Figure 149 The front and back side designs of the cards in the ‘Verb’ Group



Figure 150 The front and back side designs of the cards in the ‘Adjective and Adverb’ group



Figure 151 The artwork of the back side of a card



Figure 152 Unsorted cards of the Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards: A Learning Reform

3. box set design: A paper box was designed as the packaging for the 68 cards. It uses the motif and background color of the ‘Noun’ group (see Figure 153).



Figure 153 The box set of Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards: A Learning Reform

In addition, the list of all 67 words with information about the typefaces, designer and type foundry and the year of the distribution are listed in Appendix B.

Prototype:



Figure 154 The cards and a box set of the Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards: A Learning Reform

### 3. Yor (ꦪꦺ) Interactive Set: A Learning Reform

Dimensions, materials, and techniques:

Wooden table: 63 x 51 x 67.5-71 cm. (see Figure 155)

Interactive cards: 5 x 18 cm. /27 alphabet cards and a reset card/350 gram paper/double-sided digital print and digital die-cut (see Figure 156)

Thermal printouts: size: 384 x 384 pix./png file/67 pieces (see Figure 157)

Hardware: (1) Macintosh Mini Mac, (2) 9 inches LED monitor, (3) thermal printer, (4) router, (5) web camera, (6) LED light, (7) computer fan, (8) electrical sockets, and (9) circuit board

Software: 'Processing' software

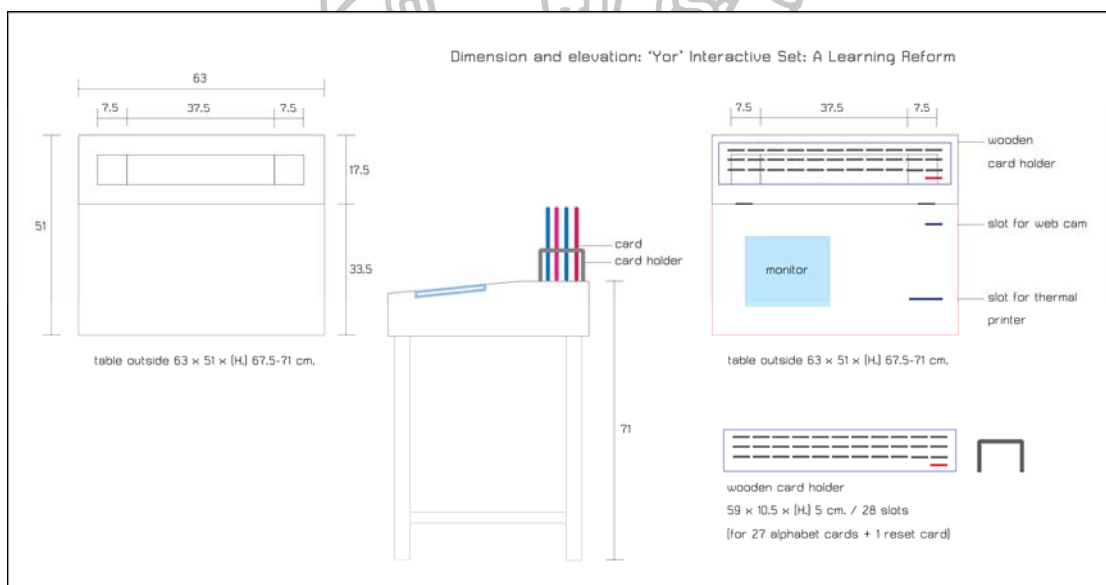


Figure 155 The dimensions and elevation of the Yor (ꦪꦺ) Interactive Set: A Learning Reform





Figure 156 The graphic designs of the interactive cards



Figure 157 The graphic designs of the printouts

Design concept:

The Yor (ญ) Interactive Set: A Learning Reform is designed as an alphabet learning tool that aims to eliminate the femininity discourses embedded in Thai alphabet primers since 1899/2442. This new learning tool conforms to the idea of creating non-sexist learning materials. It integrates the task of a word guessing game with tactile interaction in the form of a student desk by using a software-oriented

operation. This tool aims to facilitate learning of the Yor (ย) character of the alphabet with the 67 accompanying words excluding ‘Ying’ (หญิง) (meaning woman), which is the only accompaniment that people learned by rote in the past. The 67 words that have the Yor (ย) alphabet character as the first or final consonant are utilized. Among them, there are 27 letters that act as the first consonant. From the limited letters that are provided, the users have to codify their knowledge of the words that utilize the Yor (ย) alphabet character by prompting one to guess how to spell the correct word. Ideally, one will not be conscious of the ‘absence’ of the word ‘Ying’ at all, allowing for this new learning reform tool to achieve its goal of functioning as a non-gender related learning material for both children and adults.

Details of the design:

This alphabet interactive set was designed as a stand-alone learning tool. The hardware and software components operate on the Macintosh platform. An old-styled ordinary student desk used in local schools is partly transformed into a computer-operated learning tool. Its hardware is comprised of: (1) a Macintosh Mini Mac, (2) 9-inch-LED monitor, (3) thermal printer, (4) router, (5) web camera, (6) LED light, (7) computer fan, (8) electrical sockets, (9) circuit board, and (10) a set of twenty-eight alphabet interactive cards with QR codes. The ‘Processing’ software is programmed to connect the code on each card recognized by the web camera and send signals via the router’s network to command the thermal printer to print out the correct word (see Figure 158). The technical information and credits for this interactive set are as follow:

1. Software developed by Nichayanun Kittivongpakdee, Studio Craftsmanship Co., Ltd., Bangkok

2. Typeface used on the cards and computer screens: 29FahThaiBold by Pairoj Teeraprapa

3. Screen file resolution: 1280 x 720 pix. /png file

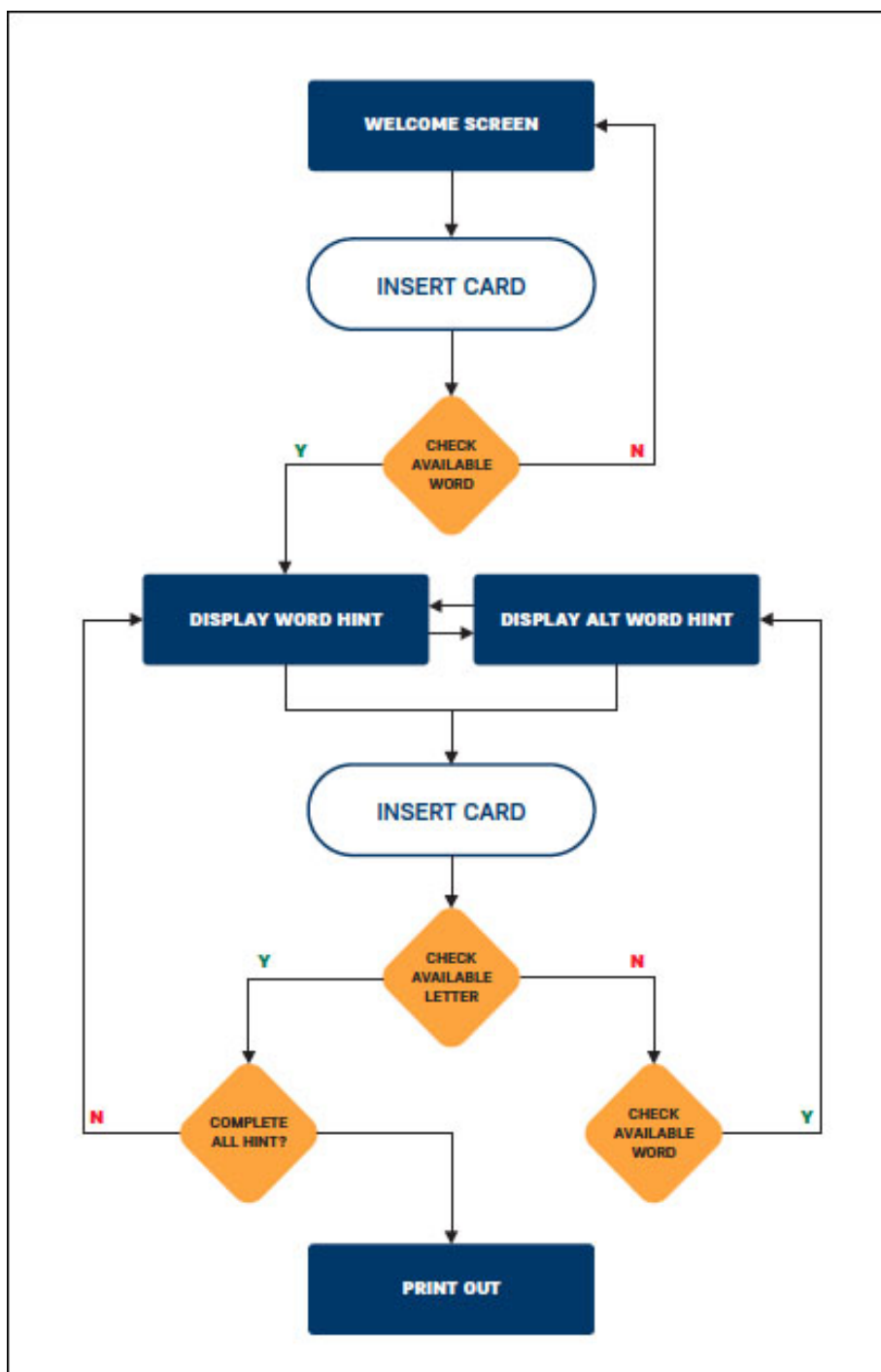


Figure 158 The operating flow chart of the Yor (ḡ) Interactive Set: A Learning Reform

When this interactive set is started, the user will see a ‘welcome screen’ displaying instructions about how to play (see Figure 159). By inserting a selected interactive card of any alphabet character, the program will randomly check the

words that have this specific alphabet as the first consonant. If it is available, that alphabet character and the word to guess will be displayed on the screen with a row of dashes representing each letter of the word. Additionally, a word hint is displayed by offering the word's vowels and/or tone marks. If there is no word with that letter as the first consonant, the screen will display a message stating, 'Sorry, this is not the first consonant, please choose another letter' (see Figure 160). The player is then asked to guess another letter and insert another card. If it is correct, the letter will be displayed in its position. If it is incorrect, the program will show the 'Wrong letter, please choose another letter' screen (see Figure 161). The game continues until all letters are filled in the dashes, at which point the screen will display 'Now, you have completed one of the 67 words, please wait for the printout' (see Figure 162). The player will receive the word printed out by the thermal printer (see Figure 163). A 'reset' card is further provided allowing for one to restart the guessing game at any point during the game.

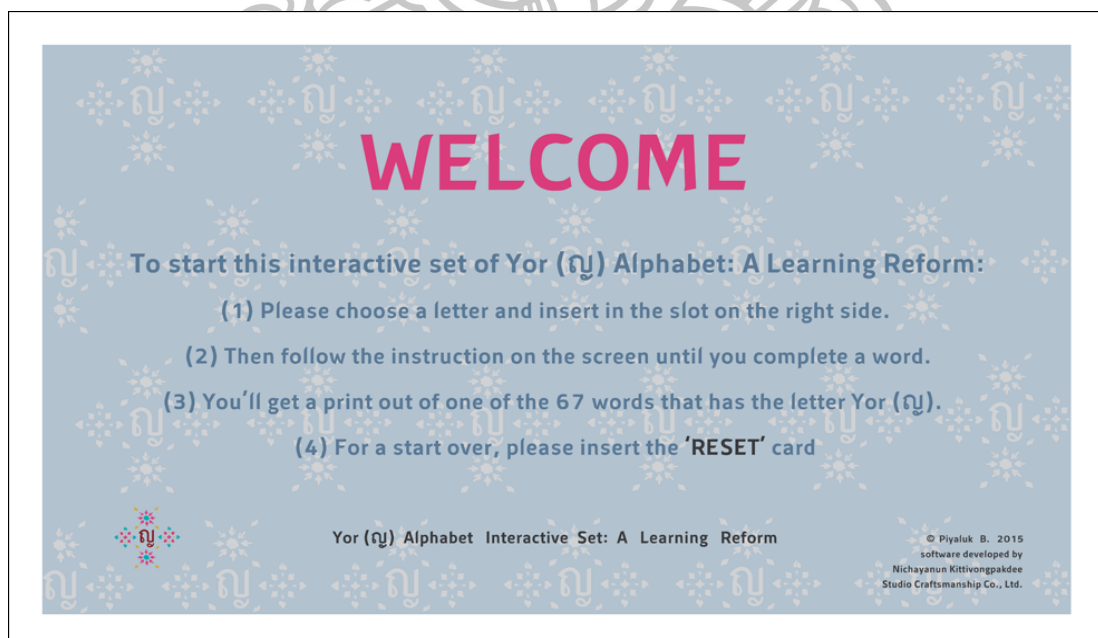


Figure 159 The 'Welcome' screen of the Yor (ꠘ) Interactive Set: A Learning Reform

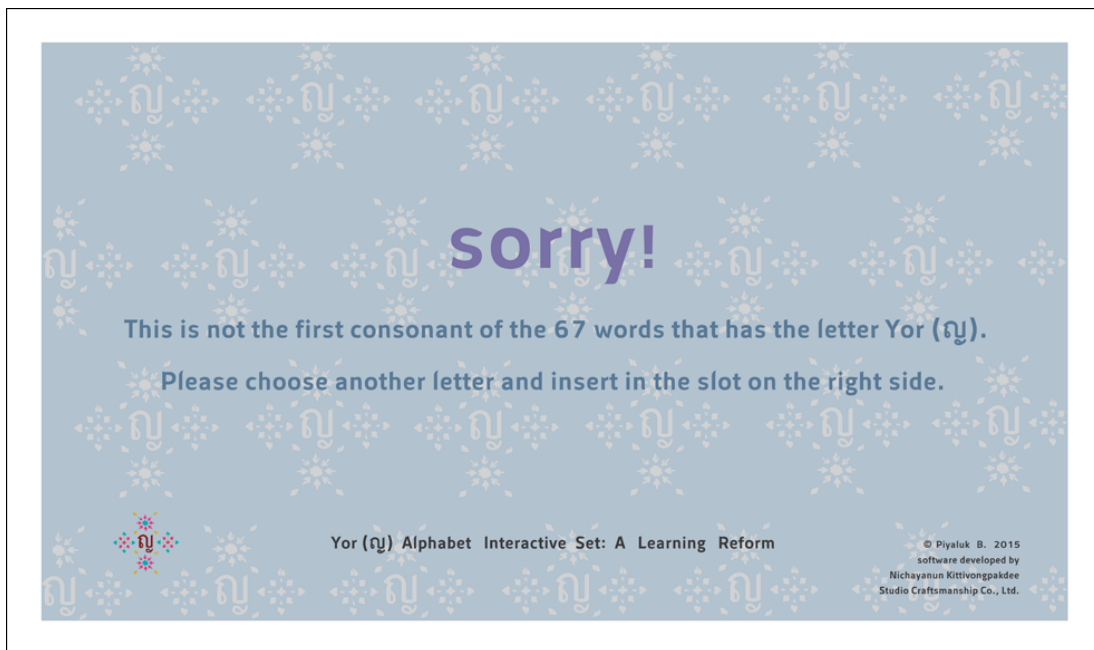


Figure 160 The ‘Sorry’ screen of the Yor (ຽ) Interactive Set: A Learning Reform

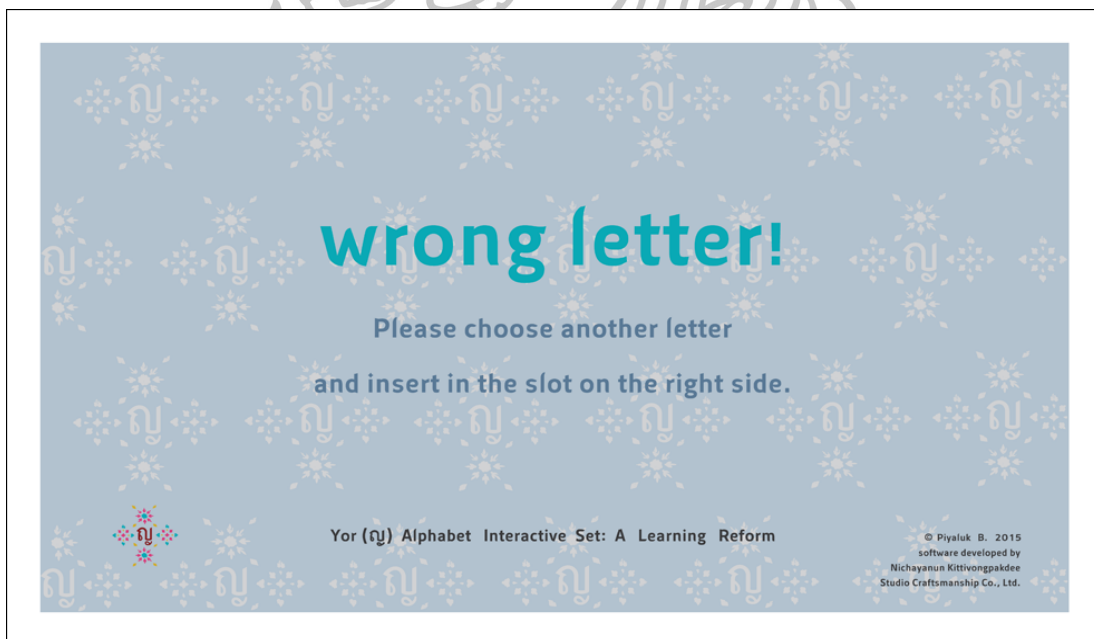


Figure 161 The ‘Wrong letter’ screen of the Yor (ຽ) Interactive Set: A Learning Reform

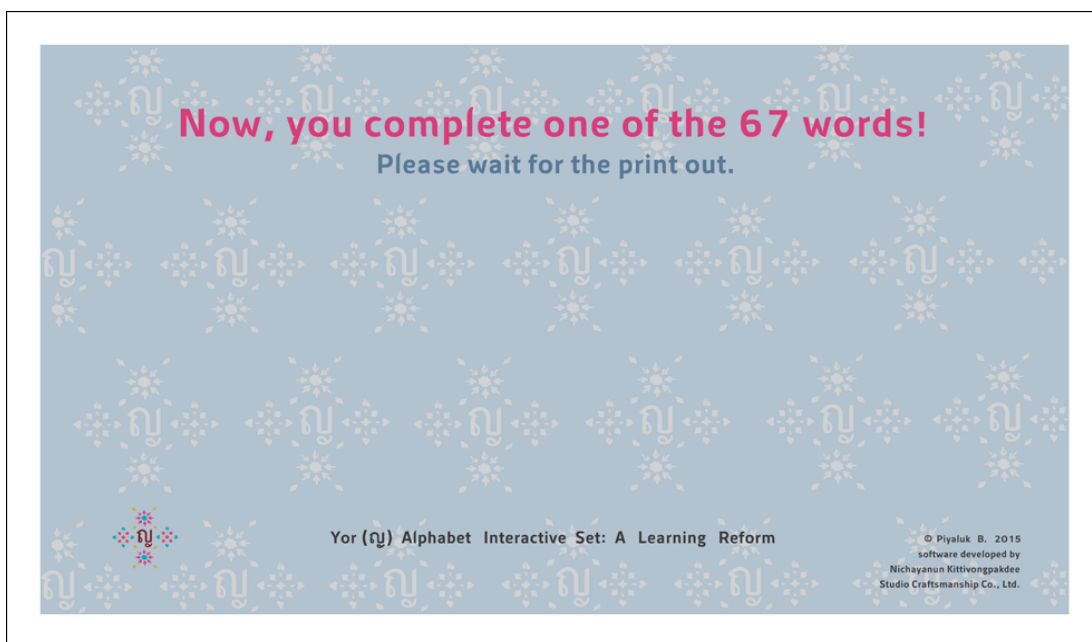


Figure 162 The ‘Now, please wait for the printout’ screen of the Yor (ꠘ) Interactive Set: A Learning Reform



Figure 163 A thermal printout of the Yor (ꠘ) Interactive Set: A Learning Reform

This Yor (ꠘ) alphabet learning tool’s task to promote the process of learning to spell is similar to that of ‘Hangman’ or the common letter guessing game (see Figure 164 and Figure 165). However, instead of ‘hanging’ or killing someone,

this tool rewards the user with a printout of the correctly spelled word in both Thai and English languages. Even though the ‘Hangman’ game is a popular classroom game across the world, it should be criticized for incorporating a sense of violence into basic language learning in a ‘naturalized’ way.



Figure 164 PHP Hangman Game, Version 1.0.0, Copyright by ophp.com 2000  
Source: Softpedia, **PHP Hangman Game**, accessed March 14, 2016, available from <http://i1-scripts.softpedia-static.com/screenshots/PHP-Hangman-Game-3829.png>



Figure 165 Interactive Classroom Game, Hangman, by Barryfunenglish.com  
Source: Barry Fun English, **Interactive Classroom Game**, accessed March 14, 2016, available from <http://www.barryfunenglish.com/games>

Prototype:



Figure 166 The Yor (ꠘ) Alphabet Interactive Set: A Learning Reform



Figure 167 Top view of the Yor (ꠘ) Alphabet Interactive Set: A Learning Reform





Figure 168 The card holder



Figure 169 The alphabet cards and printout

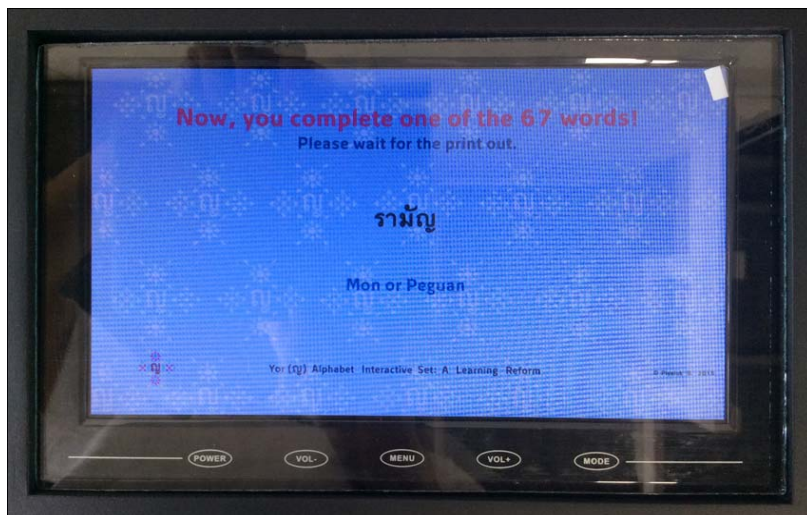


Figure 170 The screen

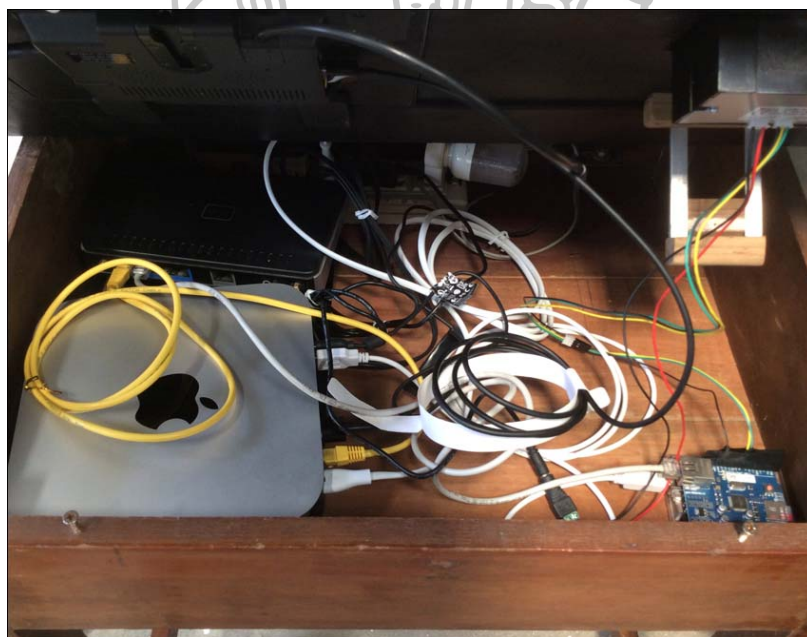


Figure 171 The hardware inside the table



Figure 172 The printouts of the Yor (ຽ) Alphabet Interactive Set: A Learning Reform

### Summary

In conclusion, this chapter explicates the semiotic process of analyzing and interpreting meanings in thirty-one Yor (ຽ) alphabet primers and other secondary visual resources. Five procedures of visual semiotics analyses conducted in this inquiry are: (1) compiling and researching the history and context of Yor (ຽ) alphabet primers, (2) investigating the verbal and non-verbal codes in Yor (ຽ) alphabet primers and analyzing the syntagmatic relations of signs in each Yor (ຽ) alphabet primer, (3) decoding and interpreting the connotative meanings of Yor (ຽ) alphabet primers, and then finding the paradigmatic relations of signs between Yor (ຽ) alphabet primers and other visual resources, (4) reforming the concept of alphabet learning and designing Yor (ຽ) alphabet learning reform tools.

The visual analyses of Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and other visual resources conducted throughout these procedures disclose femininity discourses and social ideologies about Thai women as described in the five research findings: (1) Thai beauty ideologies, (2) the absences of women's roles as a mother and a housewife, (3) the visual trope of a parasol connotes three cultural meanings including: typification of the beauty contestants, attraction to be an object of male gaze, and identification of race and nationality, (4) literacy of Thai women, and (5) women as laborers in the workforce. The intertextual relations of cultural and social issues about women emphasize how stereotypes, discourses and ideologies are embedded in the 'presences' of signs and texts around us.

The synthesis of these findings leads to the final procedure of the 'reform' concept. The conventional way of Yor (ญ) alphabet learning that reproduced gender discourses is 'denaturalized' by eliminating them and creating a new alphabet learning reform. The design implementations of three Yor (ญ) alphabet learning reform tools are presented as prototypes: (1) Yor (ญ) Alphabet Template: A Learning Reform, (2) Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards: A Learning Reform and (3) Yor (ญ) Alphabet Interactive Set: A Learning Reform



## Chapter 6

### Conclusion and recommendations

I would like to address my conclusion as a discussion of the results of ‘integration,’ regarding the connections between ideas, theories, and experiences that occurred during the entire process of this inquiry. During the conceptualization, investigation, and interpretation processes, I had to identify, analyze, discuss and interpret, of which the main outcome generated was this written paper, and finally, design, which produced a set of prototypes, the Yor (ญ) alphabet learning tools.

This chapter starts with summaries of the research findings from the empirical study through the mixed-method and framework of visual rhetoric, visual semiotics, and critical discourse analysis. Then, the synthesis of those findings results in an attempt to ‘denaturalize’ the stereotypes, discourses, and social ideologies about Thai women. Finally, this effort leads to the design concept of the ‘reform’ learning tools. At the close of the inquiry, suggestions for future research are provided.

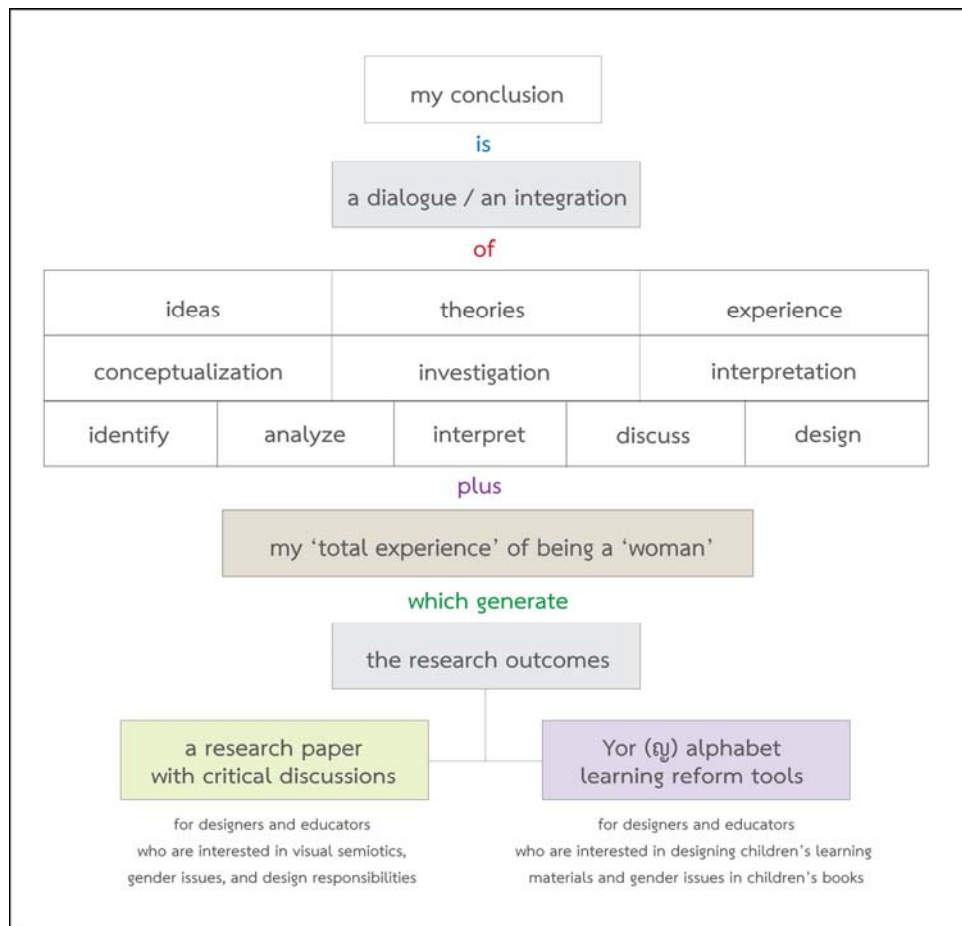


Figure 173 The diagram illustrating the conclusion and outcomes of this research

## Conclusion

From the semiotic process focusing on the connotative meanings of texts and images in thirty-one Yor (ญ) alphabet primers, dating from between 1899/2442 and 2012/2555, and their intertextual relations with femininity discourses and social ideologies about Thai women from various graphic design artifacts, the five research findings are:

1. 'beauty ideologies' are embedded as preferable characteristics of Thai women via the rhyming words of Yor Ying (ญ หญิง) alphabet learning
2. the 'absences' in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers are the images representing the roles of the mother and the housewife, which are the most highly expected roles for women

3. a ‘parasol’ is the visual trope and ‘typification’ of beauty contestants, ‘attraction’ of being the object of male gaze, and ‘identification’ of the woman’s race and nationality

4. the images of a ‘woman reading a book’ connote the literacy of women but their actions, costume, poses, and settings illustrate that they are reading to enjoy their leisure time, not working or studying

5. the images of a ‘woman typing at a desk’ connote working women in the workforce, or ‘modern’ women, but their actions, poses, and especially the absences of their male bosses signify that they are working under the male power. Their roles are rather supporting and related to the ‘object of male gaze’ femininity discourse.

These findings respond to my research questions: What are the representations of women in Yor (ญ) alphabet primers and their connotative meanings related to their contexts? Furthermore, how do these connotations relate to Thai femininity discourses and ideologies in terms of their intertextual relations with other graphic design artifacts? These uncovered evidences encompass all aspects of stereotypes, discourses, and ideologies about Thai women, including role and status, literacy, education, working labor, occupation, identity, bias, and the ‘object of male gaze.’ In Thai society presently, it seems that there is an attempt for gender equality to be gained legally by feminist activists and scholars, but ultimately, from the process of inquiry and my ‘total experience’ of being a woman, the power relations in society are still dominated by men. It reminds me of the origin of the word, ‘woman’:

‘ORIGIN Old English wīfmon, -man (see wife, man), a formation peculiar to English, the ancient word being wife.’

This word appears as if ‘woman’ cannot exist without ‘man.’ Being a ‘woman’ myself, I realize that living positively is the best way to cope with any cultural or social discourses. But the most important thing is that women have to acknowledge that these femininity discourses exist and are formed by social ideologies. It is not a ‘natural’ phenomenon and every woman has her own choices of living.

These understandings are concluded within the specific context of decoding the visual languages in only one character of the Thai alphabet and its intertextuality, but hopefully, in the wider context, these understandings may speak to interests across disciplines such as design, semiotics, gender, or learning pedagogy. In considering that an alphabet primer is a learning tool, the synthesis of research findings are underlined by the fact that stereotypes, discourses, and social ideologies about women are endlessly reproduced via how an alphabet is learned. The design concept of ‘denaturalizing’ those ideologies and creating the non-gender or non-sexist alphabet learning tools is attempted. The ‘reform’ of the alphabet learning is what I propose as the secondary outcome of this inquiry. Yor (ย) Alphabet: A Learning Reform consists of three prototyped learning tools, a template, a set of cards and an interactive set. These tools are designed to eliminate femininity discourses in alphabet learning. This research outcome also argues that, even though the notion of ‘woman’ and Yor (ย) alphabet has been ‘fixed’ in Thai society for a hundred and fifteen years, an action or process of reforming this social practice is essential and urgent. At least, it conforms to the UNESCO’s EFA (Education for All) Dakar Goals (2000): “Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015.” (Blumberg, 2007: 3) The interconnected meanings about gender are not belonging to any culture, but they speak for half of the world population.

Eventually, for the design discipline, the research findings raise ethical issues about design responsibility. As a creator in the society, designers have to be cautious of the meanings they choose to signify or encode in their works. Because designs create more impact than that of being simply commodities, designers should be conscious of the controversy about cultural and social issues, such as the gender discourse that is the focus of this inquiry.

### **Recommendations**

There are two recommendations that I formulate for future research. Firstly, as further study of this research, I would like to propose the project of creating Thai alphabet learning materials upholding the concept of non-gender or



non-sexism to the UNESCO's EFA (Education for All) project, which aims to achieve gender equality in education by 2015. The design implementations of this inquiry, the three prototyped Yor (ยอ) alphabet learning tools, should be adapted and developed to design a complete set of learning materials for Thai alphabet learning or dual language learning, such as Thai with English or ASEAN languages. The concept of a non-gender focused reform can be executed through both the visual languages of the design as well as the typography and illustrations. Then, the new alphabet learning materials should be evaluated through use as pilot modules in kindergartens, for home study or for any appropriate level of education.

Secondly, for the field of graphic communication design, I strongly recommend that it is essential that further studies of the design of books for teaching reading in Thai context be carried out. Sue Walker's (2013) book titled, "Book design for children's reading: typography, pictures, and print" offers an insightful body of knowledge about this topic. In Britain, children's books are designed and published within broad-based national guidelines. Thai children's books, especially those used as language learning materials, need to be 'designed' for the sake of legibility, aesthetics, informative function, and motivation for young readers. Designers should conduct studies in collaboration with teachers, educationists, and also educational publishers and printers to set the design standard or guidelines for children's books. For example, the requirements about paper, binding, illustrations, ink, mode of printing, character of type, size of typeface, and length of the line. (Walker, 2013: 196-198) Most importantly, the significance of non-gender or non-sexism should be considered for the contents and illustrations in children's books. For the government sector, an organization like The British Association for the Advancement of Science who provides the 'Standard Typographic Table' or the 'Specimens of Type' (Walker, 2013: 23) must be established in Thailand.

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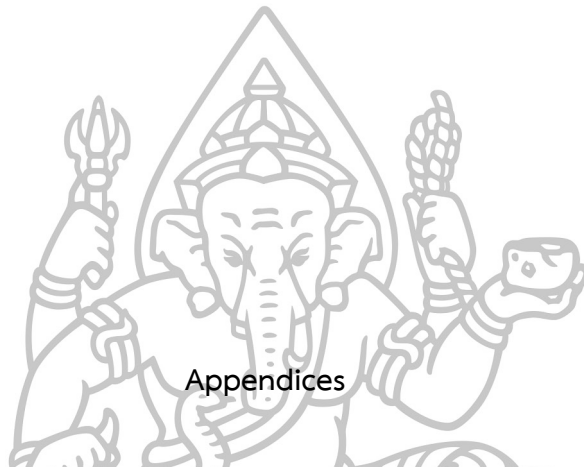
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Appendix A

Details and covers of selected Yor (ญ) alphabet primers





Figure 174 Dimensions and cover of Yor #15



Figure 175 Dimensions and cover of Yor #16



Figure 176 Dimensions and cover of Yor #17



Figure 177 Dimensions and cover of Yor #18





Figure 178 Dimensions and cover of Yor #20



Figure 179 Dimensions and cover of Yor #21



Figure 180 Dimensions and cover of Yor #22

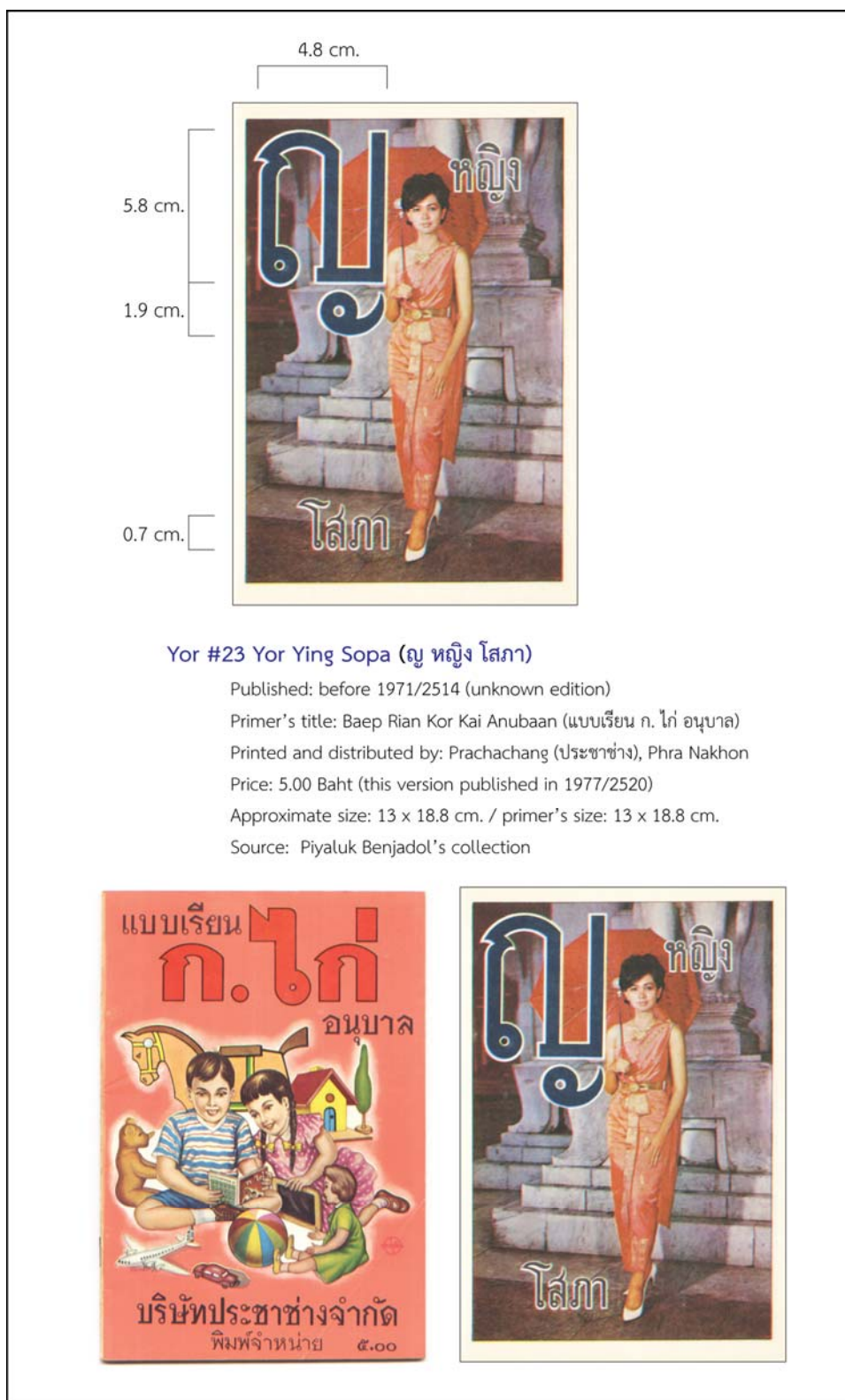


Figure 181 Dimensions and cover of Yor #23



Figure 182 Dimensions and cover of Yor #24



Figure 183 Dimensions and cover of Yor #25



#### Yor #26 Yor Ying (ญ หญิง)

Published: 7th edition, 1991/2534, 10,000 copies

Primer's title: Kor Oie Kor Kai Pan Mai (ก เอ๋ย ก ไก่ แพนใหม่)

Composed by: Apai Jantawimon (อภัย จันทวิมล)

Printed and distributed by: Thai Wattana Paanit Press

(บริษัทสำนักพิมพ์ ไทยวัฒนาพานิช จำกัด), Bangkok

Price: 20.00 Baht

Approximate size: 14.7 x 21.3 cm. / primer's size: 14.7 x 21.3 cm.

Source: Piyaluk Benjadol's collection

Figure 184 Dimensions and cover of Yor #26



Figure 185 Dimensions and cover of Yor #27



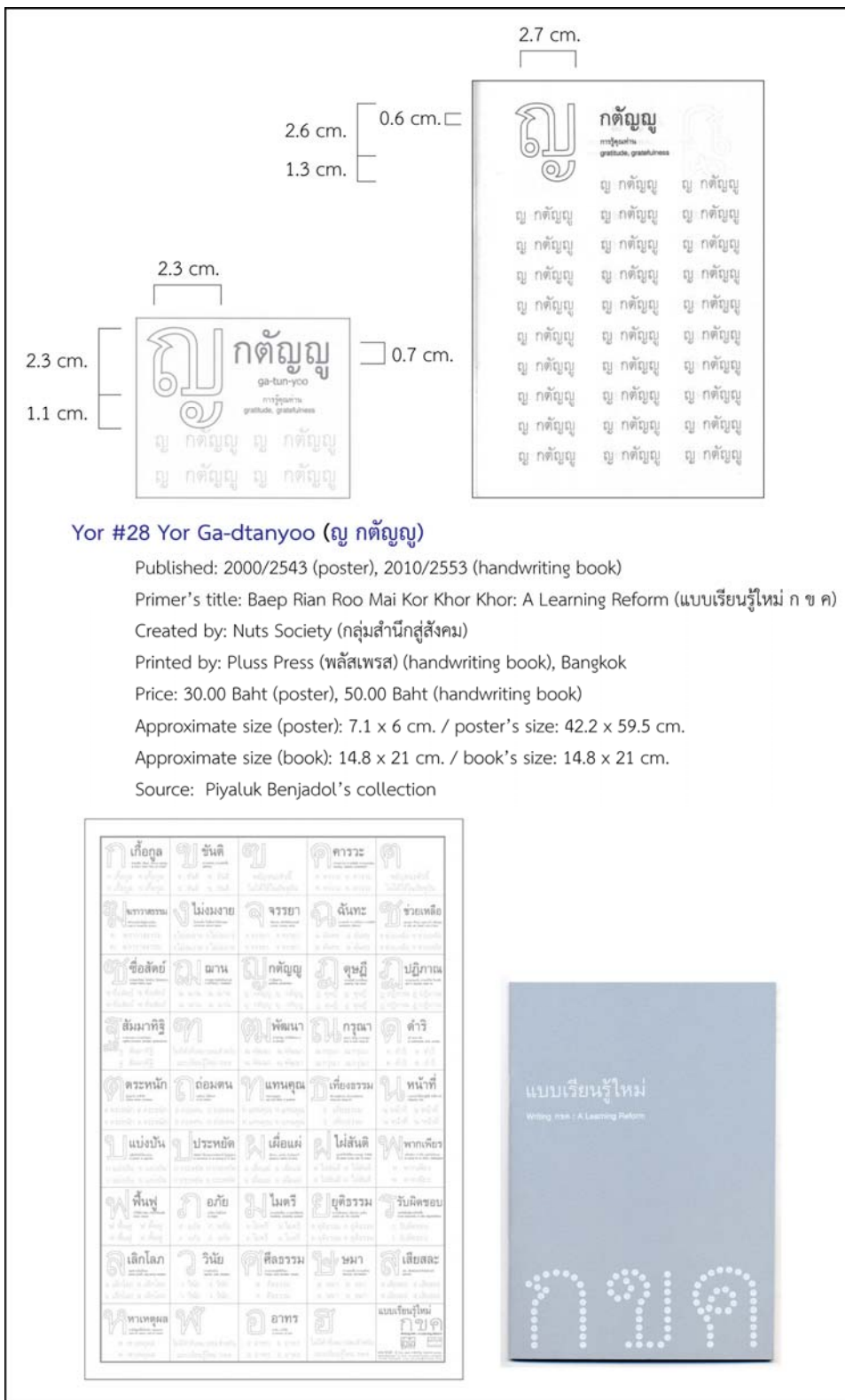


Figure 186 Dimensions and cover of Yor #28



**Yor #29 Yor Ying Gaonaa (ญ หญิง ก้าวหน้า)**

Published: 2006/2549; Primer's title: Kor Kai Nom Wai (ก ไก่ น้อยไหว)  
 Composed by: Asst. Prof. Siwakan Pathumsoot (ผ.ศ. ศิวกานท์ ปทุมสูติ)  
 Illustrations by: Poomtai Pathumsoot (ภูมิไธ ปทุมสูติ); Published by:  
 Soon Rianroo Thungsak Aasom (ศูนย์เรียนรู้ทุ่งสักอาศรม), Supanburi  
 Printed by: Nawasan Press (นวสานการพิมพ์), Bangkok  
 Price: 60.00 Baht  
 Approximate size: 14.5 x 21.1 cm. / primer's size: 14.5 x 21.1 cm.  
 Source: Piyaluk Benjadol's collection

Figure 187 Dimensions and cover of Yor #29



Figure 188 Dimensions and cover of Yor #30



Figure 189 Dimensions and cover of Yor #31



## Appendix B

List of typefaces and type designers used in designing Yor (ย) Alphabet Cards:

### A Learning Reform



Table 13 Sixty-seven words with alphabet Yor (ญ), meanings, typefaces, and type designers, used in designing Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards:  
A Learning Reform

No.	Word (Thai)	Meaning (English)	Typeface	Type designer (/type foundry) (Thai, English)	Year of the distribution
1	ญาติ N.	relative	GajaeNoveau	ธีรวัฒน์ พจนวิบูลศิริ Theerawat Pojvibulsiri / SiamType	2558 / 2015
2	หญ้า N.	grass	Untitled	ไพโรจน์ ธีระประภา Pairoj Teeraprapa / SiamType	2557 / 2014
3	ขวัญ N.	an invisible spirit that lives within each person and which are responsible for psychological and spiritual well-being	LinceSansTH	วริทธิ์ ไชยกุล Warit Chaiyakul / Typomancer	2558 / 2015
4	วันเพ็ญ N.	the middle of the lunar month	TH Charmonman	เอกลักษณ์ เพียรพนาเวช Ekaluck Peanpanawate	2549 / 2006
5	เปรียญ N.	a graduate in theology	Jeans	ฉัตรณรงค์ จรุงศุภธาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2556 / 2013
6	มอญ N.	Mon or Peguan	TH Mali Grade6	สุदारัตน์ เลิศสีทอง Sudarat Lertseethong	2549 / 2006
7	ญวน N.	Vietnamese	TH Niramit AS	ทีมอักษรเมธี Aksarametee Team	2549 / 2006
8	ญี่ปุ่น N.	Japanese	Sitpakorn70New	ไพโรจน์ ธีระประภา Pairoj Teeraprapa	2557 / 2014
9	ญาณ N.	perception, insight, knowledge	Darby Sans TH	สมิขฌน์ สมันเลาะ Smich Smanloh / Cadson Demak	2557 / 2014
10	ปัญญา N.	wisdom	29 FahThai	ไพโรจน์ ธีระประภา Pairoj Teeraprapa	2553 / 2010

Table 13 Sixty-seven words with alphabet Yor (ญ), meanings, typefaces, and type designers, used in designing Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards:  
A Learning Reform (continue)

No.	Word (Thai)	Meaning (English)	Typeface	Type designer (/type foundry) (Thai, English)	Year of the distribution
11	ญาณี N.	knowledgeable people, philosopher	DawnoraTH	วรสิทธิ์ ไชยกุล Warit Chaiyakul / Typomancer	2557 / 2014
12	วิญญู N.	sage, scholar, savant	DEC59yr	ผศ. อาวิน อินทร์ซี่ Asst. Prof. Arwin Intrungsi / Siamtype	2558 / 2015
13	ผู้ใหญ่ N.	elder, senior	Kulaha	เอกลักษณ์ เพียรพนาเวช Ekaluck Peanpanawate / TypeK	2557 / 2014
14	ปรัชญา N.	philosophy	SU72yr	ไพโรจน์ ธีระประภา Pairoj Teeraprapa	2558 / 2015
15	สัญญาณ N.	signal, alarm	Leelas	ผศ. อาวิน อินทร์ซี่ Asst. Prof. Arwin Intrungsi / Siamtype	2558 / 2015
16	สัญลักษณ์ N.	signs (Semiotics terms)	Numsamai	สถาวิทย์ ฤาชา Stawix Ruecha and ศศิกานต์ วงษ์อินทร์ Sasikarn Vongin / Cadson Demak	2557 / 2014
17	วิญญาณ N.	soul, spirit	TH Kodchasan	กัลย์สุดา เปี่ยมประจักษ์พงษ์ Kulsuda Piamprachakpong	2549 / 2006
18	ปริญญา N.	academic degree	DB Fongnam	ปริญญา โรจน์อารยานนท์ Parinya Rojarayanont / DB Fonts	2530 / 1987
19	สัญลักษณ์ N.	symbol	Santiparp	ภาณุวัฒน์ อุ้สกุลวัฒนา Panuwat Usakunwathana / Cadson Demak	2558 / 2015

Table 13 Sixty-seven words with alphabet Yor (ญ), meanings, typefaces, and type designers, used in designing Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards:  
A Learning Reform (continue)

No.	Word (Thai)	Meaning (English)	Typeface	Type designer (/type foundry) (Thai, English)	Year of the distribution
20	เดญยธรรม N.	dharma or doctrine that people should learn	Anupark	อนูทิน วงศ์สรรคกร Anuthin Wongsankakon and สภาวิทยุ ภาษา Stawix Ruecha / Cadson Demak	2557 / 2014
21	สัพพัญญู N.	omniscience	Naresuan	ชูโรง คิม Chorong Kim / Cadson Demak	2555 / 2012
22	สัญชาตญาณ N.	instinct	Ballet	ฉัตรณรงค์ จริงศุกษาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2557 / 2014
23	เพ็ญ N.	full moon	FahJoneTest	ไพโรจน์ ธีระประภา Pairoj Teeraprapa	2552 / 2009
24	บัญชี N.	account	Oxygen	ฉัตรณรงค์ จริงศุกษาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2555 / 2012
25	อัญมณี N.	jewel, gem	KlinfolkRegular	ไพโรจน์ ธีระประภา Pairoj Teeraprapa / SiamType	2558 / 2015
26	เหรียญ N.	coin	Edison	ฉัตรณรงค์ จริงศุกษาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2555 / 2012
27	กุญแจ N.	key	29 Inseedang	ไพโรจน์ ธีระประภา Pairoj Teeraprapa	2552 / 2009
28	ปฏิญญา N.	declaration, vow, agreement	Anatomy	ฉัตรณรงค์ จริงศุกษาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2555 / 2012



Table 13 Sixty-seven words with alphabet Yor (ญ), meanings, typefaces, and type designers, used in designing Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards:  
A Learning Reform (continue)

No.	Word (Thai)	Meaning (English)	Typeface	Type designer (/type foundry) (Thai, English)	Year of the distribution
29	ควาญ N.	mahout	TH Charm of AU	กัลยาณมิตร นรนนันท์พุทธิ Kulyanmitr Noranutpudthi	2549 / 2006
30	อัญชัน N.	the butterfly pea	Croissant	ฉัตรณรงค์ จริงศุภธาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2555 / 2012
31	รามัญ N.	Mon or Peguan	29 FahMai	ไพโรจน์ อีระประภา Pairoj Teeraprapa	2545-2546 / 2002-2003
32	บำนาญ N.	pension	Pesto	ฉัตรณรงค์ จริงศุภธาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2555 / 2012
33	ญัตติ N.	amendment, proposal, issue	Srivannavari	เอกลักษณ์ เพ็ชรพนาเวช Ekaluck Peanpanawate / TypeK	2552 / 2009
34	สัญชาติ N.	nationality, citizenship	Si Karun	เอกลักษณ์ เพ็ชรพนาเวช Ekaluck Peanpanawate / TypeK	2554 / 2011
35	ญาดา N.	knowledgeable people, philosopher	London	ฉัตรณรงค์ จริงศุภธาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2555 / 2012
36	บุญ N.	virtue, merit	LynxTH	วรสิทธิ์ ไชยกุล Warit Chaiyakul / Typomancer	2556 / 2013
37	วิจารณ์ญาณ N.	judgment, discretion	Galileo	ฉัตรณรงค์ จริงศุภธาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2555 / 2012

Table 13 Sixty-seven words with alphabet Yor (ญ), meanings, typefaces, and type designers, used in designing Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards:  
A Learning Reform (continue)

No.	Word (Thai)	Meaning (English)	Typeface	Type designer (/type foundry) (Thai, English)	Year of the distribution
38	ภูมิปัญญา N.	intellect, knowledge	RhymeTH	วริทธิ์ ไชยกุล Warit Chaiyakul / Typomancer	2557 / 2014
39	เชิญ V.	invite, solicit	Arunswad	ฉัตรณรงค์ จรุงศุภธาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2555 / 2012
40	สำราญ V., Adv.	revel, live it up	Quark	วริทธิ์ ไชยกุล Warit Chaiyakul / Typomancer	2557 / 2014
41	สำคัญ V., Adj.	important	NewOdeon	ธีรวัฒน์ พจนวิบูลศิริ Theerawat Pojvibulsiri / SiamType	2558 / 2015
42	ใคร่ครวญ V.	introspect, ponder	Kalatexa Text	เอกลักษณ์ เพียรพนาเวช Ekaluck Peanpanawate / TypeK	2554-2556 / 2011-2013
43	สูญ V.	lose, vanish	TH Bai Jamjuree CP	ทีม PITA (รพี สุวีรานนท์ และ วิโรจน์ จิรพัฒน์กุล) Rapee S. and Viroj J. / Team PITA	2549 / 2006
44	สรรเสริญ V.	praise, admire	Technotechnic	ผศ. อาวิน อินทร์ชี่ Asst. Prof. Arwin Intrungsi / Siamtype	2558 / 2015
45	ผลาญ V.	destroy, demolish	TH Fah Kwang	ทีมสิบเอ็ด (กิตติ ศิริรัตนบุญชัย และ นิวัฒน์ ภัทโรวาสน์) Kitti S. and Niwat P. / Sib Ed Team	2549 / 2006
46	กตัญญู V.	be grateful, oblige	49GROUP	เอกลักษณ์ เพียรพนาเวช Ekaluck Peanpanawate / TypeK	2557-2558 / 2014-2015

Table 13 Sixty-seven words with alphabet Yor (ญ), meanings, typefaces, and type designers, used in designing Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards:  
A Learning Reform (continue)

No.	Word (Thai)	Meaning (English)	Typeface	Type designer (/type foundry) (Thai, English)	Year of the distribution
47	สัญญา V.	promise	Oag Sam Sorg	ธีรวัฒน์ พจนวิบูลศิริ Theerawat Pojvibulsiri / SiamType	2557 / 2014
48	บัญชา V.	command, order	Vanilla	ฉัตรณรงค์ จริงคุงธาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2555 / 2012
49	ปฏิญาณ V.	pledge, take an oath	TH Chakra Petch	ธีรวัฒน์ พจนวิบูลศิริ Theerawat Pojvibulsiri	2549 / 2006
50	อนุญาต V.	allow, permit	Chulalongkorn	เอกลักษณ์ เพียรพนาเวช Ekaluck Peanpanawate / TypeK	2558 / 2015
51	บำเพ็ญ V.	fulfill	KaamKhet	เอกลักษณ์ เพียรพนาเวช Ekaluck Peanpanawate / TypeK	2558 / 2015
52	อัญเชิญ V.	invite, respectfully engage	Sukhumvit Dot	ภาณุวัฒน์ อุสกุลวัฒนา Panuwat Usakunwathana / Cadson Demak	2556 / 2013
53	เชี่ยวชาญ V.	be skilled, be proficient	ROJ_X	ไพโรจน์ ธีระประภา Pairoj Teeraprapa	2553 / 2010
54	ผจญ V.	encounter, fight against	TH KoHo	กลุ่ม ก-ฮ (ขาม จากตรงคกุล, กนกวรรณ แพนไฮสง และ ขนิษฐา สิทธิเยี่ยม) Kham J. and Ko-Ho Team	2549 / 2006
55	เผชิญ V.	confront, face	Ayotaya	ไพโรจน์ ธีระประภา Pairoj Teeraprapa	2555 / 2012
56	ประมวล V.	systematize, compile	SilapaWattana-tham	ฉัตรณรงค์ จริงคุงธาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2555 / 2012

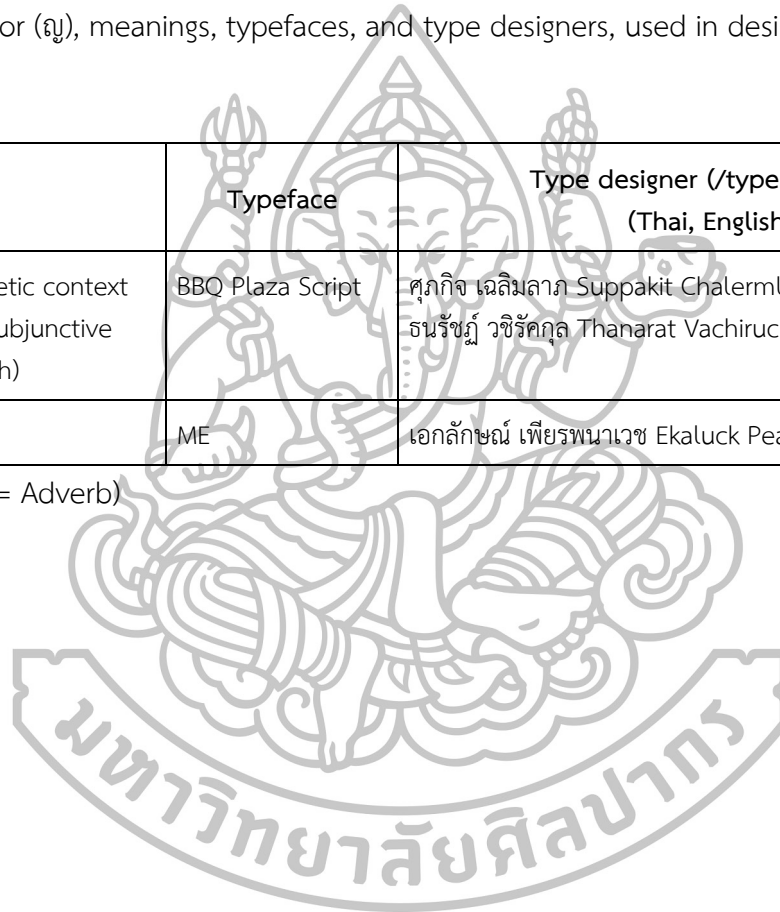
Table 13 Sixty-seven words with alphabet Yor (ญ), meanings, typefaces, and type designers, used in designing Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards:  
A Learning Reform (continue)

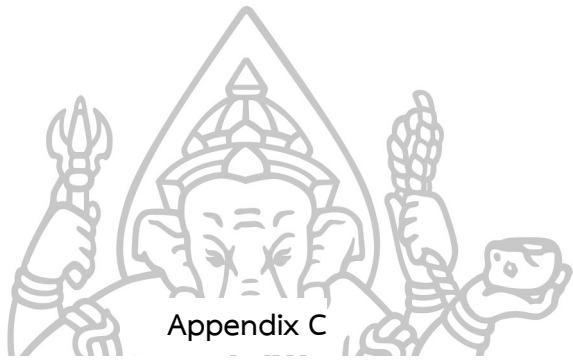
No.	Word (Thai)	Meaning (English)	Typeface	Type designer (/type foundry) (Thai, English)	Year of the distribution
57	บัญญัติ N., V.	legislate, enact	TH Krub	เอกลักษณ์ เพียรพนาเวช Ekaluck Peanpanawate	2549 / 2006
58	เจริญ Adj.	prosper, grow	29 Nakorn	ไพโรจน์ วีระประภา Pairoj Teeraprapa	2549 / 2006
59	ใหญ่ Adj.	big	Rdn2014	ไพโรจน์ วีระประภา Pairoj Teeraprapa / SiamType	2558 / 2015
60	สามัญ Adj.	ordinary, common	TH Srisakdi	ทีมอักษรามณี (ไพโรจน์ เปี่ยมประจักษ์พงษ์ และบวร จรดล) Pairoj P. and Baworn J. / Aksaramethee Team	2549 / 2006
61	ชาญ Adj., Adv.	be skilled, be proficient	Kingdom	ผศ. อาวิน อินทร์ชัย Asst. Prof. Arwin Intrungsi / Siamtype	2558 / 2015
62	ชำนาญ Adv.	skillfully, proficiently	TH Sarabun	ศุภกิจ เฉลิมลาภ Suppakit Chalermarp	2549 / 2006
63	หาญ Adv.	brave, courageous	TH K2D July8	กานต์ รอดสวัสดิ์ Karn Rodsawad	2549 / 2006
64	สราญ Adv.	happily, merrily	CharmTH	วริทธิ์ ไชยกุล Warit Chaiyakul / Typomancer	2555 / 2012
65	เผอิญ Adv.	by chance, accidentally	Superstore	ฉัตรณรงค์ จริงสุภธาดา Chatnarong Jingsuphatada / SuperStore Font	2555 / 2012

Table 13 Sixty-seven words with alphabet Yor (ญ), meanings, typefaces, and type designers, used in designing Yor (ญ) Alphabet Cards:  
A Learning Reform (continue)

No.	Word (Thai)	Meaning (English)	Typeface	Type designer (/type foundry) (Thai, English)	Year of the distribution
66	เทอญ Adv.	a particle used in a more poetic context at the end of clause in the subjunctive mood when expressing a wish)	BBO Plaza Script	ศุภกิจ เฉลิมลาภ Suppakit Chalermarp and ธนรัชฎ์ วชิรศกุล Thanarat Vachiruckul / Cadson Demak	2557 / 2014
67	จรูญ Adv.	graceful, beautiful	ME	เอกลักษณ์ เพียรพนาเวช Ekaluck Peanpanawate / TypeK	2554 / 2011

(N. = Noun, V. = Verb, Adj. = Adjective, Adv. = Adverb)





Appendix C

Exhibition view, photographed on April 9, 2016





Figure 190 The exhibition view (A) at the Gallery of Art and Design, Faculty of Decorative Arts, Silpakorn University, Bangkok  
(Photographed by Taweewit Kijtanasoonthorn, Bangkok, April 9, 2016)



Figure 191 The exhibition view (B) at the Gallery of Art and Design, Faculty of Decorative Arts, Silpakorn University, Bangkok  
(Photographed by Taweewit Kijtanasonthorn, Bangkok, April 9, 2016)



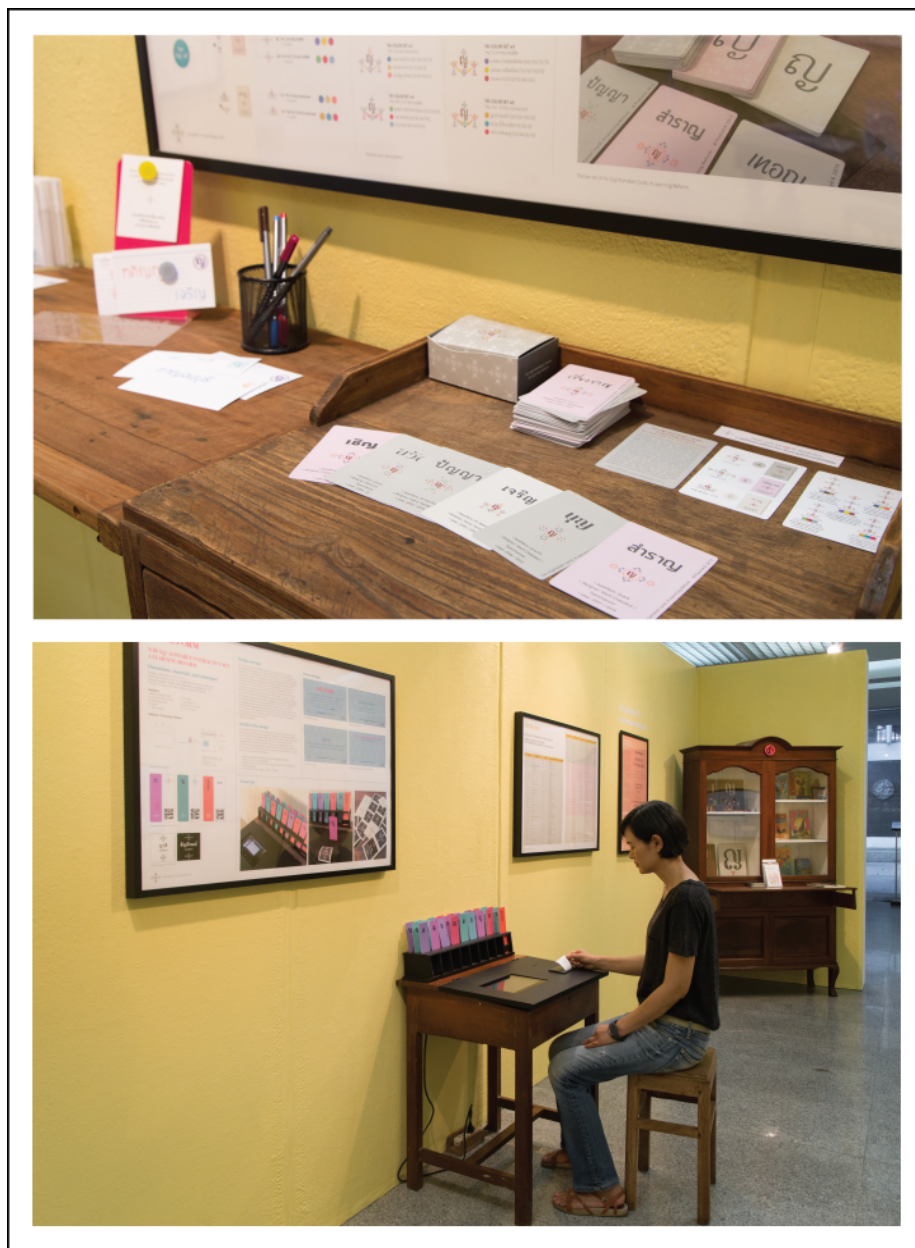


Figure 192 The exhibition view (C) at the Gallery of Art and Design, Faculty of Decorative Arts, Silpakorn University, Bangkok  
(Photographed by Taweewit Kijtanasonthorn, Bangkok, April 9, 2016)

## Biography

Name-Surname	Piyaluk Benjadol
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Educational Background	
1988	Bachelor of Fine Arts (Product Design) 2nd class honored, Silpakorn University, THAILAND
1995	Master of Fine Arts (Computer Graphics Design) Rochester Institute of Technology, U.S.A.
2011	Entered the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Design Arts International Program, Graduate School, Silpakorn University
Professional Experiences	
1995-2001	Chairpersons of Communication Design Department, School of Fine and Applied Arts, Bangkok University, THAILAND
1998-present	Co-founding and collaborating with Nuts Society group, THAILAND
2005-2006	Chairpersons of Bangkok University Gallery, THAILAND
2006-2010	Chairpersons of Communication Design Department, School of Fine and Applied Arts, Bangkok University, THAILAND
2008	Co-ordinator, The 5th Asia-Europe Art Camp: “re-Vision Bangkok New Media Art and Interactivity,” THAILAND
2010-2013	Vice President, Academic Affairs, Thai Graphic Designers Association (ThaiGa), THAILAND