

A Grammar Sketch of Standard Thai based on Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations on the Thai Language under the Department of Linguistics, University of the Philippines Diliman

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Abstract

Thai is a tone language in which each syllable has a distinctive tone. Controlled pitch movement of tones carry contrastive meaning of words. Standard Thai, the official or national language of Thailand, is a variety of Central Thai, one of Thai dialects used mostly in the Bangkok metropolitan area and the Central plains of Thailand. Standard Thai,

a desired or idealized variation of Thai dialects, is used widely throughout the country. The main objective of this paper is to present a grammatical sketch of the Standard Thai used between the 1970s and 1990s based on Thai language and linguistics research under the University of the Philippines Diliman Department of Linguistics (UP Linguistics). The scope of this work includes a description of the cumulative levels of Thai/Standard Thai grammatical hierarchy where the surface structures of phonemes, morphemes, lexical words, phrases, clauses, and sentences were examined. The two dissertations and 14 theses had been scrutinized and summarized into one piece of work as Thai Reference Grammar of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. According to the research materials, the relationship among the various elements of a sentence and among sentences was investigated primarily based on Generative, Transformational Grammar (TG), or Transformational-Generative Grammar (TGG). To discover the underlying representative structures of Thai, the studies adopted the assumption of transformational theory explaining how Thai native speakers can generate and comprehend all possible grammatical sentences. The trends of syntactic construction had likely been changed and/or simplified. Several arguments were raised on the grammatical rules which Thais could apply. The syntactic derivations had been made from the embedding compound and/or complex sentences: noun phrases were derived from the embedding

of adjectival clauses/sentences. Moreover, a great number of grammatical and linguistic terms to be used were to be clarified.

1 Introduction

Thai belongs to the Tai language family (Southwestern branch), which is, to some extent, related to languages in India, Myanmar, Laos, northern Vietnam, southern China, and Malay peninsula. Thai has several typological characteristics. It is a tonal language with five contrastive tones; every syllable that receives normal stress processes a definite pitch level (mid, low, or high) or pitch contour (falling or rising). As other varieties of Tai, Thai is monosyllabic, despite a great number of lexical word's compounding whereby the compound functions as one polysyllabic word (Herbert & Milner, 1989). Thai does not apply inflectional morphology to code grammatical information such as number and gender for nouns and verbs. There are no endings, agreements, or affixes to mark grammatical functions, no definite or indefinite articles, and the meaning is defined by word class and word order in sentences. Like most Southeast Asian languages, Thai uses numeral classifiers and applies serial verb constructions. Thai is spoken by the great majority of the population of Thailand. Standard Thai/Siamese is the national/official language of the Kingdom of Thailand. It represents a variety of Central Thai dialect, which is used widely as a lingua franca in most newspapers, radio, and television broadcasts, as well as in schools, universities, and government offices throughout the country. According to Smalley (1994), even though Standard Thai takes on a different level in the

language hierarchy, it is mutually intelligible with other Central Thai varieties.

The studies *Thai Language* and *The Nature and Development of Thai Language*, written by royal Thai scholar Phraya Anuman Rajadhon, were first published in 1954 and 1961. During that time, Mary R. Haas's initial work on the *The Thai System of Writing* (1956) was released. In 1964, the first press of *Thai Reference Grammar* written by Richard B. Noss for the Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State was posted whereby Thai phonology; morphology; syntax; free lexeme classes: isolatives, substantives, predicatives; and bound lexeme classes: modals, prepositions, conjunctions, postpositions, and sentence particles were analyzed. Since the mid-1960s, a great number of Tai linguistics and comparative Tai studies had been introduced (see Brown, 1965; Gedney, 1989; Gething et al., 1976; Harris and Chamberlain, 1975, and so on). Descriptive studies on Tai/Thai grammatical structure and/or tones have been occasionally discussed due to changes of language use and trends of simplification. *A Reference Grammar of Thai* by Iwasaki and Ingkaphirom, first published in 2005 and reissued in paperback in 2009, is the first comprehensive grammar of Thai language, written from a functional perspective.

Research studies on Thai language and linguistics were recorded as well at the University of the Philippines Diliman between 1973 and 1991. Sixteen outputs, 14 Master of Arts (MA) theses and two doctoral dissertations, under the advisory of the late professors Ernesto H. Cubar (1929–2021), Ernesto Constantino (1930–2016), Consuelo J. Paz (1933–2022), and Jonathan C. Malicsi (1947–2019), were written

by 15 Thai graduate scholars¹ under the Department of Linguistics (called Department of Linguistics and Asian languages between 1973 and 1982), College of Social Sciences and Philosophy (or CSSP, since 1983) or College of Arts and Sciences (as addressed on the studies compiled between 1973 and 1983). Most of these scholars were awarded study grants by Thai government. Figure 1 shows the domicile and/or workplace of the 15 Thai students in the different regions of Thailand.



Figure 1. Domicile of the 15 Thai Graduate Students and Their Workplace in Thailand

¹For more background information on the Thai graduate scholars and their studies in the Philippines, see §8 Implications and Recommendations.

The main objective of this paper is to present a grammatical sketch of the Standard Thai used during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s based on Thai language and linguistics research under the Department. The scope of this work includes a description of the cumulative levels of Thai/Standard Thai grammatical hierarchy: phoneme, word, phrase, clause, and sentence. The two dissertations and 14 theses being used as the primary data of this grammatical study are chronologically arranged on Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Doctoral Dissertations of Thais Under the UP Department of Linguistics

No.	Title	Author	Year of Graduation
1	A Study of Sanskrit Loanwords in Thai and Tagalog	Chinda Ngamsutdi	1983
2	A Grammatical Comparison of Thai and Tagalog	Pearl Wattanakul	1991

Archival data collection was mainly conducted at the Department of Linguistics Library; all hard copies of the unpublished 14 theses and two dissertations were merely cataloged at the Department's library. It should be noted that the materials were, at the same time, duplicated as microforms at the University of the Philippines Library Multimedia Services Room. In addition, the related articles and publications in Thailand were reviewed digitally as well. In the 16 works, one titled "Passivization in Thai" (Ngamsutdi, 1977) was found published in a

Table 2. Graduate Theses of Thais Under the UP Department of Linguistics

No.	Title	Author	Year of Graduation
1	Structure of Modification in Noun Phrases in Thai	Suthipong Sombut	1973
2	Nominal Sentences in Thai	Wissanu Rawangking	1976
3	Causative Sentences in Thai	Duangporn Kumlert	1976
4	Arguments Against Tense in Thai	Suthipon Boonrueng	1977
5	Nominalizations in Thai	Santi Kooratanaweich	1977
6	Passivization in Thai	Chinda Ngamsutdi	1977
7	Interrogative Structures in Thai	Paiboon Anusaen	1977
8	Adverbial Structures in Thai	Nipawan Teepanont	1978
9	Two-Verb Surface Predicates in Thai	Naiyana Phumipruksa	1978
10	A Study of Cases in the Thai Language	Punthip Kerpetkaew	1978
11	Tones Correspondences among Thai Dialects	Sarit Srikhao	1979
12	Further Studies in Morphology and Compounding in Thai	Patariya Thavilpravat	1979
13	Thoog Yang and Standard Thai: A Phonological, Morphological and Lexical Comparison	Samruay Klaichom	1981
14	English Loanwords in Thai	Kanittha Suwanruje	1990

Thai journal (Ngamsutdi, 1978). The percentage of the theses and dissertations that are published in a journal is shown in Figure 2.

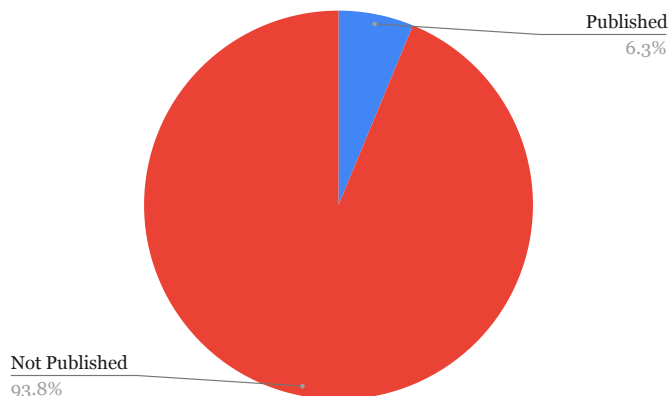


Figure 2. Percentage of the Publication of the Theses and Dissertations on the Thai Language Under UP Department of Linguistics

The subject matters of the Thai language structure described in the theses and dissertations were scrutinized, sketched, and summarized into one piece of work representing a trend of Thai reference grammar in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. This study focuses merely on the grammar of Standard Thai, not of other comparative Thai varieties: Northern, Northeastern, and Southern Thai dialects. Languages, namely Sanskrit, English, and Tagalog, compared to Standard Thai in the last three research on loanwords and grammatical comparison are, at the same time, excluded in this study. In addition, the phonetic transcription represented in this paper is based on the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), revised to the year 2020, of which some symbols would be slightly different from the ones provided in the theses and dissertations as there

were limitations of the typescript (typewriter's version) in the past period (See §3.1 Phonetic Transcriptions).

This grammatical sketch would contribute to studies of both Thai structure and general linguistics. The output of this paper would, to some extent, help elucidate debating grammatical phenomena and solve several grammatical puzzles posting in present-day use of Thai language. It can be used as a source of grounding material in teaching and learning Thai for both native and non-native Thai teachers and learners, and additionally a valid reference in developing Thai textbooks for foreigners. Moreover, the valid arguments or claims restated in the research can be applied as a guideline to improve the grammatical content and provide the grammatical descriptions of Thai language courses. Finally, the fruitful benefit of this research would certainly expand to comparative studies of Thai grammatical structure through different periods of time as well.

2 The Theses and Dissertations on the Thai Language and Linguistics Under the UP Department of Linguistics

The linguistic works of the Thai language at the University of the Philippines were recorded between the early 1970s and the early 1990s, the time of “The Thai Linguals and More Descriptions” (Badiola, 2022). During this period, of 41 linguistic outputs in total (33 theses and eight dissertations), 14 MA theses and two doctoral dissertations were done, as shown in Figure 3, by Thai scholars, cataloged at the Department of Linguistics Library, University of the Philippines Diliman. According

to Badiola (2022), seven outputs are grammatical description of selected Philippine languages.

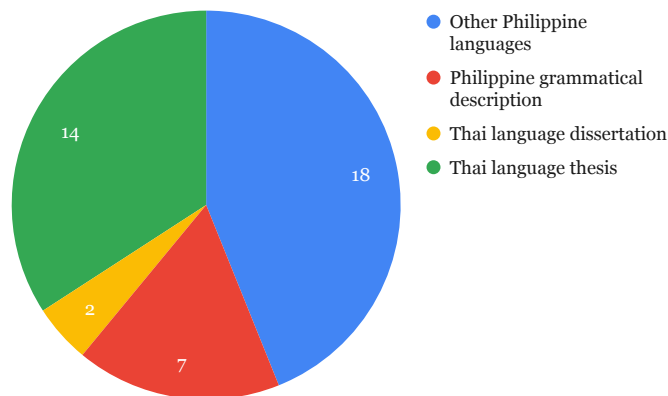


Figure 3. Number of Theses and Dissertations on the Thai Language Vis-à-vis All Linguistic Outputs Between 1973 and 1991 (Badiola, 2022)

It is interesting to note that all Thai scholars chose to apply linguistic concepts they had learned to describe and analyze linguistic features of their own language, namely, Standard Thai. Most of their research involves the descriptive analysis of the Thai grammatical structure, of which eight of them were officially advised by Ernesto H. Cubar (Anusaen, 1977; Kooratanaweich, 1977; Kumlert, 1976; Ngamsutdi, 1977; Phumipruksa, 1978; Rawangking, 1976; Sombut, 1973; Thavilpravat, 1979), three by Jonathan C. Malicsi (Boonrueng, 1977; Srikhao, 1979; Teepanont, 1978), and one by Ernesto A. Constantino (Kerpetkeaw, 1978). According to their trend of study, a single grammatical domain was investigated in the early 1970s, of which either syntax or morphology domain was taken into studies. However, some

Standard Thai Grammar based on UP Linguistics Theses and Dissertations

“semantic shades” were highlighted for various sentences’ interpretation in a number of works as well. A single phonological domain on Thai lexical tones (Srikhao, 1979) was analyzed comparatively for the first time in 1979 under the advisory of Jonathan C. Malicsi.

The two (morphology and syntax, syntax and semantics, phonology and morphology, or phonology and semantics), three (phonology, morphology, and syntax), and four (phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics) domains were studied between 1981 and 1991. During this period, the grammatical comparisons and loanwords in Thai were analyzed. Three of them were studied under the advisory of Ernesto A. Constantino: two were doctoral dissertations (Ngamsutdi, 1983; Wattanakul, 1991) and one was an MA thesis (Klaichom, 1981). In addition, the last one was an MA thesis (Suwanruje, 1990) under the advisory of Consuelo J. Paz.

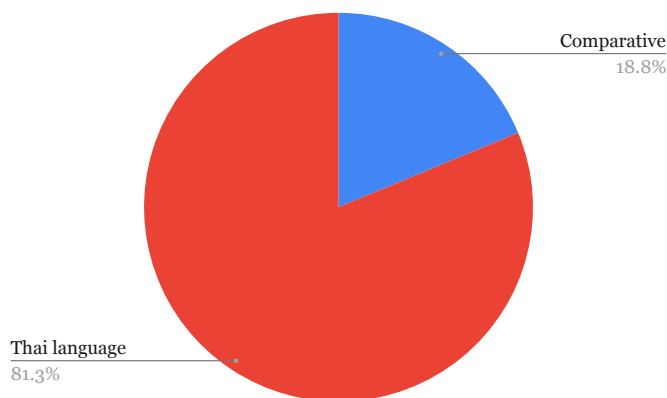


Figure 4. Percentage of Thai Graduated Outputs on the Thai Language Structure and Comparative Linguistics

Figure 4 presents the percentage of the graduated outputs on the Thai language structure and comparative linguistics, while Figure 5 shows the summary of the grammatical domains of the theses and dissertations on the Thai language between the 1970s and the 1990s.

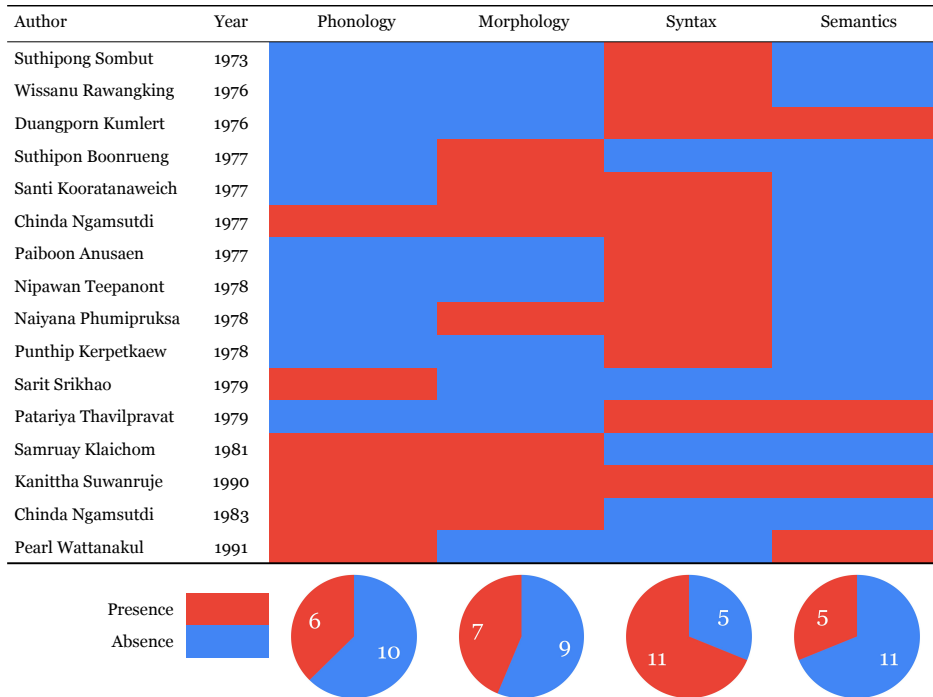


Figure 5. Summary of the Linguistic Domains of the Theses and Dissertations Between the 1970s and the 1990s

The Generative, Transformational Grammar (TG), or Transformational-Generative Grammar (TGG), was significantly applied in all outputs to identify the relationship among the various elements of a sentence and among simple and complex sentences. The graduate scholars adapted the theoretical approach they used in

explaining how the Thai native speakers can generate and comprehend all possible grammatical sentences.

In the early 1970s, the research data came from the authors themselves as they reflected how they use the language as native Thai. Some scholars had a few Thai nationals or Thai alumni under the Department as their informants. A number of Thai scholars under other units in UP served as their informants as well. The trend of the field linguistics was shown, based on the materials, in the late 1970s where more informants of Thais and non-Thais were included by the interview and elicitation.

All theses and dissertations were elucidated in English with phonetic transcription and translation; no Thai scripts provided except in Suwanruje (1990)'s work on "English loanwords in Thai." In addition, the Thai authors used the third personal pronouns in their work referring to themselves.

For the benefits of the linguistic outcomes, the graduate students expected their outputs could provide some clarifications on subject matters, clearer understanding of the Thai language, and some guidelines for further studies of Thai grammar in general.

3 Phonetics and Phonology

All Thai outputs, except one thesis (Srikhao, 1979), provided the phonetic transcription of Standard Thai. Five of the 16 described Thai phonology (Klaichom, 1981; Ngamsutdi, 1983; Srikhao, 1979; Suwanruje, 1990; Wattanakul, 1991), of which four presented the Thai sound system.

3.1 Phonetic Transcriptions

3.1.1 Consonant and Glides

Standard Thai has 21 single consonant phonemes including two glides (see Table 3). All these phonemes can occur in the initial position in the syllable. However, only eight or nine consonant phonemes (see Table 4) can appear in the final position in the syllable.

Table 3. Thai Consonant Phonemes

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stop					
voiceless unaspirated	p	t	c	k	*ʔ
voiceless aspirated	p ^h	t ^h	c ^h	k ^h	
voiced	b	d			
Fricative					
voiceless	f	s			h
Nasal	m	n		ŋ	
Lateral		l			
Trill		r			
Glide	w		j		

Table 4. Thai Final Consonant Phonemes

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stop	p	t		k	ʔ
Nasal	m	n		ŋ	
Glide	w		j		

Note that in the early 1970s and 1980s, the /q/ and /ʔ/ (question mark symbol) were respectively used to represent the voiceless unaspirated glottal stop /ʔ/ due to the limitations of traditional typescript and typo-

graphical convenience. And the phoneme /y/ was used interchangeably to represent the palatal glide /j/. The glottal stop /ʔ/ can be pronounced at the beginning of a word before a vowel as the initial segment of a syllable, e.g., [ʔaa] ‘father’s younger sibling,’ [ʔðop] ‘to encircle, to embrace;’ in the middle of a (borrowed) word between vowels, e.g., [saʔik] ‘to hiccup;’ and at the end of a word when no final consonant appears after a short vowel, e.g., [jəʔ] or [jəʔjəʔ] ‘plenty, a lot of.’

3.1.2 Consonant Clusters

Consonant clusters in Thai occur in the initial position of syllables or words. Some of both unaspirated and aspirated stops may form initial clusters with the lateral /l/, trill /r/, or labial glide /w/. Each of the stops can be followed by the phoneme /l/ or /r/, whereas the velar stops /k/ and /k^h/ can be followed by the phoneme /w/ (Wattanakul, 1991). Some Thai scholars termed these clusters as “double consonants” as appears in some loanwords in Thai. There are 11 or 12 initial consonant clusters in Standard Thai as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Thai Initial Consonant Clusters

pr	tr	kr	kw
pl		kl	
p ^h r	*t ^h r	k ^h r	k ^h w
p ^h l		k ^h l	

Note that the initial cluster /t^hr-/ is rare;² some Sanskrit loanwords in Thai as /nítt^hraa/ ‘asleep’ and /cant^hraa/ ‘moon’ use this initial cluster.

3.1.3 Vowels

Standard Thai includes 18 single (simple) vowel phonemes: nine short and nine long vowel counterparts. Three diphthongs (mixed or complex vowels) are applied as well in the Thai syllable or word. This combination of vowels includes a high vowel /i/, /i:/, or /u/ and the low central vowel /a/. Tables 6 and 7 show the single vowel phonemes and the three diphthongs respectively.

Table 6. Thai Single Vowels

	Front	Central	Back
High	i, ii	i, ïi	u, uu
Mid	e, ee	ə, əə	o, oo
Low	ɛ, ɛɛ	a, aa	ɔ, ɔɔ

Table 7. Thai Diphthongs

	Front	Central	Back
High	ii	ïi	uu
Mid			
Low		aa	
Diphthongs	ia	ia	ua

²In Thai morphemes/lexical words, the initial cluster form /t^hr-/ is pronounced as the phoneme /s-/. According to Bandhmedha (2011), the /t^hr-/ appeared in some loanwords and has been pronounced as a cluster since the Rattanakosin era (1782–1932).

Regarding the outputs of Thais, beside the three diphthongs shown in Table 7, two, five, or six diphthongs were at the same time identified: two diphthongs /aj/ and /aw/ (Boonrueng, 1977; Kumlert, 1976); five diphthongs /ia/, /ia/, /ua/, /ai/, /au/ (Suwanruje, 1990); and six diphthongs include the three short vowel counterparts /iaʔ/, /iaʔ/, and /uaʔ/ (Wattanakul, 1991).

Besides, it should be noted that according to the transcription represented in the outputs, the vowel symbols /y/ was interchanged with /i/, /x/ or /æ/ with /æ/, /e/ or /E/ with /ə/, and /O/ with /ɔ/.

3.1.4 Tones

Tone is a distinctive feature of Thai phonology. Five contrastive tones in Thai consist of three level tones (high, mid, low) and two contour tones (falling/high-falling and rising/low-rising). Three phonological features used for determining tones in Thai are consonant classes (high, mid, low), vowel length (short and long), and syllable types (open/smooth and closed/checked). Table 8 illustrates the five distinctive tones in Thai.

Table 8. Thai Tones

Tone Value	Transliteration	Examples
Mid	no marking	/k ^h aa/ 'to be lodged in'
Low	`	/k ^h àa/ 'galangal root'
Falling	^	/k ^h âa/ 'I, slave, servant'
High	ˆ	/k ^h áa/ 'to trade'
Rising	˘	/k ^h ǎa/ 'leg'

3.2 Syllable Structure

A Thai syllable is basically composed of one initial consonant, one vowel, and one tone. An initial consonant cluster and final consonant (a stop, nasal, or glide) can be optionally added. The syllable structure of Thai can then be summarized in notations as follows:

$$C(C)V^T(V)(C) \text{ or } C(C)D^T(C)$$

Note that <C> stands for a consonant including glides, <V> for a vowel, <D> for a diphthong, and <^T> for a lexical tone. The symbols enclosed in the parentheses may or may not occur.

Two syllable types stated in §3.1.4 are open/smooth and closed/checked syllables. Open/smooth syllables are syllables ending with long vowels, glides, and nasal; Closed/checked syllables are syllables ending with a stop consonant /p, t, k/. In spite of the types of syllables categorized, Klaichom (1981) elaborated a neutral syllable as an unstressed syllable consisting of the vowel /i/, /e/, and /ɛ/ (/X/) with a neutral tone in her work.

The following are examples of syllable structure in Thai.

CV ^T / CD ^T	/pâa/	‘aunt’	/mia/	‘wife’
CV ^T C / CD ^T C	/câaŋ/	‘to hire’	/piak/	‘wet’
CCV ^T / CCD ^T	/klâa/	‘brave’	/kia/	‘salt’
CCV ^T C / CCD ^T C	/pruŋ/	‘to flavor, to cook’	/krùat/	‘gravel, pebble’

4 Word Formation

According to Thavilpravat (1979), Thai word formation can be divided into three main groups: compound, complex, and reduplicated words.

4.1 Compound Words

Compounding is very common in Thai. A Thai compound word takes two or more free morphemes to create a new word. Compounds in Thai are either endocentric or exocentric. An endocentric compound indicates a subtype of the concept denoted by its head (the leftmost component); in other words, each component contributes by its form to the meaning of the whole word. An exocentric compound, by contrast, appears to lack a head and the meaning of each component does not denote the whole word literally; that is to say that the word's meaning from its parts is unpredictable. In Thai, compounds can be formed as verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs, as follows.

4.1.1 Compounding Resulting in Verbs

Compound verbs can be either transitive or intransitive. Most compound verbs have a verb as the first element. However, they can be formed by a noun and a verb and a preposition and a noun.

Verb + Verb (Coordinate Compound) This type of compound consists of two verbs in concatenation without a noun in between (Phumipruksa, 1978). In other words, they differ from verb serialization in Thai where a noun insertion between verbs is common. According to Klaichom (1981), the two constituents of this compound typically come from two

different Thai dialects, of which meanings and syntactic functions are the same (synonymous compound).

- (1) /chîa faŋ/ ‘to obey’
/chîa/ ‘to believe’ + /faŋ/ ‘to listen’
- (2) /tìt taam/ ‘to follow’
/tìt/ ‘to adjoin’ + /taam/ ‘to follow’
- (3) /sũun hâaj/ ‘lost, to disappear’
/sũun/ ‘lost, to disappear’ (Southern Thai) + /hâaj/ ‘lost, to disappear’ (Central Thai)
- (4) /ʔòŋ p^hlia/ ‘to feel exhausted’
/ʔòŋ/ ‘exhausted’ (Northern Thai) + /p^hlia/ ‘exhausted’ (Central Thai)

Verb + Noun This type of compound is related to the following structures: verb + direct object, verb + locative/directional phrases, and verb + adverbial phrase.

- (1) /ʔòk kamləŋ/ ‘to do physical exercise’
/ʔòk/ ‘to put forth’ + /kamləŋ/ ‘strength’
- (2) /ʔòk nâa/ ‘to take the lead’
/ʔòk/ ‘to put forth’ + /nâa/ ‘front, face’
- (3) /k^háo t^hâa/ ‘to make sense’
/k^háo/ ‘to enter’ + /t^hâa/ ‘posture’

Verb + Preposition This type of intransitive compound usually forms a non-literal meaning of words, which are typically restricted to a particular context. As a result, this word formation is not considered as a constituent of a common clause or sentence which its prepositional phrase normally consists of a preposition and nominal object.

- (1) /pen klaaŋ/ ‘being neutral’
/pen/ ‘to be’ + /klaaŋ/ ‘middle’
- (2) /k^hâo nôm ʔôm nai/ ‘to be on intimate terms with someone’
(/k^hâo/ ‘to enter’ + /nôm/ ‘outside’) + (/ʔôm/ ‘to depart or exit’ + /nai/ ‘in, inside’)

Noun + Verb A noun and verb compound resulting in a verb is rare in Thai. This type of compound typically contains a body-part noun as the first component, e.g., /hũa/ ‘head,’ /cai/ ‘heart,’ /nâa/ ‘face,’ followed by a descriptive verb (adjective in English), e.g., /ʔôm/ ‘soft,’ /dii/ ‘good,’ /nãa/ ‘thick’.

- (1) /hũa sãa/ ‘to be irritated’
/hũa/ ‘head’ + descriptive verb /sãa/ ‘to be broken, spoiled’
- (2) /nâa mît/ ‘to faint’
/nâa/ ‘face’ + descriptive verb /mît/ ‘to get/turn dark’

Preposition + Noun This type of compound can be either transitive or intransitive. The literal meaning of each component is related to the implicated compound.

- (1) /nôk cai/ ‘unfaithful’
/nôk/ ‘outside’ + /cai/ ‘heart’
- (2) /nôk k^hôk/ ‘to be opposed to’
/nôk/ ‘outside’ + /k^hôk/ ‘stall for an animal’

4.1.2 Compounding Resulting in Nouns

Noun + Noun In this formation, the most common first noun is an object or term, whereas the second one functions as attributive in nature: source/locative, possessive-locative, possessive, instrumental-reservational, feature, object, agent, and time. According to Wattanakul (1991), this type of compound includes two root words, of which their meanings are the same (couplet).

- (1) /náam t^halee/ ‘sea water’
/náam/ ‘water’ + /t^halee/ ‘sea’
- (2) /sàa sàat/ ‘mat’
/sàa/ ‘mat’ (Central Thai) + /sàat/ ‘mat’ (Northern, Northeastern, Southern Thai)

Noun + Verb When a verb follows a noun in a compound, it indicates the nature of the noun: purpose, characteristic or kind, and/or action. It should be noted, in some cases as in the compound verbs’ noun-verb formation, that these compounds can be considered as a clause where the noun functions as the subject and the verb as the predicate.

- (1) /plaa k^hem/ ‘salted fish’
/plaa/ ‘fish’ + descriptive verb /k^hem/ ‘to be salty’
- (2) /k^hài dεεŋ/ ‘egg yolk’
/k^hài/ ‘egg’ + descriptive verb /dεεŋ/ ‘to be red’

Noun + Preposition This type of compound indicates an object and its spatial relationships, i.e., direction, location, or place. The structure of this compound is different to a prepositional phrase where a noun would follow a preposition.

- (1) /k^hɔ̌ŋ nɔ̌k/ ‘imported product’
/k^hɔ̌ŋ/ ‘things’ + /nɔ̌k/ ‘outside’
- (2) /c^hán bon/ ‘upstairs, top layer’
/c^hán/ ‘level’ + /bon/ ‘on, up’

Verb + Verb In Thai, some specific terms can be formed by two semantic-related verbs. In many cases, a combination of two individual verbs forms an address noun.

- (1) /tôm jam/ ‘a kind of Thai spicy soup’
/tôm/ ‘to boil’ + /jam/ ‘to mix things/ingredients together’
- (2) /hɔ̌ mɔ̌k/ ‘steamed curry in banana leaves’
/hɔ̌/ ‘to wrap’ + /mɔ̌k/ ‘to bury’

4.1.3 Compounding Resulting in Adjectives

Compound adjectives usually include a noun and an adjective. However, they can be formed by a verb and a noun as well. The structure of a noun and an adjective, in many cases, indicates personal characteristics, whereas the one of an adjective and a noun defines physical or emotional

state. A component of these compounds is usually a body-part noun. Regarding the Thai morphological structure, a compound adjective usually follows a content noun identifying a state or characteristics. Note that this compound can be categorized as a stative verb addressed after a nominal subject, pronoun, or proper noun.

Noun + Adjective

- (1) /cai dii/ ‘kind’
/cai/ ‘heart’ + /dii/ ‘good’
- (2) /hũa đii/ ‘stubborn’
/hũa/ ‘head’ + /đii/ ‘stubborn’

Adjective + Noun

- (1) /nỏj cai/ ‘to feel slighted’
/nỏj/ ‘small’ + /cai/ ‘heart’
- (2) /lảj cai/ ‘being a player’
/lảj/ ‘many’ + /cai/ ‘heart’

Verb + Noun

- (1) /p^hỏ k^hỏn/ ‘very close’
/p^hỏ/ ‘to burn’ + /k^hỏn/ ‘hair’
- (2) /dỏn đin/ ‘ordinary’
/dỏn/ ‘to walk’ + /din/ ‘soil, ground’

4.1.4 Compounding Resulting in Adverbs

Compound adverbs can be formed by a verb and a noun, a noun and a verb, or a preposition and a noun. This compound is formed to modify

or qualify an adjective, verb, or adverb expressing a relation of place, time, circumstance, manner, cause, and degree.

Verb + Noun

- (1) /náp kâaw/ ‘carefully’
/náp/ ‘to count’ + /kâaw/ ‘step’

Noun + Verb

- (1) /k^h๖๖ tòk/ ‘sadly’
/k^h๖๖/ ‘neck’ + /tòk/ ‘fall’

Preposition + Noun

- (1) /nô๖k nâa/ ‘overdo’
/nô๖k/ ‘outside’ + /nâa/ ‘face’

4.2 Complex Words (Derived Compound Words)

A complex word is mainly composed of a root or base and a bound morpheme or affix, namely, prefix and suffix in Thai. The infixation (see §4.2.5) is not productive in Thai language. However, compound verbs, adjectives, and adverbs can be affixed to form derived compound words (Wattanakul, 1991).

4.2.1 Nominalizing Prefixes

Both /kaan/ and /k^hwaam/ can be either free or bound morphemes. /kaan-/ can function as both a noun prefix forming a common noun indicating activity, work, occupation, matter, and affair, or suffix to Sanskrit root words. It can be prefixed to a verb, transforming the verb

into a gerund noun which indicates action as well. /k^hwaam-/ can be a verb or an adjective prefix indicating state, condition, or quality as *-ness* in English. In other words, /k^hwaam-/ forms the abstract noun in Thai. In addition, the /kaan-/ and /k^hwaam-/ prefixes can be attached to a verb phrase to create a noun.

- (1) /kaan ɲaan/ ‘work’
/kaan/ ‘matter of’ + /ɲaan/ ‘work’
- (2) /kaan mian/ ‘politics’
/kaan/ ‘matter of’ + /mian/ ‘nation, city’
- (3) /kaan nɔɔn/ ‘sleeping’
/kaan/ ‘action of (doing what the verb denotes)’ + /nɔɔn/ ‘to sleep’
- (4) /k^hwaam dii/ ‘goodness’
/k^hwaam/ ‘a state of’ + /dii/ ‘good’
- (5) /k^hwaam rúu/ ‘knowledge’
/k^hwaam/ ‘a state of’ + /rúu/ ‘to know’
- (6) /k^hwaam pen yùu/ ‘living, daily lives’
/k^hwaam/ ‘a state of’ + /pen/ ‘to be’ + /yùu/ ‘to be, to live’

4.2.2 Classifying Prefixes and Suffixes

Classifying prefixes and suffixes indicate a class or category of people or things having some property or attribute in common. Words in this class are composed of meaningful bound morphemes: prefix + base and base + suffix.

Prefix + Base

(1) /nák/ denotes an expert, a votary, or an agent as the suffix *-er* in English.

- a) /nák-rian/ ‘student’
/rian/ ‘to study’
- b) /nák-muaj/ ‘boxer’
/muaj/ ‘boxing’
- c) /nák-siip/ ‘detective’
/siip/ ‘to detect’
- d) /nák-dontrii/ ‘musician’
/dontrii/ ‘music’

(2) /k^hon/, /c^haaw/, or /p^hûu/ denotes an inhabitant, a human, a person/people, or a man/woman.

- a) /k^hon-k^hrua/ ‘a cook’
/k^hrua/ ‘kitchen’
- b) /c^haaw-kòʔ/ ‘islander’
/kòʔ/ ‘island’
- c) /p^hûu-jǐŋ/ ‘girl, woman’
/jǐŋ/ ‘female’

Base + Suffix

- (1) /kɔɔn/ denotes a worker, a laborer, a doer, or an agent.
- a) /kasì-kɔɔn/ ‘agriculturist’
/kasì-/ ‘agriculture’
 - b) /pʰítʰii-kɔɔn/ ‘master of ceremony’
/pʰítʰii/ ‘ceremony’
- (2) /pʰâap/ denotes a state or a condition.
- a) /sěerii-pʰâap/ ‘freedom, liberty’
/sěerii/ ‘freedom, liberty’
 - b) /kʰun-na-pʰâap/ ‘quality’
/kʰun(-na)/ ‘goodness, advantage’

4.2.3 Modifying Prefixes and Suffixes

Modifying prefixes and suffixes modify the meaning of the base.

Prefixes

- (1) /à/ means ‘not’.
- a) /ʔà-tʰam/ ‘unjust, unfair’
/tʰam/ ‘truth, dharma’
 - b) /ʔà-kàtanjuu/ ‘ungrateful’
/kàtanjuu/ ‘gratitude, grateful’
- (2) /ʔànú/ means ‘lesser, minor, or lower’.
- a) /ʔànú-rák/ ‘to conserve’
/rák/ ‘to keep’
 - b) /ʔànú-kammakaan/ ‘subcommittee’
/kammakaan/ ‘committee’

Suffixes

- (1) /ʔèt/ refers to ‘one’.
 - a) /sìp-ʔèt/ ‘eleven’
/sìp/ ‘ten’
 - b) /pʰan-ʔèt/ ‘one thousand and one’
/pʰan/ ‘thousand’
- (2) /kʰom/ is a suffix for the 31-day months.
 - a) /miinaa-kʰom/ ‘March’
/miin/ ‘fish’
 - b) /sǐnhǎa-kʰom/ ‘August’
/sǐnhǎa/ ‘lion’

4.2.4 Adverbial Prefix

This type of complex words includes the morpheme /jàaŋ/ ‘in the manner of’ in the first component followed by a verb or adjective indicating verbal manner in a clause or sentence.

- (1) /jàaŋ rew/ ‘quickly’
/jàaŋ/ ‘in the manner of’ + /rew/ ‘quick’
- (2) /jàaŋ ŋaam/ ‘beautifully, successfully’
/jàaŋ/ ‘in the manner of’ + /ŋaam/ ‘beautiful’

4.2.5 Sublexemic Prefixes and Infixes

According to Noss (1964, as cited in Thavilpravat, 1979), sublexemic infixes are more widely distributed in Standard Thai than prefixes.

Prefixes

- (1) Consonant phoneme prefixes /p-/ , /p^h-/, /t-/ , /k-/ , /k^h-/ are formed with /r/, /l/, /w/ as syllable base's initial consonants, namely, clusters.
- a) /p-lùk/ 'to wake (someone) up'
/p-/ + /lúk/ 'to get up'
 - b) /k-ròɔp/ 'to make a frame'
/k-/ + /ròɔp/ 'a cycle'
 - c) /k^h-wǎaŋ/ 'to obstruct'
/k^h-/ + /waaŋ/ 'to put/drop down'
- (2) Bound morpheme prefixes /kam-/ , /c^ha-/ , /tà-/ , /t^hà-/ , /t^há-/ , /nâa-/ , /p^hà-/ , /ban-/ (/bam-/ , /baŋ-/), /prà-/ , /pà-/ , /krà-/ , /kà-/ , /sà-/ , /sǎm-/
- a) /nâa-rák/ 'to be lovable'
/nâa-/ + /rák/ 'to love'
 - b) /p^hà-sǎan/ 'to blend'
/p^hà-/ + /sǎan/ 'to weave'
 - c) /baŋ-kháp/ 'to force'
/baŋ-/ + /k^háp/ 'tight'

Infixes The infixes applied in Thai are mostly found in Khmer loan-words as follows:

- (1) Consonant phoneme infix /-m-/
- a) /t^ha<m>laaj/ 'to ruin'
/t^hálaaj/ 'to destroy'
 - b) /ca<m>rəən/ 'to be successful'
/carəən/ 'to prosper, flourish'

- (2) Bound morpheme infixes /-am-/ , /-an-/ , /-aŋ-/ , /-ab-/ , /-al-/ , /-aw-/ , /-aj-/ , /-amn-/ , /-amr-/
a) /t<am>raa/ ‘textbook’
/traa/ ‘stamp, seal’
b) /r<ab>iap/ ‘discipline, order’
/riiap/ ‘to be in order, to be smooth’
c) /c<amn>aaj/ ‘to distribute’
/caaj/ ‘to pay, spend’
d) /s<al>àk/ ‘to carve’
/sàk/ ‘to tattoo’

4.3 Reduplicated Words

Reduplication is a repetition of a base or morpheme to form a lexical word. According to Wattanakul (1991), two categories of Thai reduplication can be formed: partial and total reduplication. In partial reduplication, the initial consonant or all consonants and the tone of the root word are repeated with a different vowel. Thai reduplication adds various meanings to a word, such as plurality, continuity (series of action), generality, emphasis, approximation, intensity, and distributivity. In addition, it can include onomatopoeic words to indicate some successive sounds or circumstances. Furthermore, reduplication in Thai is found as well in derived and compound words, which in some cases, initial consonant phonemes are repeated for rhyming the compounds. This formation may include repeated syllables with no meaning when isolated.

- (1) /ruajrəəj/ ‘rich’
/ruaj/ ‘rich’

- (2) /dèk-dèk/ ‘children’
/dèk/ ‘child’
- (3) /tùp-tùp/ ‘to pound repeatedly’ (sound of heart beating)
/tùp/ ‘to pound’
- (4) /k^háaw-k^hăaw/ ‘very white’
/k^hăaw/ ‘white’
- (5) /p^hañâap-p^hañâap/ ‘gaspng for breath, fatally’
/p^hañâap/ ‘gaspng for breath’
- (6) /p^hûuroŋ p^hûuráaj/ ‘bandit’
/p^hûuráaj/ ‘bandit’
- (7) /rótfon rótfai/ ‘train’
/rótfai/ ‘train’

5 Phrase and Clause Structure

5.1 Structures of Modification in Noun Phrases

A noun phrase is composed of a head noun and one modifier or a sequence of modifiers. Several types of modifiers can be formed in various ways. In Thai, modifiers follow a head noun (the leftmost head) at all times. The four structures of modification in noun phrases stated in Sombut’s (1973) work are as follows.

Head Noun + One Modifier

- (1) náam jen (adjective modifier)
water cold
‘cold water’

Standard Thai Grammar based on UP Linguistics Theses and Dissertations

- (2) báan máai (noun modifier)
house wood
'wooden house'
- (3) t^hănǎn (sǎaj) ní (demonstrative modifier)
road (route) this
'this road'
- (4) daaw hâa duan (numeral modifier)
star five sphere
'five stars'
- (5) k^hon k^hon t^hîi sǎam (numeral modifier)
person body at three
'the third person'
- (6) nók lǎaj tua (quantifier modifier)
bird many body
'many birds'
- (7) pìik k^hǎw nók (genitive [possessive] modifier)
wing of bird
'bird's wing'
- (8) k^hon t^hîi pen k^hruu (noun modified by a relative clause)
person who be teacher
'the person who is a teacher'

Head Noun + Two Modifiers

- (1) noun + adjective + possessive phrase
kaafɛɛ rɔɔn k^hɔɔŋ k^hun
coffee hot of you
'your hot coffee'
- (2) noun + (noun classifier + ordinal numeral) + (noun classifier + demonstrative)
nǎŋ-sǐi lêm t^hi-sǎam lêm nán
book classifier third classifier demonstrative
'that third book'

Head Noun + Three Modifiers

- (1) noun + adjective + classifier + demonstrative
bǎan máai sǐi dɛɛŋ lǎŋ nán
house wood color red classifier that
'that red wooden house'
- (2) noun + adjective + (number + classifier) + demonstrative
k^hon sǎaj sǎam k^hon nán
person beautiful three classifier that
'those three beautiful persons'

Head Noun + Four Modifiers

- (1) noun + adjective + possessive phrase + classifier + demonstrative
ɔɔŋt^háo nǎŋ sǐi-náamtaan k^hɔɔŋ k^hun k^húu ní
shoes leather brown of you pair this
'this pair of brown leather shoes of yours'

5.2 Two-Verb Predicates in Thai

Regarding Phumipruksa (1978), two-verb constructions in Thai are classified into three main types: (a) two-verb constructions in which one is a modal verb; (b) two-verb constructions in which one is a completive verb; and (c) two-verb constructions of two free verbal morphemes.

Modal Verb + Main Verb In modal constructions, the modals, which are the verbs in the first position, function as auxiliaries while the non-modals that follow are the main verbs. Modal verbs in Thai include abilitatives, desideratives, emphatics, repetitives, causatives, and passives. Modal verbs in Thai can carry new information in sentences.

- (1) abilitative

k^hǎo **dâai** nɔɔn miak^hiin rǎi plàao

s/he **be able to** sleep last night question particle (yes/no)

‘Was s/he able to sleep last night?’

- (2) desiderative

wiirá jàak faŋ p^hleeŋ sǎakon

Weera **would like to** listen song international

‘Weera would like to listen to international songs.’

- (3) causative

k^hruu **hâi** nákrían lóp kradaan

teacher **have someone do something** student erase board

‘The teacher had the student erase the board.’

- (4) passive
nákrian **t^hùuk** k^hruu tii
student **passive marker** teacher hit
'The student was hit by the teacher.'

Completive Verb/Verb Phrase + Completive Verb Completive verbs are the verbs that function as predicates occurring at the end of the sentence or after the verb phrase. A completive verb can appear as a single main verb of a sentence or as a main verb in the two-verb construction.

- (1) ŋaan **sèt** léew
work **finish** already
'The work is already done.'
- (2) mǎa wâaináam **pen**
dog swim **know how to do something**
'The dog knows how to swim.'

Two-verb Construction of Free Verbal Morphemes This type of verb construction includes two free verbal morphemes and there might or might not be a noun between these morphemes: $V_1(N)V_2$. The first verb component usually gives a more specific meaning than the second component. However, the second component commonly functions as the main verb of the sentence. The two verbs can be performed by a single or two subjects, as follows.

- (1) k^hǎo **síi** k^hanǒm **kin**
 s/he **buy** snack **eat**
 ‘S/he bought snacks to eat.’
- (2) mɛɛw **kàt** nǔu **taaj**
 cat **bite** rat **die**
 ‘The cat bit the rat to death.’

Regarding the sentence illustrated above, /mɛɛw/ ‘cat’ is the subject of the first verb /kàt/ ‘bite,’ whereas /nǔu/ ‘rat, mouse’ is its direct object. /nǔu/ ‘rat, mouse’ is, at the same time, the subject of the second verb /taaj/ ‘to die.’

Although the two-verb components are free morphemes and carry their own meaning in the sentences, the first verb may denote an event which happens and finishes before the second one, i.e., a sequence of actions. It may also denote an event which happens at the same time as another verb, i.e., simultaneous actions. Or it may indicate the purpose, direction, or manner of another verb.

- (3) dèk dèk **k^hi** càkkrajaan **pai** tàlàat
 children **ride** bicycle **go** market
 ‘The children rode the bicycle to (go to) the market.’
- (4) nók **bin hǎa** ʔaahǎan
 bird **fly look for** food
 ‘The bird flew to look for food.’
- (5) nákrian kamləŋ **k^hian** còtmǎaj **tòp** p^hian
 student progressive aspect **write** letter **answer** friend
 ‘The student is writing a letter responding (to his/her) friend.’

5.3 Aspect As Arguments Against Tense in Thai

Boonrueng (1977) reexamined the traditional analysis of “tense markers” in Thai, such as /kamləŋ/, /jaŋ/, /cà/, /pʰəŋ (cà)/, /kʰəj/, /jùu/, /dâai/, /léew/, and /maa/. He argues these morphemes are not tense markers but rather aspect indicators, completive verbs, or directional particles indicating the time sequence in Thai verbal phrases or sentences.

Thai aspects/aspect markers include pre-verbal and post-verbal aspects according to their position in relation to the main verb or verb phrase.

Pre-verbal Aspects The Thai pre-verbal aspects include progressive aspect /kamləŋ/, durative aspect /jaŋ/, contemplative aspect /cà/, recent perfective /pʰəŋ (cà)/, and repetitive aspect /kʰəj/, which are illustrated as follows.

- (1) raw **kamləŋ** tʰam-ŋaan bâan
we **progressive** work house
‘We are doing household chores.’
- (2) lúuk lúuk **jaŋ** lék mâak
kids **durative** small very much
‘The children are still very young.’
- (3) cʰai **cà** prəkùat róngpʰleej pʰrúŋnǐ
Chai **contemplative** join competition sing tomorrow
‘Chai will join the singing competition tomorrow.’
- (4) tʰəə **pʰəŋ (cà)** maa-tʰɨŋ rooŋrian dǎawnǐ
s/he **recent perfective** arrive school now
‘S/he has just arrived at school now.’

- (5) nǔu k^həj hěn c^háaŋ t^hîinǎi
you **repetitive** see elephant where
'Where did you (used to) see the elephant?'

Post-verbal Aspects The Thai post-verbal aspects consist of intensive aspect /jùu/ and perfective aspect /léew/, which are illustrated as follows.

- (1) taa ʔòkkamlaŋ jùu
mother's father exercise **intensive**
'The grandfather is doing exercises (now).'
- (2) p^höm jùu mánílaa lǎaj pii léew
I stay/live Manila several year **perfective**
'I have been staying in Manila for several years.'

Note that two or more aspect markers in Thai may co-occur in the verbal phrases or sentences. It is possible, with some rearrangeable positions or patterns in the sentences, that their grammatical function be transformed as well, such as /léew/ from being an aspect marker to an adverb. Their meaning and function vary depending on their syntactic structure elucidating the different contextual interpretation.

5.4 Cases of Thai

Cases are defined as nouns or pronouns which are related to the predicate of a simple sentence. Regarding Kerpetkeaw's (1978) output, 15 cases, namely agentive, objective, associative, source, goal, identified, identifier, possessed, possessor, existential, stative, benefactive, instrumental, locative, and time, are identified based on some syntactic criteria, i.e.,

the use of prepositions, positions, and functions of the cases in the surface structure of the simple sentence. Nine of 15 cases can co-occur in two to five cases in transitive sentences, as illustrated below.

Two Cases Two cases in Thai active sentences include an agentive and objective nouns or pronouns. The agent and object co-occur respectively before and after the verb.

(1) **k^hruu** sǎɔn **k^hanít^sàat**
teacher teach **Mathematics**
‘The teacher teaches Mathematics.’

(2) **mêɛ** hǔŋ **k^hâaw**
mother cook **rice**
‘The mother cooks rice.’

The agentive case indicates the doer or instigator of the action expressed by an action verb. The agentive case can be positioned in both active and passive sentences. However, it functions consistently as a subject in the active clause or sentence but not in the passive one where the agent is likely to be dropped. The objective case or object occurs merely with transitive verbs. It indicates the thing affected by the action of the verb. The object occurs immediately after the verb in a transitive clause or sentence.

Three Cases Besides the agent and object, any one of the nine cases may occur in Thai transitive sentences to form sets of three cases, such as source, goal, locative, time, benefactive, instrumental, and associative. The different sets of three cases are illustrated as follows.

- (1) **rao** jiiim **nǎŋsii** càak **hòŋsamùt**
I/we borrow **book** from **library** (source)
'I/we borrowed the book from the library.'
- (2) **p^hó** sii **rót** hâi **lûuksăaw**
father buy **car** for **daughter** (benefactive)
'The father bought a car for (his) daughter.'

Four Cases Besides the agent and object, any two of the other cases may occur with the transitive verb to form different sets of four cases, as follows.

- (1) **c^hǎn** sòŋ **cotmăaj** càak **filípin** ^{t^hiŋ}
I send **letter** from **Philippines** (source) to
nóŋsăaw
younger sister (goal)
'I sent the letter from the Philippines to (my) younger sister.'
- (2) **maanii** k^hăaj **nǎŋsii** t^hi **roonrian** **míawaan**
Manee sell **book** at **school** (locative) **yesterday** (time)
'Manee sold the book at the school yesterday.'

Five Cases Besides the agent and object, any three of the other cases may occur with the transitive verb to form several sets of five cases, as follows.

- (1) **săamii** sòŋ **sia^haa** càak **jūipùn** hâi **c^hăn**
husband send **clothes** from **Japan** (source) to/for **I** (goal)
(dooj) t^haaŋ **k^hriañbin**
(by) way **airplane** (instrumental)
'(My) husband sent the clothes from Japan to me by airplane.'
- (2) **pôm** kàp **pim** hŭŋ **k^hâaw** dùaj **mô**
Pom with **Pim** (associative) cooked **rice** with **pot**
faifáa sãmràp **mêe**
electric (instrumental) for **mother** (benefactive)
'Pom and Pim cooked rice for (their) mother by using the electric pot.'

Cases in the Passive Sentences The same sets of cases which occur in active sentences can, at the same time, be placed in passive sentences. However, some functions of the cases are significantly changed as the different structure to form the passive sentences is made. That is to say, the object, being the subject in passive sentences, is positioned at the beginning of the sentence followed by the passive markers /t^hùuk/³ or /doon/.⁴ In addition, the agent occurs immediately after the passive

³/t^hùuk/ has several meanings and different functions in Thai grammar: 'to be cheap in price (descriptive verb)', 'to be correct (adverb)', or 'to touch or come in contact with (action verb).'

⁴/doon/'s literal and informal meaning is 'to touch or come in contact with.'

marker followed by the verb. It should be noted that in the passive sentences, the agent may be dropped.

- (1) **sǎa** t^hùuk **naaj-p^hraan** jiiŋ dūaj **piin**
tiger passive marker **hunter** shoot by **gun**
‘The tiger was shot by the hunter using the gun.’
- (2) **sǎa** t^hùuk **naaj-p^hraan** jiiŋ
tiger passive marker **hunter** shoot
‘The tiger was shot by the hunter.’
- (3) **sǎa** t^hùuk jiiŋ
tiger passive marker shoot
‘The tiger was shot.’

6 Summary

The graduate theses and doctoral dissertations on the grammatical structures of Standard Thai were compiled at UP Department of Linguistics between the early 1970s and 1990s. As seen in Figure 4, 81.25% of the scholars studied the grammar of Standard Thai, while 18.75% did a grammatical comparison of Thai dialects and foreign languages: Sanskrit, English, and Tagalog. The linguistic domain that showed a favorable trend of their linguistic interest, as seen in Figure 5, was syntax. Regarding their works, semantics was another domain they tried to shed light on: how the various structures they analyzed took part in the sentences’ generalizations and interpretations.

The morphological forms of different types of words were primarily investigated during that period as well. Compounding formed by the free morphemes are common among their works; the various parts

of speech can be placed together to create the new compounds. The great number of complex words affixed with the bound morphemes are mostly borrowed words from Pali, Sanskrit, and Khmer. Both partial and total Thai reduplications add the various meanings to a word. Some reduplicated words may be used to lessen the degree of property's intensity, e.g., /dɛɛŋdɛɛŋ/ 'reddish, slightly red'.

The various types and forms of nominal and verbal phrases were scrutinized, while the simple clause constructions were described. The structure of verb predicates and the prepositional phrase forms shed light on the 15 cases and seven pre-verbal and post-verbal aspects, where the tense markers are not widely applied.

The phonological analyses were the least of the Thais' outputs, and among the few, the Standard Thai tones were taken into comparison with the three regional Thai dialects, and Thai's phonological structure were at the same time compared to that of Tagalog.

7 Discussion

The study of the 16 Thai linguistic theses and dissertations not only provides the primary picture and frame of the Thai grammar dated back between 1970s and 1990s; the linguistic trends in the Philippines during that time are, at the same time, observed. The traditional or structuralist grammar was slightly replaced by the transformational theory, namely, Generative, Transformational grammar (TG) and the Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG), where the underlying set of rules of language production and sentence formation was highlighted. In the early 1970s and 1980s, the linguistic outputs relied on

the traditional grammar presenting the explicit descriptions and classifications of specific Thai structures; the surface and deep structures were mentioned in the later years, however, not many works went through a series of transformations.

The Thai grammatical structures have not changed significantly since the 1970s. Thais practice most of the valid grammatical structures as sketched in this work, especially the serial verb constructions and passive forms. However, the lexical words presented in some outputs are not widely applied in the present days: the pronoun /lǝ̀ɔ̀n/ ‘you, s/he’ becomes not polite or unrespectful as some speakers use it for irony. Another example is the use of the benefactive /sǎmràp/ ‘for, to’ in clauses or sentences in general. In many cases, Thais replace this word with /hâi/ ‘to give, for, to’ in both formal and informal statements. For example, /sǎmràp/ ‘for, to’ in /c^hǎn càaj ɲən sǎmràp k^hun/ ‘I spent money for you’ is usually not common these days. Instead, /c^hǎn càaj ɲən hâi k^hun/ is widely used. In addition, the compounds created in the past are mostly endocentric; a great number of exocentric compounds have been created at present to be used in various contexts. Moreover, Thai words are mostly formed by the derivation process, not by inflection. Furthermore, Thais are likely to simplify the way they use the language by shortening or dropping a segment, morpheme, or lexicon in phrases, clauses, and/or sentences, especially in speech communication. Personal pronouns, classifiers, and the possessive modifier /k^hǝ̀ɔ̀ŋ/ ‘of’ used in possessive phrases, e.g., /pìik (k^hǝ̀ɔ̀ŋ) nók/ ‘bird’s wings’ (lit. ‘wing [of] bird’), are, among others, dropped in the Thai structure.

Lastly, affixation derived in complex words (see §4.2) has been debated whether it is a common feature of Thai, of which native root words

are monosyllabic. It may be noted that affixes, especially bound morphemes, are mostly found in words borrowed from Khmer or Sanskrit. Regarding the sublexemic prefixes addressed in §4.2.5, affixes are possibly formed in native-like Thai monosyllabic words as part of the initial clusters: /p-lùk/ ‘to wake (someone) up’ (/p-/ + /lúk/ ‘to get up’), /k-ròp/ ‘to make a frame’ (/k-/ + /ròp / ‘a cycle’). Based on the typical formation of these complex words, the meanings of both root and derived words are likely to be related and categorized in the same semantic direction/domain. It is interesting to know whether this is a coincidence, true, or borrowed syntactic-semantic cluster formation.

8 Implications and Recommendations

The number of Thais studying in the Philippines grew dramatically between the 1960s and early 1970s after, I believe, the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Queen Sirikit paid a state visit to the Philippines in 1963 at the invitation of His Excellency Diosdado Macapagal, President of the Philippines, that time. The visit marked a major milestone in the strengthening of friendly relations between Thailand and the Philippines (Ratanaprakse & Jayanama, 2009), which continues to this day. Their Majesties visited the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), the Agricultural College of the University of the Philippines Los Baños. His Majesty received an honorary doctorate in Law from the University of the Philippines Diliman and Her Majesty an honorary doctorate in Arts from Centro Escolar University. At the same time, the Higher Education sector had been reformed in Thailand since the late 1960s; the Thai government through the Ministry of Education, among others,

Standard Thai Grammar based on UP Linguistics Theses and Dissertations

provided scholarships to Thai teachers and professors to study abroad to experience and apply new or different disciplines obtained from the foreign academic institutions to Thai academe in Thailand. Among other colleges and universities in the Philippines, a great number of the Thais pursued their graduate studies at the University of the Philippines (UP). Many of them went to UP Los Baños (UPLB) for a graduate degree in agriculture and/or agriculture-related fields. Many resided as well in UP Diliman (UPD) studying business and commerce, community development, economics, engineering (industrial and management), law, language and literature, politics and government, public administration, and statistics (Chety, 1977). Fifteen of them furthered their studies in the Department of Linguistics. Figure 6 shows the different grants funded to the Thai graduate scholars during their stay in UPD; Figure 7 illustrates the various employment sectors of the Thai scholars before pursuing their studies in UPD.

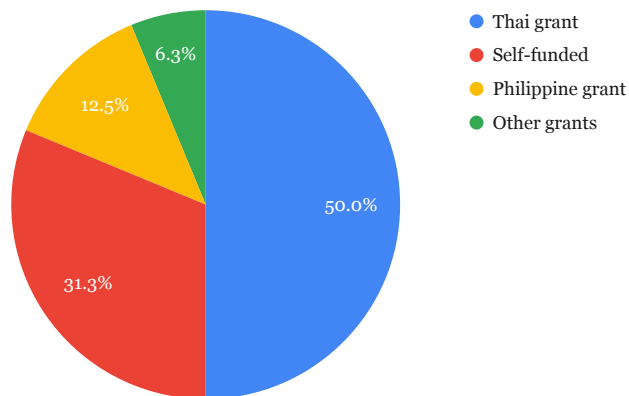


Figure 6. Percentage of Grants Funded to the Thai Scholars to Pursue Their Studies at UP Department of Linguistics

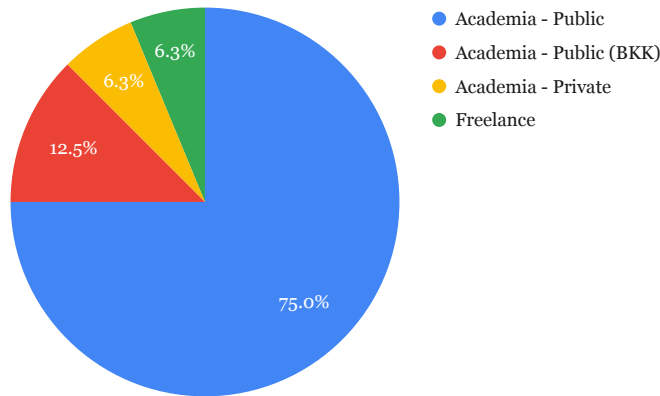


Figure 7. Percentage of the Employment Sectors of the Thai Scholars Before Pursuing Their Studies in the Universities of the Philippines Diliman

50.00% of all grants were funded by Thai government through the Ministry of Education, Bangkok, Thailand; 31.25% were self-funded; and 12.50% was granted by the UP Department of Linguistics, College of Arts and Sciences (CSSP at present) or other UP units. Three of the Thai scholars taught Thai language under the Department from 1971 to 1977. The students left after their graduation. Until now, there is no new Thai student graduating from the Department. At present, there is one Thai PhD candidate enrolling in the Department of Computer Science, UP Diliman, inspired by her father who got Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) Scholarship funded by UPLB to study at Department of Agriculture in the late 1980s. This grant has been granted annually for government officials to further their studies in MA and PhD program in UPLB and other partner universities in Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand. Many

have been wondering about the reasons why the grants offered before at UPD were interrupted and how to bring those opportunities back consistently to international students once again.

The theses and dissertations used as primary data of this paper are invaluable, yet widely unknown. Of 16 outputs, only one is found published, much less in Thai. Initially, all works should be made accessible; they must be examined, digitized, and electronically available.

As mentioned previously (see Figure 5), almost all outputs focus on Thai structural/syntactic studies. There is a lack of other linguistic fields, e.g., sociolinguistics, lexicography, dialectology, diachronic linguistics, etc., on Thai research under the Department in the said period. The research studies accomplished by Thai scholars under other UP colleges and/or constituent units in the same period should be explored. All works related to Thai under UP should be compiled and made available to, at least, the UP community. Interdisciplinary findings on “Thai” in particular past period may help us connect with, relate to, understand, and/or solve the problems being raised at present.

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