

The Correspondences of Middle Vietnamese Lateral Stops to Việt-Mường Languages

(Abstract)

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1. After the split of Việt and Mường, the clusters in Vietnamese still remained and direct evidences (in Latin scripts) are ml-, bl-, tl-, pl-, and kl-. All these clusters are composed of a stop + a lateral. The first four clusters are found in *Dictionarium Annamiticum, Lusitanum et Latinum* by Alexandre de Rhodes (1651), the last in John Barrow's traveling notes.

One of the necessary conditions to make syllables isolated in speech is that "phonetic components of syllable must be closely fused, combine together in strict ways, do not combine too freely" (Nguyễn Quang Hồng 1986:40-41). Thus, the study of Vietnamese clusters and their change to simple consonants will be useful to shed light on the tendency of Vietnamese to a high isolating state of syllable. Therefore, the study of cluster implies a remarkable typological significance.

2. The change of lateral stops from Proto Việt-Mường to modern Mường dialects is as follows:

