THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEUTRAL PASSIVE AND THE PERSISTENCE OF THE ADVERSATIVE PASSIVE IN THAI[1]

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Abstract

This study traces the development of the adversative and neutral passives in Thai to draw inferences about their establishment and change. It shows how the word /thùuk/, which used to occur with only a verb with unfavorable meaning to form an adversative passive, is now used with virtually all transitive verbs in Thai. This suggests that the neutral passive has been established in Thai syntax. However, /thùuk/ is ambivalent because it marks both adversative and neutral passives. This means that the adversative passive still persists in Thai, but it

is now likely to be marked by /doon/, which has a clear adversative meaning. This passive marker seems to have developed in the track of /thùuk/ and is replacing the equivocal /thùuk/ marker.

1. Introduction

It has generally been accepted that the passive in Thai, as well as in other Southeast Asian languages, is adversative. The *typical adversative passive* in Thai is marked by the auxiliary verb /thùuk/ meaning 'to undergo or come in contact with (an unfortunate or unfavorable experience)'. It is followed by the main verb, which is derived from a transitive verb with an unfavorable meaning and is in the form of a finite verb. The subject, which is animate, has the "Patient" case relation; as in (1) and (2) below.

(1) khǎw *thùuk* khâa
     he   PSSV.   kill
     [Patient]
     'He was killed.'

(2) nák-rian *thùuk* tamnì
     student   PSSV.   reprimand
     [Patient]
     'The students were reprimanded.'

However, my study (Prasithrathsint 1985, 1988) shows that the /thùuk/ passive can also be *non-adversative* and that the non-adversative pattern has been used for almost a century. It has any of the following three characteristics:

1) It has an animate subject, a non-adversative main verb, and non-adver-

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sative context;

2) It has an inanimate subject and a non-adversative main verb;

3) It has an inanimate subject, an adversative main verb, but a non-adversative context.

Examples of the non-adversative /thùuk/ passive in Thai:

(3) aacaan khon nán   ***thùuk***
     lecturer person that   PSSV.
     klàaw thǐŋ   bɔ̀y-khráŋ
     speak of   often
     'That lecturer has been spoken
     of often.'

(4) aahǎan ***thùuk*** tàk   sày
     food   PSSV. dip up put in
     caan
     plate
     'The food was dipped up and
     put on the plate.'

(5) khɔ̌ɔŋ ***thùuk*** thíŋ
     thing PSSV. discard /
     neglect
     'The thing was discarded /
     neglected.'

On the other hand, *the adversative passive* has any of the following characteristics:

1) It has an animate subject and an adversative main verb;

2) It has an animate subject, a non-adversative main verb, and an adversative context;

3) It has an inanimate subject, an adversative main verb, and an adversative context.

It should be noted that the non-adversative (hence "neutral") passive emerged into Thai about six decades after its adversative counterpart (Prasithrathsint 1985: 104). However, the fact that such a neutral passive does exist in Thai is not very well accepted by Thai grammarians, who fail to recognize how much Thai has changed.

The problem is why the non-adversative /thùuk/ passive is not recognized in spite of its extensive use today. Is it because the adversative /thùuk/ pattern is persistent? Or is it because the word /thùuk/ itself is ambivalent and, therefore, it is not easy to distinguish the adversative from the neutral pattern? Does Thai maintain this ambivalence of the passive or has it developed a new adversative passive to replace the one marked by /thùuk/?

This study traces the development of the adversative and neutral /thùuk/ passives in Thai to draw inferences about their establishment and change. The use of the neutral and adversative /thùuk/ passive in present-day Thai is analyzed to ascertain whether the neutral passive has been implanted in Thai syntax and whether the adversative passive still prevails. The study also aims to find out whether there is any other marker of adversative passive that is equivalent to /thùuk/, but the meaning of which is not as ambiguous.

I hypothesize that the neutral passive has been implanted in Thai syntax: i.e., the word /thùuk/ occurs with inanimate subjects and all kinds of verbs. However, as Thai people still maintain that the

passive in Thai must be adversative, I expect to find that the adversative passive pattern still exists: i.e., /thùuk/ is still also used as the unfavorable marker in passive constructions. Nevertheless, as the word /thùuk/ is now ambivalent (adversative or non-adversative), I expect to find emerging another adversative passive marker which is equivalent to /thùuk/ but semantically non-equivocal.

The data for analysis is based on concordances from a two-million-word corpus of current Thai.[3]

It is hoped that the findings of this study will contribute to the theory of syntactic change, grammaticalization, and areal linguistics.

2. The adversative /thùuk/ passive from the past to the present time

2.1 The original /thùuk/ as a main verb

My study (Prasithrathsint 1985) shows that before the emergence of the adversative /thùuk/ passive in Thai, the word /thùuk/ was originally used as a *transitive verb* meaning 'to hit (the target)' or 'to touch (the right spot)', as in (6) below. Later, it was found to occur with an animate subject and the meaning

shifted to something opposite: i.e., 'to incur' or 'to be hit by' as in (7). The latter was found for the first time in 1855—about five decades after the former was found in the Bangkok period, in 1802. (Prasithrathsint 1985: 79-80)

(6) mîit **_thùuk_** mii
    knife hit   hand
    'The knife hit the hand.'

(7) khaw **_thùuk_** yaa-pít
    he   incur   poison
    'He was poisoned'.

As can be seen, the word /thùuk/ is non-adversative in (6) but adversative in (7). Evidence from documents shows that the use of /thùuk/ as in (6) is the oldest in Thai. In present-day Thai, this pattern is still used but not very productive. The pattern in (7) is marked by the animate subject, which is affected by something unfavorable; e.g., *poison, knife, sword, rod, stone, mosquito, germ, storm, flood,* etc.[4]

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[3] The data used in this study is from the research project on "Parts of speech in Thai: A syntactic analysis based on a two-million-word corpus of current Thai" financially supported by the Thailand Research Fund (TRF).

[4] Saranya Svetamalya (2001) in her paper entitled "A categorization of *thùuk* in Thai: Lexicase analysis" in *Essays in Tai Linguistics*, edited by M.R. Kalaya Tingsabadh and Arthur Abramson, also regards /thùuk/ in (6) as a transitive verb. However, she analyzes /thùuk/ in (7) as "incorporated thùuk + noun construction"; i.e., / thùuk + yaaphít/ would be regarded by her as one word. I do not agree with this because we can say in Thai: /khaw thùuk yaaphít nay aahǎan/ (he-incur-poison-in-food) 'He incurred the poison in the food.' The noun /yaaphít/ can be expanded and not incorporated. When it is expanded, its meaning changes from indefinite to definite.

2.2 The emergence of the adversative /thùuk/ passive construction

The adversative passive pattern, in which /thùuk/ is the marker, emerged at the same time as (7)—it was found for the first time in 1855 (Prasithrathsint 1985: 83). The word /thùuk/ in the passive is regarded here as a verb or specifically, an auxiliary verb, as in (8). This pattern is considered a passive construction as defined by many linguists, such as Keenan (1990: 260, Kullavanijaya (1974: 192-210). It is a construction in which *the subject is in the Patient case relation, the main verb is derived from a transitive verb, and there is a passive marker.*

(8) waŋ-nâa   cà   ***thùuk***
     Wangna (rank) will   PSSV.
     khîan
     whip
     'Wangna will be whipped.'

2.3 The adversative /thùuk/ passive with an agent NP

There are two kinds of adversative /thùuk/ passive with an agent NP in Thai. The first one is marked by the prepositional phrase, which is composed of /dooy/ 'by' + the agent NP, placed after the main verb, as in (9). The second one places the agent NP right after /thùuk/, as in (10). The latter was found to emerge around the same time as the basic /thùuk/ passive mentioned in 2.2, whereas the first incidence of the former was found several decades later. However, both of the patterns are productive in present-day Thai. Only the second pattern will be dealt with here because it is relevant to the topic of interest in this essay.

(9) khǎw   ***thùuk***   khâa
     he   PSSV.   kill
     dooy   khâattakɔɔn   hòot
     by   murderer   brutal
     'He was killed by a brutal murderer.'

(10) khǎw   ***thùuk***   tamrùat càp
     he   PSSV.   police arrest
     'He was arrested by the police.'

It is interesting that the structure of the adversative /thùuk/ passive construction with an agent NP without 'by' (10) looks like a combination of the structures represented by (7) and (8). As evidence shows, ***it is likely to develop from a re-analysis of two consecutive sentences***: one of the structure in (7)—/thùuk/ + NP—followed by another containing a transitive verb without subject, as in the following datum found in 1855.

(11) S[(rɨa)   ***thùuk***   **lom**
     ship   incur   wind
     ùtra-càt thîi   chaay-chamrɛ́
     strong   at   shore
     nay]S   **S[phát** pay   khâaŋ
     inside   blow   go   side
     àaw   thâa   ciin]S
     bay   harbor Chinese
     '(The ship) incurred a strong wind at the coast inside. (The wind) blew (it) out of its course to the bay of the Chinese harbor.'

In actuality, (11) is ambiguous partly due to the lack of a punctuation mark in the Thai writing system to indicate where a sentence ends; therefore, the whole string of words can be interpreted as two consecutive sentences, the first of which ends after the word /nay/ 'inside', or a single, rather long sentence of the structure in (10), in which /thùuk/ is the passive marker and /lom/ 'wind' is the head of the agent NP.

For several reasons, I analyze (11) as two consecutive sentences, the first one having /thùuk/ 'to incur' as the main verb and the second one having /phát/ 'to blow' as the main verb. Firstly, the verb /thùuk/ in this particular context is very likely to be the /thùuk/ word meaning 'to incur', which is followed by the word /lom/ 'wind', its object argument. Indeed, as evidenced in the data, /thùuk/ which means 'to incur' is likely to occur with nouns that designate natural power or something that can cause an unfavorable effect, such as 'wind', 'fire', 'rain', 'storm', 'flood', 'gun', 'poison', etc. Secondly, the NP that follows /thùuk/ 'to incur' is usually the last constituent in the sentence, so it can be very long, such as in (11). In other words, it would be very unusual for a passive in Thai to have such a long agent NP followed by the main verb. This is completely missing in my data. Thus, it is more likely that the verb /phát/ 'to blow' is the first constituent of the second sentence than another constituent of the preceding one. This is supported by the fact that it is very common to begin a sentence with a verb in Thai. In other words, subjectless sentences are grammatical in Thai. Furthermore, the

object of a sentence is also optional. In this particular example, neither the subject nor object of the verb /phát/ 'to blow' appear. However, the sentence is grammatical and intelligible because the context is very clear.

Therefore, I propose the structures of (11) as follows:[5]

(12)

| (rɨa)	*thùuk*	lom…
'ship'	'incur'	'wind'
[+N]	[+trns]	[+N]
[AGT]	[+fint]	[PAT]

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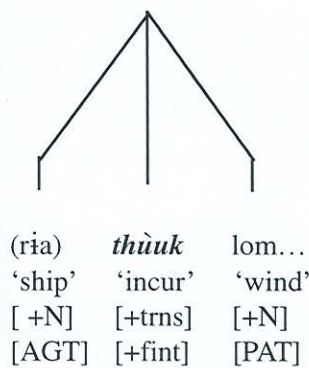
[5]   Following Starosta (1988) and Savetamalya (2001), I use tree diagrams with features to represent the structures of syntactic constructions. However, only the main features are indicated here: [+N] refers to NOUN; [+trns] signifies a transitive verb, [-trns] an intransitive verb, [+fint] a finite verb, [-fint] a non-finite verb, and [+aux] an auxiliary verb (which implies [-trns]). The features [PAT], [AGT], and [COR] refer to the Patient, Agent, and Correspondent case relations, respectively. Starosta (1988: 126) defines PAT "the perceived central participant in a state or event," AGT " the perceived external instigator, initiator, controller, or experiencer of the action, event, or state, and COR "the entity perceived as being in correspondence with the Patient" or "the perceived external frame or point of reference for the action, event, or state as a whole."
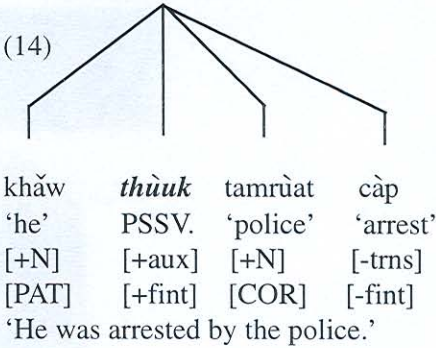
(lom)	phát …	(rɨa)
'wind'	'blow'	'ship'
[+N]	[+trns]	[+N]
[AGT]	[+fint]	[PAT]
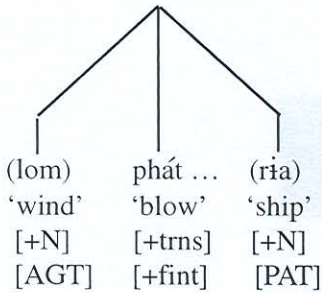
'The ship incurred a wind.
(It) blew (the ship)….'

Then it is likely that a reanalysis occurred, and the result is the structure in (13), which I regard as the *adversative /thùuk/ passive with an agent.*

(13)

(rɨa)	*thùuk*	lom	phát…
'ship'	PSSV.	'wind'	'blow'
[+N]	[+aux]	[+N]	[-trns]
[PAT]	[+fint]	[COR]	[-fint]
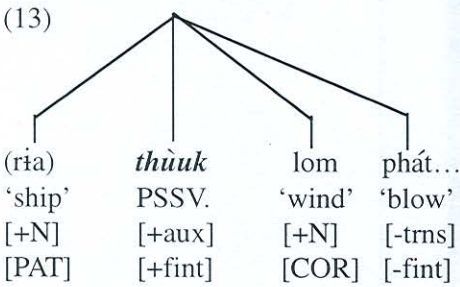
'The ship was blown away by the wind.'
I maintain that the word */thùuk/* in such a construction as (12) has been reanalyzed as an *auxiliary verb* (13), which is *an intransitive verb that must have a non-finite verb as its sister constituent.* In this type of passive (13), it occurs with two NP arguments: *Patient subject* and *Correspondent complement.* The verb /phát/ 'to blow' in (12) has also been reanalyzed as an *intransitive* verb derived from its transitive counterpart (of the same form) and a *non-finite* verb, which is regarded as the main verb of

the passive construction. [6] So the structure of (10) is the same as (13). It is illustrated as follows:

(14)

khǎw	*thùuk*	tamrùat	càp
'he'	PSSV.	'police'	'arrest'
[+N]	[+aux]	[+N]	[-trns]
[PAT]	[+fint]	[COR]	[-fint]

'He was arrested by the police.'

Without the agent, the basic structure would be the same—only the agent is missing, as can be seen in (15) below.

(15)

khǎw	*thùuk*	càp
'he'	PSSV.	'arrest'
[+N]	[+aux]	[-trns]
[PAT]	[+fint]	[-fint]

'He was arrested.'

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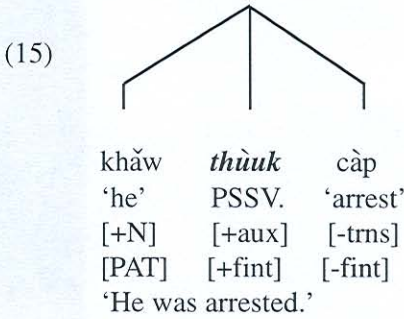
[6] Savetamalya (2001: 125-126) gives a clear justification for analyzing */thùuk/* as an intransitive verb that takes two NP arguments: Patient and Correspondent. However, she finally argues against it, giving the reason that the Correspondent NP cannot be topicalized. Therefore, it should not be regarded as Correspondent but the Agent subject of the main verb, which is a finite verb. I do not agree with this because the main verb in the passive construction is always non-finite. The verb /phát / and /càp / in (13) and (14) are non-finite because we cannot add /cà/ 'will' in front of them. Also, I have tested many intransitive sentences with a Correspondent NP and found that the Correspondent NP cannot be topicalized.

In (15) it is clear that the subject of the passive sentence, which is the only NP in it, must be Patient. The word /thùuk/ is clearly an auxiliary verb followed by the verb /càp/, which is non-finite and intransitive. It is non-finite because we cannot add /cà/ (future or irrealis marker) in front of it, and it is intransitive because it cannot take an object. The following sentence is *ungrammatical* because the main verb becomes finite and transitive.

(16)   *

khǎw	*thùuk*	cà	càp	than
'he'	PSSV.	'will'	'arrest'	'you'
[+N]	[+aux]	[+ADV]	[+trns]	[+N]
[PAT]	[+fint]		[+fint]	

2.4 The adversative / thùuk/ passive at present

At present, the adversative /thùuk/ passive is still used in Thai, for example, (17) and (18) below.

(17)   khǎw   *thùuk*   yìat-yǎam
        he   PSSV.   despise
        'He is despised.'

(18)   khon-yâak-con *thùuk*
        poor people   PSSV.
        bɔrisàt   càt-sǎn-bâan
        company housing
        aw-prìap
        take advantage
        'Poor people are taken advantage of by housing companies.'

Adversative verbs that are found to occur with /thùuk/ are those meaning 'shot', 'kill', 'reprimand', 'accuse', 'arrest', 'throw away', 'hunt', 'despise', 'take advantage of', 'get rid of', 'betray', 'rape', 'punish', 'control', 'destroy', 'kick', 'tempt', 'threaten', 'prohibit', 'hurt', 'suspect', 'hinder', 'bite', 'hit', 'run over (by a car)', etc.

It should be remarked that some adversative verbs often occur with inanimate subjects. When the context is not adversative, the passive becomes neutral as will be seen in Section 3.

3.   The neutral /thùuk/ passive

Evidence seems to suggest that the neutral /thùuk/ passive emerged in Thai around 1912—six decades after the first incidence of the adversative /thùuk/ passive was found. In my data representing Thai in the 1980's, the neutral /thùuk/ passive was found to occur less frequently than its adversative counterpart. In contrast, my data representing the years 1998-1999 show that the occurrence of the neutral passive surpasses that of its adversative counterpart (about 60:40 frequency rate).[7] The data also show that *this type of passive can be used with all transitive verbs.* Therefore, it is safe to say that the neutral /thùuk/ passive has established itself as the general passive in Thai.

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[7] The frequency rate is acquired by counting the number of occurrences of the neutral and the adversative /thùuk/ passive in a concordance of the word /thùuk/, which is approximately 30,000 characters long.

Examples:

(19) khɔ̌ɔ-muun ***thùuk*** nam-maa
data   PSSV.   bring
wíkhrɔ́
analyze
'The data were brought to be
analyzed.'

(20) khǎw ***thùuk*** panrayaa
he   PSSV.   wife
khɔ̌ɔ-rɔ́ɔŋ   hây   phaa
request   that   take
pay   sɨ̌ɨ-khɔ̌ɔŋ
go   shop
'He was asked by his wife to
take her shopping.'

(21) kaan-phátthanaa mák
development   normally
thùuk khâw-cay   nay
PSSV. understand in
khwaam-mǎay   wâa...
meaning   that
'Development is normally un-
derstood to mean ...'

(22) thanǒn níi   ***thùuk*** sâaŋ
road   this   PSSV.   build
mɨ̂a   sàttawát   thîi-lɛ́ɛw
when   century   last
'This road was built in the last
century.'

It is interesting to note that verbs such
as /khɔ̌ɔrɔ́ɔŋ/ 'ask', as in (20), /khâw-
cay/ 'understand', as in (21), and / sâaŋ/
'build', as in (22), are normally
passivized by using the /thùuk/ structure.
In the past, about two decades ago, these
verbs were found to be passivized by
other strategies as in (23), (24) and (25),
respectively.

(23) khǎw   ***dây-ráp***
he   receive
kaan-khɔ̌ɔ-rɔ́ɔŋ
request
càak panrayaa hây
from wife   that
phaa   pay   sɨ̌ɨ-khɔ̌ɔŋ
take   go   shopping
'He was asked by his wife to
take her shopping.'

(24) kaan-phátthanaa mák
development   normally
pen thîi   khâw-cay
be   that   understand
nay khwaam-mǎay wâa...
in   meaning   that
'Development is normally un-
derstood to mean ...'

(25) thanǒn níi   ***sâaŋ***   mɨ̂a
road   this   build   when
sàttawát   thîi-lɛ́ɛw
century   last
This road was built in the last
century.'

Verbs with favorable meaning, such as
those meaning 'to ask', 'to request', 'to
elect', 'to invite', 'to appoint', etc. can
now be used with the passive auxiliary
/thùuk/, whereas in the past they were
normally found to occur with the word
/dây-ráp/ 'to receive' as in (23) (See
details in Prasithrathsint 1985: 97-100).

*Verbs of perception, emotion, and cog-
nition,* such as those meaning 'to see',
'to hear', 'to love', 'to know', 'to un-
derstand', 'to be pleased with', etc. can
now be passivized by using the passive
auxiliary /thùuk/, whereas in the past
they were usually passivized by using

the strategy represented by (24), with the verb /pen/ 'be' and the /thîi/ nominalizer. (See Prasithrathsint 1985: 92-97)

The passive sentence (25) represents a very common passive in Thai, found to be the most frequently used in my study (Prasithrathsint 1985: 73-76). It is an unmarked passive construction, in which there is no passive marker. The verb is interpreted as an intransitive passive verb that is homophonous with its transitive counterpart. This is usually found to be used with *factitive* verbs, such as those meaning 'to create', 'to build', 'to make', 'to cut', 'to decorate', etc. However, today these verbs are normally passivized by using the passive auxiliary /thùuk/.

Therefore, it seems that the /thùuk/ passive marker can now be used with virtually all kinds of transitive verbs, and thus we can say that the neutral /thùuk/ passive has been implanted in the language.

4. The /doon/ passive—the truly adversative passive in Thai

It is interesting to find that whereas the /thùuk/ passive is now ambiguous, another adversative passive has emerged and is productively used. It will be called here the /doon/ passive.

Actually, the first incidence of this type of passive was found in 1922, about a decade after the neutral /thùuk/ passive was found for the first time. However, after that it was not found at all until around the 1970's and the 1980's, but its occurrence was extremely rare—only

9 instances of it were found altogether in the data representing the years 1922-1982. (Prasithrathsint 1985: 101)

The analysis shows that the word /doon/ has the same meaning as /thùuk/ and is also found to occur in the same syntactic environments, except that *it is never used in a neutral passive construction.*

4.1 /doon/ as a transitive verb meaning 'to hit (the target)'

Similar to the earliest occurrence of the word /thùuk/ represented by (6), the word /doon/ is also found to be used with exactly the same meaning—'to hit (the target)' or 'to touch (the right spot)', as in (26) and (27).

(26) khǎw   khwâaŋ kɔ̂ɔn-hǐn
      he   throw   stone
      doon   hǔa   mǎa
      hit   head   dog
      'He threw a stone, and it hit the dog's head.'

(27) lûuk · má-phráaw   lòn
      fruit   coconut   fall
      doon   bâan
      hit   house
      'The coconut fell down and hit the house.'

In such environments as (26) and (27), even though /thùuk/ would be used in the past, now it is likely that Thai speakers prefer using /doon/. In other words, /thùuk/, which is a transitive verb meaning 'to hit (the target)', has become somewhat obsolete.

There is another piece of evidence supporting the obsolescence of /thùuk/ in this sense. In Thai, the compound /thùuk-cay/ (touch + heart), which means 'to please, to be satisfactory, pleasing, appealing', was widely used until very recently when /doon-cay/ (touch + heart) with exactly the same meaning started to be used. This word has replaced the former almost completely, as least in the corpus I use.

4.2 /doon/ as an intransitive verb meaning 'to incur'

The second pattern in which /doon/ is found is a sentence in which the subject is normally animate and the verb /doon/ means 'to incur', 'to be hit by' or 'to suffer from'. The object of /doon/, similar to (7), must be a noun with an unfavorable meaning, as in (28) below.

(28)　khǎw　　***doon***　　yaa-phít thîi
　　　　he　　　incur　　poison　that
　　　　manút　chìit　　thîi　　phîit
　　　　man　　spray　　at　　　plant
　　　　'He incurred the poison that man sprayed on plants.'

This pattern is very productive, judging from the frequency of its occurrence. Again, this has replaced the pattern that used to be marked by /thùuk/ in the past. The nouns that follow /doon/ are, for example, /aawút/ 'weapon', /fay/ 'fire', /krasǔn/ 'bullet', /phaayú/ 'storm', /wikrìt sèetthakìt/ 'economic crisis', /mîit-koon/ 'razor', /rabə̀ət/ 'bomb', /khwaam-rɔ́ɔn/ 'heat', /fǒn/ 'rain', /khɔ́ɔŋ-plɔɔm/ 'counterfeit thing', /khɔ̂ɔ-hǎa/ 'accusation', /dὲɛt/ 'sunlight', /phǒn-krathóp/ 'impact, effect',

/khàaw-lɨɨ/ 'rumor', /náam-thûam/ 'flood', /mɔɔrasǔm-kaan-mɨaŋ/ 'political monsoon', etc.

4.3 /doon/ as a passive auxiliary in an adversative passive construction

The analysis of the data shows that /doon/ is most productively used as a passive marker. It is interesting to notice that *it conveys only an adversative meaning*. The subject of the /doon/ passive is mostly animate, and the verb is normally adversative (as 29, 30 below). However, even if the subject is inanimate or the verb is not adversative, the context is always makes clear that the meaning of the sentence is adversative, such as (31).

(29)　khǎw　　***doon***　　tham-ráay
　　　　he　　　PSSV.　assault
　　　　(basic passive without an agent)
　　　　'He was assaulted.'

(30)　khǎw ***doon***　　rót chon　　taay
　　　　he　PSSV.　car hit　　die
　　　　(passive with an agent)
　　　　'He was hit dead by a car.'

(31)　bâan　***doon***　khamooy khîn
　　　　house PSSV. thief　　break into
　　　　khâaw-khɔ́ɔŋ　***doon***
　　　　belongings　　PSSV.
　　　　rɨɨ-khón
　　　　search
　　　　'The house was broken into. The belongings were searched.'

4.4 The substitution of /doon/ for /thùuk/ in the adversative passive

Evidence shows that /doon/ is equivalent to /thùuk/ in its adversative sense and suitable as its substitute. Two sentences are found in which both adversative passive markers co-occur. They are as follows:

(32) phûu   thîi   ***doon   thùuk***
      person who   PSSV.   PSSV.
      tàt   khɛ̌ɛn...
      cut   arm
      'A person whose arm was cut...'

(33) phrá-sòp khɔ̌ɔŋ kasàt
      corpse   of   king
      faaroo   ***doon   thùuk***
      Pharaoh PSSV.   PSSV.
      lɔ̂ɔp   khùt
      steal   dig
      'The corpse of the Pharaoh was dug up stealthily.'

The use of /doon/ and /thùuk/ together as a reduplication is not an uncommon phenomenon in Thai. Many compound words are made of   two words of the same meaning. Some linguists call them "semantic doublets"; for example, /plìan-plɛɛŋ/ (change+change) 'to change', and /pə̀ət-phə̌əy/ (open+open) 'to open up, disclose, reveal, uncover.' Very often we find that one of the words in a semantic doublet becomes obsolete while the other one survives well. In the examples alone, the word /plɛɛŋ/ 'to change' and /phə̌əy/ 'to open' are very rarely used alone. They survive as part of the compounds. However, in /doon-thùuk/, even though /thùuk/ still survives as an adversative passive marker, it now tends to be used as such only restrictively. Its new function is to be a general passive marker in Thai.

5. Conclusion

This study aims to provide evidence as to how the adversative and neutral /thùuk/ passives in Thai have developed and how they are used in Thai today. The evidence of present usage shows that /thùuk/ plays an ambivalent role: it marks both adversative and non-adversative passives. This study also shows that the /doon/ passive seems to have developed in the track of /thùuk/ and that now it takes the full function of adversative passive marker. From this, I infer that it is replacing /thùuk/ for that function. Also, the fact that /thùuk/ is now used with virtually all transitive verbs in Thai suggests that the general passive has been established in Thai syntax even though the structure of adversative passive, which seems to be a typical areal feature of East and Southeast Asian languages, still prevails with a new marker.

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