

# The Functions of *kʌʔ* in Oral Kui Narrative

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## ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the functions of *kʌʔ* in oral Kui narrative in terms of the bipartite structure of discourse information, i.e. story line vs. non-story line. When *kʌʔ* functions as a story line marker it marks the following four types of relationships: temporal sequence, consequence, change of orientation, and simultaneous events. Within non-story line information *kʌʔ* functions as a conditional connector or adversative connector. It also functions to mark conclusion and formulaic finis or sequential nonevents.

## 0. Introduction

This paper presents discourse functions of the auxiliary *kʌʔ*<sup>1</sup> in oral Kui<sup>2</sup> narrative. The data were drawn from three texts narrated by a native speaker<sup>3</sup> of

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<sup>1</sup>*kʌʔ* may be translated as 'Well,...; so then; also', and it is often not translatable (Prasert 1978).

<sup>2</sup> Kui or Kuai is a language of the Mon-Khmer subfamily of the Austroasiatic phylum. It belongs to the Katic Branch (Thomas and Headley 1970). The Kui people are sometimes called Suai by the Thai and Lao. Suai (in Thai) means 'those who pay tribute' whereas Kui (in the Kui language) means 'human being' (Oranuch 1984:1).

<sup>3</sup>Miss Somklin Cajkwang, aged 23 years, was my informant, fluent both in Kui and Thai. She came from Khuton village, Surin province, in which half of the population speak either the northeastern Thai dialect, another dialect of Kui or a dialect of Khmer, and the other half of the population speak her Kui dialect. She came to Bangkok to work with me for a year. In transcribing the texts narrated by this informant, I also used Prasert 1978 and Wanna et al. 1975 as references.