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EDITORIAL NOTES

This special issue of MANUSYA contains eight articles and a book review. The articles are based on various aspects of linguistic research. They are grouped under the theme “Studies in Linguistics: Phonology, Syntax, and Pragmatics,” which represents fairly well the content of all the articles and the book review.

Three articles in this issue focus on tones. They deal with variation and change in the tonal systems in three various languages. Kanita Chaimano analyzes tonal variation in Tai Lue spoken in Thailand and classifies the Tai Lue dialects into groups according to their tonal systems. Chommanad Intajamornrak’s acoustic study of Tai Yuan tones used by speakers of Mal (non-tonal language) shows that there is variation which divides the Mal speakers into two groups. The article by Phanintra Teeranon and Rungwimol Rungrojsuwan is also an acoustic study. It concerns the on-going change in the high tone of Standard Thai, as evidenced in the difference in the pronunciation of this tone between the old and the young groups.

Two studies focus on syntax. Somsonge Burusphat and Qin Xiaohang analyze idioms in Zhuang, a Tai minority language in China, and classify them into two major types according to their syntactic structures. Another article by Suthasinee Piyapasuntra concerns syntactic patterns used by Thai children. It is found that as the children grow up, their narratives become more and more syntactically complex.

The rest of the articles are pragmatic studies. Kandapon Jaroenkitbowom analyzes the various meanings of the word *chɔ̂ɔp* in Thai. She found that the polysemy of this word arises from pragmatic motivation, which has caused *chɔ̂ɔp* to have three different meanings: ‘to be right,’ ‘to like,’ and ‘often.’ The article by Krisda Chaemsaiithong is a historical pragmatic study of apologies in English. Based on the Essex pauper letters of the 19th century, he found that apologies are not a politeness device but a politic strategy used in negotiating and constructing a smooth, harmonious interpersonal relationship. The last article by Suttinee Chuanchaisit and Kanchana Prapphal concerns Thai university students’ strategies used in their communication in English. They found that the high-ability students prefer risk-taking strategies, e.g., social-affective, fluency-oriented, help-seeking, and circumlocution strategies, whereas the low-ability students tend to avoid these strategies.

Finally, the book review adds to the knowledge of diachronic approach to syntactic studies. It gives interesting information of British English and American English and how they have changed syntactically over time.

Amara Prasithrathsint
Natchanan Yaowapat
Issue Editors
TONAL VARIATION IN THE LUE DIALECTS OF THAILAND

Kanita Chaimano

Abstract

This study analyzes the tonal variation of Lue dialects spoken in Thailand. These dialects are classified into groups based on structural differences in their tonal systems, and this classification then forms the basis for a linguistic map of Thailand’s Lue dialects. The data were collected from 45 villages in 7 provinces in the northern part of Thailand. Three informants were selected to represent each village, for a total of 135 informants participating in this research. William J. Gedney’s (1972) wordlist was used to elicit tonal data. The tonal features of the dialects were analyzed using auditory information and the personal computer programs “PRAAT, ver. 4.5.12” and Microsoft Excel.

My research categorizes the Lue dialects into two major classes with tonal systems consisting of five and six tones, respectively. Deeper analysis of each dialect’s tonal system and tone features supports further division into nine basic patterns (patterns 1–5 with five tones and pattern 6–9 with six tones), with additional subdivisions in pattern 3, 5, 7, and 8. Furthermore, these nine basic patterns may also be organized into five groups based on the tone splits and mergers in column A of Gedney’s (1972) tone chart:

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(1) A1-2-3-4 (A1=A3, A2=A4), comprising patterns 1 and 6;
(2) A1-23-4, comprising patterns 2 and 7,
(3) A1-234, comprising patterns 3 and 8,
(4) A12-34, comprising pattern 4; and
(5) A123-4, comprising patterns 5 and 9.

The tonal system and tone features of pattern 3/2 were found to be distributed widely in many provinces (Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Lampang, and Nan). The tonal system and tone features of patterns 5/1 and 8/2 are found in Chiang Rai province; and those of patterns 4 and 7/1, in Chiang Mai province.

Introduction

According to Ruengdet Pankhuuenkhat’s (1988) classification of the Tai language family, Lue has two main dialects: Lue and Yong. Some linguists identify the Lue and the Yong as belonging to a single ethnic group. Indeed linguistically, the Yong living in Thailand are of the same group as the Lue, but both of them call themselves Yong because they originated in Mueang Yong, Myanmar. Maliwan Tuwakham (2005) expands on this by noting that the Yong were originally Lue speakers who migrated from Sipsongpanna to Mueang Yong in the Shan state of Myanmar, where they assumed power over the indigenous people. The Lue then became the majority group in Mueang Yong and renamed themselves Yong after the name of Mueang where they were living. When these Lue were later forced to move to Lamphun, Thailand, they preserved their ethnicity by insisting that they were Yong.

A number of previous studies have investigated the sound systems of Lue and Yong, surveying the languages as they are spoken both in Thailand and in other countries with Lue and Yong populations.
Because those studies utilized data collected both here and abroad, their phonological analysis differs in terms of consonant phonemes and tonal systems. Tonal systems of Lue and Yong presented in those studies are summarized in tables 1 and 2.

These previous studies on the tonal system and tone features of both Lue and Yong dialects surveyed dialects in only one location. Comparative studies of Lue and/or Yong dialects from different locations have not yet been conducted. The present study addresses this lack by presenting an overview of the tonal systems of all Lue dialects in Thailand (including Yong dialects as a subclass of Lue), using tonal analysis to classify these dialects, and providing a linguistic map of Lue dialects, which has never been done before.

### Table 1: The tonal system of Lue dialects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Area(s) Studied</th>
<th>Number of Tones</th>
<th>Tones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chamnan Rodhetphai (1974)</td>
<td>Chiang Kham, Chiang Rai</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1. mid level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. low level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. high falling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. high rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. low rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seree Veroha (1975)</td>
<td>Ban Yon, Tambon Yong, Chiang Kham, Chiang Rai</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1. mid level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. low level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. high level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. high falling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. mid rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. low rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Li (1977)</td>
<td>Cheng Tong, Yunnan</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1. mid level (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. mid level (33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. low rising (13) or low level (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. high level (55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. mid falling (31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. high rising (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanthariya Lamchiagdase (1984)</td>
<td>Ban Hua Fay, Tambon Kluay Phae, Mueang, Lampang</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1. mid high falling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. low tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. mid falling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. high falling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. high rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. mid low falling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pornsawan Ploykaew (1985)</td>
<td>Ban Sanmafan, Chiang Rai</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1. mid low rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. high level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. mid level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. mid low level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. low level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. mid low falling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Objectives of the study**

The purpose of this study is to analyze the tonal system and tone features of Lue dialects in Thailand. These dialects will be grouped on the basis of comparative tonal data. Then a linguistic map of the dialects will be created based on the tonal systems identified.

**Table 2: The tonal systems of Yong dialects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Area(s) Studied</th>
<th>Number of Tones</th>
<th>Tones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ruengdet Pankhuenkhat (1978)</td>
<td>Pa Sang, Lamphun</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1. mid &lt;br&gt;2. low &lt;br&gt;3. high &lt;br&gt;4. falling &lt;br&gt;5. rising &lt;br&gt;6. low falling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somchit Davies (1979)</td>
<td>Ban Don Chai, Mae Tha Valley, Lamphun</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1. mid level &lt;br&gt;2. mid falling &lt;br&gt;3. lower low level &lt;br&gt;4. high falling &lt;br&gt;5. higher low level &lt;br&gt;6. rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary E Sarawit (1979)</td>
<td>Pa Sang and Makhua Jae, Lamphun</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1. mid &lt;br&gt;2. low &lt;br&gt;3. high falling &lt;br&gt;4. mid rising &lt;br&gt;5. rising &lt;br&gt;6. low falling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisuttira Neamnark (1985)</td>
<td>Mueang, Pa Sang, Ban Hong and Mae Tha, Lamphun</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1. mid &lt;br&gt;2. low rising &lt;br&gt;3. high falling &lt;br&gt;4. mid rising &lt;br&gt;5. mid falling &lt;br&gt;6. rising falling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodology

The theoretical orientation of this study follows Gedney’s (1972) checklist for determining tones. The Lue dialects under consideration will be classified on the basis of their tone splits and mergers. In numbering the tones in this research, tones on smooth syllables are numbered, while the tones on checked syllables are treated as allotones of smooth-syllable tones.

The tone features of Thailand’s Lue dialects were analyzed using the software program “PRAAT, ver.4.5.12”. First, each word uttered was recorded with the program, and then the program calculated the fundamental frequencies and the fundamental frequency curves of each utterance. The results are displayed as the relation between the fundamental frequency and the duration of each tone.

Microsoft Excel was used to plot charts the fundamental frequencies, producing tonal contours for each word. A number system was used to identify the tonal contour of all the Lue dialects.

These results formed the basis for a description the tonal system and tone features of Lue dialects. Comparison of the tonal systems was used to classify the dialects into groups, and these groups were then displayed in language maps.

Research Instruments

Gedney’s (1972) checklist for determining tones has been adapted for this research. The wordlist comprises minimal sets or pairs. For each consonant class, I have selected words which evince the maximum number of similarities across the tone columns so that, in most cases, the only differences among words in a single row are the tones. Such a selection prevents the elicited tonal data from being affected by differences in consonant or vowel sounds and thus producing errors in the tonal analysis.

Table3: A checklist for determining tone in Lue dialects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>DS</th>
<th>DL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>pʰä:</td>
<td>pʰä:</td>
<td>pʰä:</td>
<td>pʰäk</td>
<td>(nä:) pʰä:k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘cliff’</td>
<td>‘to chop’</td>
<td>‘cloth’</td>
<td>‘vegetable’</td>
<td>‘forehead’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>pʰa:</td>
<td>pʰa:</td>
<td>pʰa:</td>
<td>pʰa:k</td>
<td>pʰa:k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘to throw’</td>
<td>‘forest’</td>
<td>‘aunt’</td>
<td>‘to stick in’</td>
<td>‘mouth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>bʰ:n</td>
<td>bʰ:n</td>
<td>bʰ:n</td>
<td>bʰ:t</td>
<td>bʰ:t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘to bloom’</td>
<td>‘shoulder’</td>
<td>‘mad’</td>
<td>‘card’</td>
<td>‘to cut’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘to rub’</td>
<td>‘pier’</td>
<td>‘to challenge’</td>
<td>‘to greet’</td>
<td>‘snail’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data collection

The area studied covered seven provinces: Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Lampang, Phrae, Nan, and Phayao. These seven provinces contain 37 districts. In most cases, one village was chosen from each district, and three informants were selected to represent each of these villages. This held true for the 29 districts where all speakers identified themselves as Lue. In eight of the districts, however, villagers self-identification divides them into two groups: Lue and Yong. Therefore, two villages were chosen from each of these districts, making 16 villages with three informants each. Villages selected had to meet two linguistic criteria and one nonlinguistic criterion. The linguistic criteria were, first, that the majority of villagers were Lue speakers and, second, that villagers still used Lue for everyday communication both at home and in the local area. The nonlinguistic criterion was that villagers should continue to engage in traditional practices or important ceremonies and rituals, such as the call for the tutelary spirit, the chasing of unlucky past deeds, and the ceremony for good fortune. All told, this produced a total of 45 villages and 135 informants. The informants were all women not less than 50 years old.

Tone comparison of Lue dialects in Thailand

Comparison of tone numbers

The tonal systems of the Lue dialects spoken in Thailand have either five or six tones on smooth syllables. The tone splits and mergers in Column A reveal nine tonal patterns.

Table 4: Comparison of tonal patterns with number of tones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone pattern</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 tone system</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 tone system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows that tonal patterns 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are five-tone systems, while tonal patterns 6, 7, 8, and 9 are six-tone systems.

Tone splits, tone merger, and the complementary distribution of allotones

All nine tonal patterns are compared in terms of tone splits, tone mergers, and complementary distribution of allotones in Figure 1.
Figure 1 shows that the tone splits are conditioned by the phonetic features of the initial consonants. Five types of tone split that are found in tone column A: A1-2-3-4 (A1=A3, A2=A4), A1-23-4, A1-234, A12-34 and A123-4. Tone columns B, C, and D evince two-way splits conditioned by the voicing of the initial consonants.

1. Tone Column A
   a) Tonal patterns 1 and 6 have a tone split of A1-2-3-4 (A1=A3, A2=A4).
   b) Tonal patterns 2 and 7 have a tone split of A1-23-4.
   c) Tonal patterns 3 and 8 have a tone split of A1-234.

2. Tone Column B, C, DL, and DS
   d) Tonal pattern 4 has a tone split of A12-34.
   e) Tonal patterns 5 and 9 have a tone split of A123-4.

All patterns have a two-way split conditioned by the voicing of the initial consonants.

The tone splits in column A have been used to classify Lue dialects since the split in column A differ from the other columns. The Lue dialects may be classified into five groups according to the splits and mergers of tones in column A, as follows.
Lue dialect group 1 (Patterns 1 and 6)

In Lue dialect group 1, column A appears as A1-2-3-4 (A1=A3, A2=A4); that is, it consists of two tones in A1+A3 and A2+A4, respectively. Lue dialects with this tonal arrangement are spoken in Khun Tan District in Chiang Rai Province, Song Khwae District, Tha Wang Pha District, and Pua District in Nan Province, Chiang Kham District, Chun District, and Chiang Muan District in Phayao Province.

Lue dialect group 2 (Patterns 2 and 7)

In Lue dialect group 2, column A appears as A1-23-4; that is, it consists of three tones A1, A2+A3 and A4. Lue dialects with this tonal arrangement are spoken in Mae Tha District, Wiang Nong Long District, and Li District in Lamphun Province, Wiang Kaen District, Phan District, and Wiang Chai District in Chiang Rai Province, San Sai District, Sameong District, and Doi Saket District in Chiang Mai Province, Chiang Kham District, Chun District, and Chiang Muan District in Phayao Province, and Santi Suk District in Nan Province.

Lue dialect group 3 (Patterns 3 and 8)

In Lue dialect group 3, column A appears as A1-234; that is, it consists of two tones: A1 and A2+A3+A4. Lue dialects with this tonal arrangement are spoken in Mae Ai District and Fang District in Chiang Mai Province, Mae Tha District and Mueang District in Lampang Province, Mueang District, Thung Hua Chang District, Mae Tha District, and Ban Thi District in Lamphun Province, Thung Chang District in Nan Province, and Mae Chan District and Phan District in Chiang Rai province.

Lue dialect group 4 (Pattern 4)

In Lue dialect group 4, column A appears as A12-34; that is, it consists of two tones: A1+A2 and A3+A4. Lue dialects with this tonal arrangement are spoken in Mae On District, San Kamphaeng District, and San Pa Tong District in Chiang Mai Province.

Lue dialect group 5 (Patterns 5 and 9)

In Lue dialect group 5, column A appears as A123-4; that is, it consists of two tones A1+A2+A3 and A4. Lue dialects with this tonal arrangement are spoken in Chiang Khong District, Chiang Saen District, Mueang District, and Mae Sai District in Chiang Rai Province, Mueang District in Phrae Province, Ban Hong District in Lamphun Province and Phu Sang District in Phayao Province.
Map 1: Dialect areas of the five Lue dialect groups based on tone splits and mergers in Column A

Light symbol represents Lue dialects, while dark symbol represents Yong dialects.
Comparison of tonal contours

As each dialect may display similarities and differences of tonal contours, this data arrangement shows the tonal contours shared by the informants. The tonal contours of the nine tonal patterns are presented in the tonal diagram as shown in figure 2.
Tonal Variation in the Lue Dialects of Thailand

Pattern 4

Pattern 5/1

Pattern 5/2

Pattern 6

Pattern 7/1

Pattern 7/2
Figure 2: The tonal contours of the nine Lue tonal patterns

The geographical distribution of the nine Lue tonal patterns

Each of the Lue tonal patterns is found in various part of Northern Thailand. More specifically, the relevant dialects are spoken in the following seven provinces: Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Lamphun, Lampang, Phrae, Nan and Phayao.
Tonal Variation in the Lue Dialects of Thailand

Map 2: Geographical distribution of the nine tonal patterns

Light symbols represent Lue dialects, while dark symbols represent Yong dialects.
Classification of Lue dialects

The Lue dialects in Thailand can be classified according to two criteria: (1) the total number of tones and (2) the tone splits and mergers in column A. Based on the number of tones in a dialect’s tonal system, the dialects are assigned to one of two groups: Group 1 or Group 2.

**Classification of Lue dialects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1 (5 tones)</th>
<th>Group 2 (6 tones)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Ban On Luay (Chiang Mai)</td>
<td>1) Ban Dong Careon Chai (Chiang Mai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Ban Mai Mok Caam (Chiang Mai)</td>
<td>2) Ban Luang Tai (Chiang Mai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Ban Huay Luang (Chiang Rai)</td>
<td>3) Ban Mae Sap Neua (Chiang Mai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Ban Tha Kham (Chiang Rai)</td>
<td>4) Ban Kluay (Phan, Chiang Rai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Ban Sri Don Chai (Chiang Rai)</td>
<td>5) Ban Kluay (Mae Chan, Chiang Rai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Ban Muang Ton (Lamphun)</td>
<td>6) Ban Ko Sai (Chiang Rai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Ban Tha Pladuk (Lamphun)</td>
<td>7) Ban Pa Paw (Lamphun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Ban Makhue Cea (Lamphun)</td>
<td>8) Ban Nong Bua (Nan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Ban Kluay Klang (Lampang)</td>
<td>9) Ban Khon (Nan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Ban Mae Pung (Lampang)</td>
<td>10) Ban Sop Yang (Nan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) Ban Pang Puk (Nan)</td>
<td>11) Ban Yuan (Phayao)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) Ban Ngop Sala (Nan)</td>
<td>12) Ban Rong Meat (Phayao)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13) Ban Mitraphap (Chiang Mai)</td>
<td>13) Ban Thung Careon (Phayao)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14) Ban Don Mai (Chiang Mai)</td>
<td>14) Ban Sop Pong (Phayao)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15) Ban Don Pin (Chiang Mai)</td>
<td>15) Ban Kham Sop Puen (Chiang Rai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16) Ban San How (Chiang Mai)</td>
<td>16) Ban Pa Pae (Chiang Rai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17) Ban Chaiphum (Chiang Rai)</td>
<td>17) Ban Sri Don Moon (Chiang Rai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18) Ban Dok Keaw (Chiang Rai)</td>
<td>18) Ban Pa Phai Wang Nam Li (Lamphun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19) Ban Rong Yeaw (Chiang Rai)</td>
<td>19) Ban Ton Phuang (Lamphun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20) Ban Muang Daeng (Chiang Rai)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21) Ban Chang Khaw Noi Neau (Lamphun)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22) Ban Rai (Lamphun)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23) Ban Thung Khaw Hang (Lamphun)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24) Ban Nong Yang Fa (Lamphun)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25) Ban Pa Tan Hong Hae (Lamphun)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26) Ban Thin (Phrae)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3: Classification of Lue dialects**
Map 3: Dialect areas of the two Lue dialect groups based on number of tones

5-Tone systems (Lue) 6-Tone systems (Lue)
5-Tone systems (Yong) 6-Tone systems (Yong)

Due to space limitation, some symbols overlap.
Conclusion

This study has categorized Lue dialects according to the number of tones in their tonal systems. They have then been sub-categorized according to the tone configurations of tone column A. Some tonal patterns have been further arranged based on variations in complementary tone distribution.

Based on the number of contrastive tones in their tonal systems, Lue dialects can be classified into two groups: Group 1, with five contrastive tones, and Group 2, with six contrastive tones.

Examination of the tone splits and mergers in column A reveals nine distinct tonal patterns in these Lue dialects. Tonal patterns 1 through 5 belong to the five-tone Group 1. Tonal patterns 6 through 9 belong to the six-tone Group 2.

Discussion

The Lue dialects have been classified into two groups based on the tonal systems: the five-tone systems in Group 1 and the six-tone systems in Group 2. Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Lamphun, and Nan provinces have dialects from both Group 1 and Group 2. Lampang and Phrae only have dialects from Group 1, while Phayao has only Group 2 dialects. Therefore, it can be concluded that most Lue dialects in Thailand belong to Group 1.

A classification of the Lue dialects into P group was carried out by Chamberlain (1975). His study of the Lue dialects spoken in Chiang Hung Mueang Yong, Ceng Tong, Mueang Sing, Mueang Long, Ou Neua, Kanlampa, Sop Tiek and Houei Lao will be compared with this study. Chamberlain classified a Lue dialect as belonging to the P group if its tone column *A had a split/merger pattern of *A123-4, and tone column *BCD had a split/merger pattern of *BCD123-4, with *B = *DL.

If one compares the tone split and mergers found in Chamberlain’s (1975) analysis of Lue dialects with the splits and mergers found in the Lue dialects of Thailand, one notices the same split/merger configuration in columns BCD (i.e., 123-4) and, similarly, B=DL. Differences are found only in column A. The Lue dialect studied by Chamberlain in Chiang Hung and Mueang Yong had A12-34, while those in Ceng Tong, Mueang Sing, Mueang Long, Ou Neua, Kanlampa, Sop Tiek, and Houei Lao had A123-4. In contrast, the Lue dialects spoken in Thailand have A1-2-3-4 (A1=A3, A2=A4), A1-23-4, A1-234, A12-34 and A123-4.

A comparison of tone split/merger configurations in the Lue dialects of Chiang Hung and Mueang Yong, on the one hand, and the dialects of Ceng Tong, Mueang Sing, Mueang Long, Ou Neua, Kanlampa, Sop Tiek and Houei Lao, on the other hand, the Lue dialects of Thailand reveals differences in tone configuration of column A and similarities in the tone configurations of columns B, C, DL, and DS. This is shown in table 5.
Table 5: Comparison of Chiang Hung and Mueang Yong Lue and, Ceng Tong, Mueang Sing, Mueang Long, Ou Neua, Kanlampa, Sop Tiek, and Houei Lao Lue with the Lue dialects of Thailand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lue in Chiang Hung and Mueang Yong (Chamberlain 1975)</th>
<th>Lue in Ceng Tong, Mueang Sing, Mueang Long, Ou Neua, Kanlampa, Sop Tiek, and Houei Lao (Chamberlain 1975)</th>
<th>Lue dialects in Thailand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B123-4</td>
<td>B123-4</td>
<td>A123-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C123-4</td>
<td>C123-4</td>
<td>B123-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DL123-4</td>
<td>DL123-4</td>
<td>C123-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS123-4</td>
<td>DS123-4</td>
<td>DL123-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B = DL</td>
<td>B = DL</td>
<td>DS123-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Comparison of Chiang Hung and Mueang Yong Lue and, Ceng Tong, Mueang Sing, Mueang Long, Ou Neua, Kanlampa, Sop Tiek, and Houei Lao Lue with the Lue dialects of Thailand

Considering the historical evidence, Sawaeng Malasaem (1997: 40) notes that Tai Lue culture is spread all along the Mekong River, the Kok River, and the upper part of the Ping River. This area consists of many important cities, such as Chiang Rung, Mueang Luang, Mueang La, Chiang Tung, Mueang Yong, Chiang Khaeng, Mueang Sing, Chiang Saen, Chiang Khong, Mueang Fang, and cities that act as provincial capitals in Thailand today: Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Lampang, Phrae, Nan, and Phayao. Thus, it is not surprising to find Lue and Yong dialects only in the northern part of Thailand and covering only these seven provinces.

We should note that the Lue and the Yong constitute a single people who settled in Sipsongpanna and that the reason why they refer to themselves by different names is that they migrated to Thailand from different places: the Lue from Sipsongpanna and the Yong from Mueang Yong, Myanmar.

The next question to be considered concerns the variation of the Lue and Yong dialects. Why do some provinces have both Lue and Yong dialects, while other provinces have only one or the other?

This study showed that Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, and Lamphun Provinces have both Lue and Yong dialect communities, while Lampang, Phayao, and Nan Provinces have only Lue dialects and Phrae Province has only Yong dialects.
Teeraparb Lohitkun’s (1995: 96) history of the Tai Lue notes that King Kawila was assigned to bring Tai Lue people from Sipsongpanna into Chiang Mai and other provinces in Northern Thailand during the reign of King Rama I, forcing the Yong to move from their homeland in Mueang Yong, Myanmar, to settle in Lamphun. Therefore, we find both Lue and Yong dialects in Chiang Mai and Lamphun provinces. Furthermore, Teeraparb’s historical evidence is consistent with this study’s finding that Lue is spoken more than Yong in Chiang Mai and Yong more than Lue in Lamphun.

Geographically speaking, Chiang Mai, Phayao, and Nan border close to Myanmar and form the routes to Sipsongpanna, the homeland of Lue. Therefore, Chiang Rai is the province in which the Lue dialects first entered Thailand. Even though both Lue and Yong dialects are found in Chiang Rai, Lue is more widespread. Lue dialects are found in Phayao and Nan and also, by virtue of its geographical proximity, in Lampang. Phrae Province borders Lampang, Phayao, and Nan. As Lue dialects are spoken in these three provinces, one would also expect to find them spoken in Phrae, but this is not the case. Only Yong is found in Phrae, and that only in Ban Thin, Muaeng District. Interviews conducted in the course of this research revealed that the Yong in Phrae came from Lamphun. So, this again explains why Yong and not Lue is spoken there.

The Lue dialects spoken in Thailand today have been influenced by Standard Thai and Kham Mueang. The older generation are able to code switch i.e. they speak Lue among themselves but Standard Thai or Kham Mueang with their children. The Lue dialects will mostly like be transformed or lost to varying degrees in the future. The Thai government should play a role in promoting language preservation.

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Faculty of Graduate Studies, Mahidol University.

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THE FUNDAMENTAL FREQUENCIES OF TAI YUAN TONES SPOKEN BY LUA’ (MAL) SPEAKERS IN NAN PROVINCE, THAILAND

Chommanad Intajamornrak

Abstract

Lua’ (Mal), a Mon-Khmer language, has been reconstructed as a non-tonal language. However, it has been found that the Lua’ (Mal) spoken in Ta Luang Village in the Pua District of Nan Province is becoming a tonal language due to contact with Tai Yuan, the majority language of Nan Province. There are two groups of lexical pitches in the Ta Luang variety: high and low. This paper aims to analyze and compare the fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones as spoken by female Lua’ (Mal) speakers in Ta Luang Village and those of female native speakers of Tai Yuan from Pua District.

A wordlist covering the full complement of Tai Yuan tones was recorded directly on computer using Adobe Audition, version 2. The informants were three female Lua’ (Mal) speakers in Ta Luang Village and three female native speakers of Tai Yuan in Pua District. Fundamental frequencies were measured at 0%, 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100% of tone duration using Praat, version 4.5.24. The results show that Tai Yuan as spoken by native speakers has six tones, namely, low-rising, mid-rising, mid-level, mid-falling, high-level, and high-falling, while the Tai Yuan spoken by Lua’ (Mal) speakers contains only five tones due to a merger of the mid-level and mid-falling tones. The pitch contour of the Tai Yuan tones spoken by the two groups of speakers is obviously different. The range of fundamental frequencies in the dynamic tones (low-rising, mid-falling, and high-falling) spoken by Tai Yuan native speakers is wider than that of Lua’ (Mal) speakers.

It appears that Tai Yuan tones are interfered with by the native language, Lua’ (Mal). The differences in number of tones and in the acoustic characteristics of tones influence how non-tonal speakers produce a tone language. Moreover, the fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones spoken by Lua’ (Mal) speakers in Ta Luang Village show that they can be distinguished into two groups: High and Low.

Introduction

The Lua’ people have settled in many districts of Nan Province, for example Bo Kluea, Thung Chang, Pua, and Chiang Klang. They normally live together with other ethnic groups, e.g., Tai Lue, Hmong, Mien, and also Tai Yuan. The most recent data shows that there are, currently, more than 34,600 speakers of Lua’ (L-Thongkum et al. 2007a). According to Filbeck (1978),
the Lua’ language can be divided into two main dialects, Mal and Pray. The Lua’ are bilingual in either Mal or Pray and Tai Yuan, the majority language of Nan Province. Moreover, the younger generation can also speak Standard Thai very well.

Mal has been reconstructed as a non-tonal language (Filbeck 1978). However, the Mal spoken in Ta Luang Village in the Pua District of Nan Province (Ta Luang Mal) is becoming a tonal language due to contact with Tai Yuan. L-Thongkum and Intajamornrak (2009) found that the Mal spoken in Yot Doi Wattana Village has already become a tonal language with two tones: a high tone and a low tone. The Ta Luang variety has two pitches which can distinguish word meaning: a high pitch and a low pitch. The high pitch can vary with regard to syllable structures and intonation. In the examples given below, low pitch is indicated with a grave accent, while high pitch is left unmarked.

kāan ‘job’   kaan ‘defeated’
sɔɔt ‘to hunt’   sɔɔt ‘sticky’
cāŋ ‘able’   caŋ ‘to hire’

On the other hand, the Mal spoken in Kwet Village, Chiang Klang District, does not have contrastive tones or pitches. Consequently, it can be broadly said that varieties of Mal can be classified into three groups: non-tonal, incipient-tonal, and tonal.

Contact with Tai Yuan, the majority language of Nan Province, has been identified as a factor in certain varieties of Mal becoming tonal languages (L-Thongkum and Intajamornrak 2009). Language contact is a natural linguistic phenomenon occurring in any setting with bilingual or multilingual speakers. When multilinguals speak, their languages tend to influence each other, and this language contact situation leads to language variation and change (Prasithrathsint 2002: 92).

Tai Yuan has six tones, while Ta Luang Mal has only two pitches. Thus, it is worth investigating what happens to the tone system and acoustic characteristics of the six Tai Yuan tones when they are produced by Mal speakers. This paper studies the fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones as spoken by Ta Luang Mal and compares their acoustic characteristics with the Tai Yuan tones of native Tai Yuan speakers.

**Method**

The informants were six females aged between 25 and 40. Three of them were Ta Luang Mal speakers, and the other three were native Tai Yuan speakers living in Pua District.

The informants were asked to pronounce each test-word three times randomly, with a three-to-five second break between each word. The total number of test tokens was 180, or 30 test tokens for each informant. The data was recorded directly on a notebook computer using Adobe Audition, version 2. The fundamental frequencies were measured at 0%, 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100% of normalized duration\(^3\) using Praat, version 4.5.24.\(^4\)

The wordlist consisting of the six tones of Tai Yuan (L-Thongkum et al. 2007b) is shown below.

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\(^3\) The duration in real time is shown in the appendix.

\(^4\) Visit www.praat.org for more information on how to use the program.
Results

The fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones were divided into two groups, non-checked syllables and checked syllables, as shown in tables 1, 2, 3, and 4 and figures 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Non-checked syllables

Table 1 shows that the fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones in non-checked syllables as spoken by native Tai Yuan speakers lay between 184.03 and 299.60 Hz, a range of 115.57 Hz (maximum Hz minus minimum Hz). The pitch range of each individual speaker is shown in the appendix.

There are four contour tones: low-rising (T1), mid-rising (T2), mid-falling (T4), and high-falling (T6). The low-rising tone (T1) begins at a low pitch and then rises sharply to a high point. The mid-rising (T2) has the same general contour as the low-rising (T1) but lies in a different vocal range. It starts from a mid-point and then rises to the highest point of the scale. The mid-falling (T4) begins at a mid-point and then falls to a low pitch, while the high-falling (T6) starts at a high pitch and then rises before falling sharply at the end.

For the level tones, the mid-level (T3) begins at mid pitch and then falls slightly over the first 75% of the duration. The high-level (T5) has a contour similar to the mid-level (T3), but it starts at a higher pitch and falls slightly at the end.

---

Table 1: Fundamental frequencies of Tai Yuan tones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syllable structure</th>
<th>Tones (T)</th>
<th>Tai Yuan⁵</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-checked</td>
<td>T1</td>
<td>kaa</td>
<td>‘crow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T2</td>
<td>?aa</td>
<td>‘uncle’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T3</td>
<td>paa</td>
<td>‘forest’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T4</td>
<td>kaa</td>
<td>‘valuable’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T5</td>
<td>paa</td>
<td>‘aunt’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T6</td>
<td>kaa</td>
<td>‘merchandise’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checked</td>
<td>T2</td>
<td>pak</td>
<td>‘to plunge down’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T3</td>
<td>paak</td>
<td>‘mouth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T4</td>
<td>kaap</td>
<td>‘to hold between lips’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T5</td>
<td>kap</td>
<td>‘tight’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁵ The tone marking will be given when the fundamental frequencies are analyzed.
⁶ The pitch range of each individual speaker is shown in the appendix.
Table 1 Mean Fundamental Frequencies (Hz) of Tai Yuan Tones in Non-Checked Syllables as Spoken by Three Native Tai Yuan Speakers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>25%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>204.62</td>
<td>192.09</td>
<td>193.75</td>
<td>212.67</td>
<td>268.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>27.72</td>
<td>23.45</td>
<td>25.93</td>
<td>34.44</td>
<td>42.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>225.05</td>
<td>226.93</td>
<td>230.09</td>
<td>249.62</td>
<td>299.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>21.24</td>
<td>20.15</td>
<td>19.30</td>
<td>22.97</td>
<td>30.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>234.21</td>
<td>224.43</td>
<td>218.99</td>
<td>211.91</td>
<td>212.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>26.13</td>
<td>26.70</td>
<td>26.89</td>
<td>26.94</td>
<td>23.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>240.50</td>
<td>233.42</td>
<td>227.18</td>
<td>209.58</td>
<td>184.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>31.55</td>
<td>29.17</td>
<td>35.28</td>
<td>43.19</td>
<td>29.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5</td>
<td>248.70</td>
<td>247.97</td>
<td>245.43</td>
<td>240.15</td>
<td>230.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>29.04</td>
<td>25.86</td>
<td>27.82</td>
<td>29.55</td>
<td>38.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T6</td>
<td>260.12</td>
<td>279.29</td>
<td>280.23</td>
<td>231.24</td>
<td>197.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>27.72</td>
<td>34.91</td>
<td>38.97</td>
<td>35.02</td>
<td>17.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 Mean fundamental frequencies (Hz) of Tai Yuan tones in non-checked syllables as spoken by three Tai Yuan native speakers

Table 2 shows that the fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones in non-checked syllable as spoken by the Ta Luang Mal speakers lay between 197.97 and 304.47 Hz, a range of 106.5 Hz (maximum Hz minus minimum Hz). The F0 differential in T4 was only 9.66 Hz. It could thus be placed in the same group as the two level tones (T3 and T5), with F0 differentials of 8.39 and 21.87 Hz, respectively.

The F0 differentials of the contour tones (T1, T2, and T6) were 84.08, 66.64, and 67.07 Hz, respectively.
Table 2 Mean Fundamental Frequencies (Hz) of Tai Yuan Tones in Non-Checked Syllables as Spoken by Three Ta Luang Mal Speakers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>25%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>214.11</td>
<td>210.27</td>
<td>216.60</td>
<td>242.83</td>
<td>294.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>19.42</td>
<td>14.25</td>
<td>15.51</td>
<td>17.03</td>
<td>21.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>237.83</td>
<td>254.06</td>
<td>264.07</td>
<td>279.37</td>
<td>304.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>37.45</td>
<td>22.72</td>
<td>19.39</td>
<td>14.28</td>
<td>12.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>223.77</td>
<td>219.72</td>
<td>216.46</td>
<td>215.38</td>
<td>222.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>21.14</td>
<td>12.54</td>
<td>11.77</td>
<td>14.46</td>
<td>15.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>223.94</td>
<td>220.66</td>
<td>216.37</td>
<td>214.28</td>
<td>220.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>12.72</td>
<td>11.34</td>
<td>13.55</td>
<td>14.46</td>
<td>16.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5</td>
<td>243.53</td>
<td>250.61</td>
<td>247.65</td>
<td>245.85</td>
<td>228.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>15.41</td>
<td>8.74</td>
<td>13.66</td>
<td>16.27</td>
<td>22.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T6</td>
<td>250.55</td>
<td>265.04</td>
<td>262.19</td>
<td>238.33</td>
<td>197.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>17.65</td>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>15.87</td>
<td>21.23</td>
<td>11.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 Mean fundamental frequencies (Hz) of Tai Yuan tones in non-checked syllables as spoken by three Ta Luang Mal speakers

Figure 2 shows that the mid-falling tone (T4) has merged with the mid-level tone (T3). As spoken by Ta Luang Mal speakers, the six Tai Yuan tones have become five tones: three contour tones and two level tones. The three contour tones consist of low-rising (T1), mid-rising (T2), and high-falling (T6). The low-rising tone (T1) begins at a low pitch and then rises sharply to a high point. The mid-rising (T2) has a similar shape, but the contour is less extreme. It starts from a mid-range
pitch and then rises to the highest point on the scale. The high-falling tone (T6) starts at a mid/high pitch\(^7\) and then rises slightly before sharply falling to a low pitch.

For the level tones, the mid-level (T3), which is a merger of the mid-falling (T4) and mid-level tones (T3), begins at a mid/low pitch,\(^8\) falls slightly, and then rises slightly again beginning at 75% of the duration. The high-level tone (T5) starts at a mid-range pitch and stays level until it falls slightly during the last 25% of the duration.

It can be noticeable that Mal speakers tend to divide the six tones into 2 groups, especially during 0%-75% of the duration.

**Checked syllables**

Table 3 shows that the fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones in checked syllables as spoken by native Tai Yuan speakers lay between 168.77 and 303.34 Hz. The F0 differentials of the contour tones (T2 and T4) were 63.61 and 40.25 Hz respectively, and the F0 differentials of the level tones (T3 and T5) were 15.94 and 12.40 Hz.

In figure 3, the fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones in checked syllables spoken by native Tai Yuan speakers represent variants of the tones in non-checked syllables, but they differ slightly in their contours. Four tones appear in checked syllables, namely, mid-rising (T2), mid-level (T3), mid-falling (T4), and high-level (T5).

Table 4 shows that the fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones in checked syllables as spoken by Ta Luang Mal speakers lay between 216.35 and 269.32 Hz. The F0 differentials of contour tones (T2 and T4) were only 26.21 and 21.58 Hz respectively, and the F0 differentials of level tones (T3 and T5) were 7.28 and 5.08 Hz.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>25%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>239.73</td>
<td>239.75</td>
<td>254.13</td>
<td>273.49</td>
<td>303.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>15.13</td>
<td>16.06</td>
<td>10.83</td>
<td>12.78</td>
<td>11.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>203.62</td>
<td>202.15</td>
<td>197.71</td>
<td>193.25</td>
<td>187.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>14.87</td>
<td>17.01</td>
<td>14.53</td>
<td>12.86</td>
<td>14.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>209.02</td>
<td>205.99</td>
<td>200.80</td>
<td>186.86</td>
<td>168.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>17.26</td>
<td>13.18</td>
<td>14.58</td>
<td>12.83</td>
<td>12.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5</td>
<td>243.17</td>
<td>239.37</td>
<td>238.17</td>
<td>231.41</td>
<td>230.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>14.90</td>
<td>11.20</td>
<td>10.23</td>
<td>11.17</td>
<td>11.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^7\) The mid/high pitch means a mid pitch with gets close to the high pitch.

\(^8\) The mid/low pitch means a mid pitch with gets close to the low pitch.
In figure 4, the fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones in checked syllables spoken by Ta Luang Mal speakers show that there are four tones, which are said to be variants of the tones in non-checked syllables. T2 and T4, which are contour tones, evince less extreme contours than T2 and T4 in non-checked syllables. This means that the pitch range is very narrow.

The fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones spoken by the Ta Luang Mal and the native Tai Yuan speakers have been converted into semitones and are compared in figures 5, 6, and 7.

9 Semitones = $\frac{1}{\log(2)} \times 12 \times \log (\text{Hz to be translated} / \text{Hz reference level})$
Figure 4 shows the differences in pitch height and pitch contour of the contour tones spoken by the two groups of speakers. It clearly shows that the pitch range of the Ta Luang Mal speakers is narrower than that of the native Tai Yuan speakers. The F0 of T1 and T2 as spoken by Ta Luang Mal speakers is higher than that of the native Tai Yuan speakers, while the F0 of T4 and T6 as spoken by the Ta Luang Mal speakers is lower than their native counterparts. It should be emphasized that
the fundamental frequency of the mid-falling tone (T4) as spoken by Ta Luang Mal speakers differs in contour from that of native Tai Yuan speakers because it has become a level tone with the same shape as the mid-level tone (T3). Additionally, the high-falling tone (T6) as spoken by Ta Luang Mal tends to show less contour especially in the first 60% of the duration.

The fundamental frequencies of the level tones spoken by the two groups of speakers are quite similar in terms of both pitch and contour. However, the level tones as spoken by Ta Luang Mal speakers tend to converge during the last 25% of the duration (see figure 6).

Figure 7 compares the Tai Yuan tones in checked syllables. Here again, the range of F0 in checked syllables as spoken by native Tai Yuan speakers is wider than its counterpart as produced by the Ta Luang Mal speakers, especially in the contour tones, the mid-rising (T2) and mid-falling (T4), which rise and fall sharply.

Moreover, the acoustic characteristic of the mid-rising tone (T2) suggests that it may be affected by syllable structure. Ta Luang Mal lexical pitch varies according to syllable structure, e.g., high-falling in non-checked syllables and level in checked syllables (Intajamornrak 2008). Therefore, when Mal speakers produce the mid-rising tone in checked syllables, it shows less contour than it has in non-checked syllables.

**Conclusion and discussion**

The fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones spoken by Mal speakers in Ta Luang Village, Pa Klang Sub-District, Pua District, Nan Province, differ from the Tai Yuan tones spoken by native Tai Yuan speakers in terms of the number of tones, pitch, and contour.
The six tones of Tai Yuan become five tones when produced by Ta Luang Mal speakers because of the merger of the mid-level (T3) and mid-falling tone (T4). This is clearly evident in non-checked syllables, and it appears in all speakers. The merger can be explained by the contour of these two tones since the difference between the highest and the lowest frequency of the mid-falling tone (T4) is narrow. The mid-level (T3) starts at a mid pitch and stays level until the end of its duration while the mid-falling (T4) starts from a mid-range pitch and then falls slightly to a low pitch.
The flexion point (that is, the point at which the pitch starts to change its contour) of the mid-falling (T4) comes at 50% of the duration. It may be difficult for the Mal to distinguish these two tones. As a result, they pronounce them at the same pitch and with the same contour. In contrast, the high-falling tone (T5) shows much greater change. It starts at a high pitch and rises before falling sharply to a low pitch. For its part, the high-level tone (T6) starts at a high point and levels off until the end of duration. The two tones are easily distinguished, so the high-falling (T5) and high-level tones (T6) haven’t merged.

The acoustic characteristics of the Tai Yuan tones spoken by native Tai Yuan speakers and Ta Luang Mal speakers who speak Tai Yuan as a second language are shown in table 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tai Yuan tones</th>
<th>Spoken by native Tai Yuan speakers</th>
<th>Spoken by Ta Luang Mal speakers speaking Tai Yuan as a second language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>Low-rising</td>
<td>Low/mid-rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>Mid-rising</td>
<td>Mid/high-rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>Mid-level</td>
<td>Mid-level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>Mid-falling</td>
<td>Mid-level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5</td>
<td>High-level</td>
<td>High-level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T6</td>
<td>High-falling</td>
<td>High-falling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As is shown in table 5, T1 and T2 as spoken by Ta Luang Mal speakers start at a higher pitch (2+ and 3+), and both tones end at the highest pitch.10

With regard to contour, the tones as spoken by Ta Luang Mal speakers do not evince abrupt falls or rises. Therefore, the shape of their contour tones (e.g., T2 or T6) is flat compared to those spoken by native speakers. The mid-falling tone (T4) becomes mid-level, as can be clearly seen in non-checked syllables. The differences in pitch and contour show that the range for F0 of Tai Yuan tones as spoken by Mal speakers is narrower than that of native Tai Yuan speakers.

Ta Luang Mal is becoming a tonal language with two pitches: high and low. The fundamental frequencies of both native Ta Luang Mal words and loan words suggest two groups of pitch patterns, that is, high and low. The high group has two variants according to syllable structure: [high-level] in checked syllable and [high-falling] in non-checked syllable; the low group is phonetically low-rising and has no variants (Intajamornrak 2008).

10 When using the five-scale tone system, the symbol “+” means a higher pitch. For example, “2+” indicates a pitch of the second level that is approaching the third level.
Intajamornrak (2008) also explained that the loan words having T1, T3, and T4 in Tai Yuan appear in Mal with a low pitch, while loan words having T2, T5, and T6 in Tai Yuan have a high pitch in Mal. Therefore, Mal speakers may be perceiving pitch height rather than contour. Gandour (1983) studied the perception of tones by speakers of tone languages namely Mandarin, Cantonese, Taiwanese, Thai, and also a non-tonal language, English. His results showed that English speakers pay more attention to pitch height than speakers of tone languages did. He claimed that English does not have contrastive tones, so English speakers focused their attention on the pitch of the fundamental frequencies. Perhaps, this finding could be confirmed by a perception test.

As a result, when the Mal speakers produce Tai Yuan with its six tones, their production does not exactly match the native speakers’, especially with respect to contour tones. The fundamental frequencies indicate that Mal speakers tend to divide the six tones into 2 groups, even though the mid-falling and mid-level have merged (see Figure 2).

It can be concluded that Tai Yuan tones of the Ta Luang Mal speakers are affected by the native language, Mal. The differences in number of tones or pitches as well as the acoustic characteristics of tones or pitches influence how non-tonal speakers produce a tonal language. Moreover, the fundamental frequencies of the Tai Yuan tones spoken by the Mal in Ta Luang Village show that they can be distinguished into two groups: high and low. The high group consists of the mid-rising (T2), high-level (T5) and high-falling (T6), and the low group includes the low-rising (T1), mid-level (T3), and mid-falling (T4). This classification reflects the way in which Mal speakers classify Tai Yuan tones to suit their own native pitch patterns, which are high and low.

However, it would be interesting to study the fundamental frequencies of Tai Yuan tones spoken by the younger generation of Mal further because they go to school and speak Tai Yuan on a daily basis with friends who are Mien, Hmong, and native Tai Yuan. Moreover, they can speak Standard Thai very well compared to the older generation, which speaks Standard Thai only occasionally.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to the Thailand Research Fund through the Royal Golden Jubilee Ph.D. Program for financial support of my research (Grant No. PHD0270/2546) and the Center of Excellence Program on Language, Linguistics, and Literature as well as the Graduate School of Chulalongkorn University for my travel grant. I would also like to thank Professor Dr. Theraphan Luangthongkum, my dissertation advisor, for her kind supervision of my research. Last but not least, many thanks go to my Mal and Tai Yuan informants for their kindness and cooperation.

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12 See the acoustic characteristics of Tai Yuan loanwords in the appendix.
References


Appendix

The pitch range, average pitch, and pitch differential for each speaker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pitch range</th>
<th>Average pitch</th>
<th>Δf</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TL 1</td>
<td>200.17 – 329.43</td>
<td>257.27</td>
<td>129.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TL 2</td>
<td>183.12 – 324.04</td>
<td>238.43</td>
<td>140.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TL 3</td>
<td>183.55 – 302.66</td>
<td>223.89</td>
<td>119.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Speakers</td>
<td>239.86</td>
<td></td>
<td>129.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pitch range</th>
<th>Average pitch</th>
<th>Δf</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TY 1</td>
<td>147.25 – 323.35</td>
<td>212.83</td>
<td>176.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TY 2</td>
<td>154.51 – 323.17</td>
<td>230.87</td>
<td>168.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TY 3</td>
<td>199.30 – 336.66</td>
<td>259.51</td>
<td>137.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Speakers</td>
<td>234.40</td>
<td></td>
<td>160.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tai Yuan Tones Spoken by Lua’ (Mal) Speakers

Real-time duration and average duration for each speaker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>TL 1</th>
<th>TL 2</th>
<th>TL 3</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CVV</td>
<td>541.30</td>
<td>388.88</td>
<td>360.94</td>
<td>430.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVVS</td>
<td>385.03</td>
<td>322.48</td>
<td>301.17</td>
<td>336.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVS</td>
<td>167.96</td>
<td>98.72</td>
<td>120.27</td>
<td>128.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>TY 1</th>
<th>TY 2</th>
<th>TY 3</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CVV</td>
<td>482.15</td>
<td>457.91</td>
<td>423.43</td>
<td>454.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVVS</td>
<td>305.24</td>
<td>380.74</td>
<td>345.35</td>
<td>343.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVS</td>
<td>149.90</td>
<td>166.87</td>
<td>162.74</td>
<td>159.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acoustic characteristics of Tai Yuan loanwords as spoken by Ta Luang Mal speakers when they speak Mal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan-word tone</th>
<th>Non-checked syllable</th>
<th>Checked syllable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHANGE IN THE STANDARD THAI HIGH TONE: AN ACOUSTIC STUDY

Phanintra Teeranon¹
Rungwimol Rungrojsuwan²

Abstract

Standard Thai tones are divided into two categories; namely, level tones (mid tone, low tone, and high tone) and contour tones (falling tone and rising tone).

The Thai high tone was found to have changed its height and shape between the years 1911 and 2006 (Bradley 1911; Abramson 1962; Tumtavitikul 1992; Morén and Zsiga 2006). The tone changed its shape from mid falling (1911) to high level (1962), and then to mid rising (2006).

This study attempts to show that the high tone in Standard Thai is changing its phonetic characteristics from high level to mid rising. The informants were divided into two age groups: over-sixty and under-twenty. Each age group was comprised of twenty informants. The Praat program was used to conduct an acoustic analysis. The results show that the high tone shape in the over-sixty group is high level, but it is mid rising in the under-twenty group. It has also been found that the present characteristic of the high tone is similar to that of the rising tone. It is argued whether the Standard Thai high tone should be categorized as a contour tone. Standard Thai high tone variations indicate the plausibility of observing an ongoing change. In addition, some ongoing change in the falling tone is also discussed.

Introduction

Thai is classified as a tonal language, a language that uses tone to convey word meaning. For example, [maa] means ‘to come’ but [máa] means ‘horse’. Based on an acoustic study and phonological analysis (Abramson 1962, 1975), there are five distinctive tones in Standard Thai³: mid tone, low tone, falling tone, high tone and rising tone. Acoustically, each Thai tone phonetic characteristic is well-defined by fundamental frequency (F₀) shape. F₀ shape is identified by F₀ height (the starting point of F₀) and F₀ direction (the movement of F₀). The F₀ shape is the basis for grouping Thai tones into two categories, namely level or static tones, and contour or dynamic tones.

The level tone category is comprised of mid tone, low tone, and high tone. The contour tone category is comprised of falling tone and rising tone.

All tone shapes can be described by using the five-tone scale pitch system to represent their F₀ height and direction. And to convert their shapes into the five-tone scale pitch system, the mid tone is [33], low tone is [21], falling tone is [43], high

³ Standard Thai is the official language spoken by educated speakers in every part of Thailand, used in news broadcasts on radio and television, taught in school, and described in grammar books and dictionaries (Tingsabadh and Abramson 1993). We use the term Standard Thai because it was classified as a variety of Central Thai on the basis of tone system and tone split (Gedney 1972).
Over the past several decades, an acoustic study of Standard Thai tones has been an interesting topic for many linguists. Linguists of earlier studies examined Standard Thai tones on isolated monosyllables (Abramson 1962, 1975, 1979; Erickson 1974). Then Hiranburana (1972), Potisuk et al. (1994) and Tingsabadh and Deeprasert (1997) proposed testing the tones in stressed and unstressed syllables of connected speech. Recently, Gandour et al. (1999) and Teeranon (2002b) have made advances. They studied stressed and unstressed syllables in tempo and rhythmic units of speech. Most of these studies confirmed that Standard Thai tones are: mid tone is [33], low tone is [21], falling tone is [43], high tone is [44 or 45], and rising tone is [323]. The findings also showed that the F0 shape of Standard Thai tones can vary by context, e.g. tone variants in stressed syllables, tone variants in unstressed syllables. It can be said that the studies mentioned above were all interested in the synchronic study of Thai tones; they were seemingly focused on tone variations in various contexts. There are only a few studies (Panroj 1991; Teeranon 2002a, 2002c) seemingly interested in the diachronic study of Thai tones or variations of Thai tones in apparent time. These studies discovered that the F0 shape of tones can vary by apparent time; they used different age group to represent the past and the present time. Panroj (1991) found that Thai tones tend to be different from time to time. However, Panroj (1991) never stated clearly that the high tone changed its F0 height and direction from high level [44 or 45] to mid rising [334]. An examination of change in the Standard Thai high tone was later conducted by the documented research method (Teeranon 2002a). There was also a study (Teeranon 2002c) which tried to prove the change in the Standard Thai high tone spoken by two generations: an older generation and younger generation. But she used a small number of informants, only three from each group. It can be observed that previous work was based on small numbers of informants as prior to the advent of computers, measuring glottal periods as seen in waveforms or measuring across harmonics in narrow-band spectrograms was time-consuming. The other point that can be obviously seen from the F0 shapes of tones found in each study is, moreover, presented by using the overall mean. The variation of F0 of tones, not just for high tones, seems to be undervalued. That is to say, the phonetic variations of tones seem to be undervalued. To demonstrate that high tone change is observable, F0 shapes of high tones were also presented by their variants. As mentioned in Aitchison (2001: 43), Labov recognized, the variation and fuzziness which so many linguists try to ignore are quite often indications that changes are in progress.

In order to confirm the change of the high tone, an acoustic study of Standard Thai tones and their variants was analyzed using measurements of F0 on isolated monosyllables spoken by informants of two generations: those over sixty years old and those under twenty years old. The reason for studying the change in these two age groups is that the over-sixty group represents the past, while the under-twenty group represents the present and the future.

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4 From now on, we call them the over-sixty group and the under-twenty group, respectively.
Preliminary background: The change of Standard Thai high tone

According to the F₀ shape of the high tone during the past century, starting from 1911 to 2007, the development of the high tone is divided into three periods.

From 1962–1975, while the rising tone showed a slight change, the shape of the high tone showed much greater change. In this period, the rising tone began at mid-point then stayed low before rising, but the high tone gradually increased from the high level with a slight fall at the end (Abramson 1962, 1975; Erickson 1974). The high tone was seemingly changing from contour to level. And it is found that the falling tone shape looked very much like the high tone in the first period (see Figure 2). In recent times, the high tone has been noticed to change its shape again from high level to mid rising (see Figure 3) (Abramson 1979; Chuwarahawong 2000; Morén and Zsiga 2006; Panroj 1911 by C. B. Bradley. Bradley (1911) used a kymographic recording of Thai. The informant may have been himself, an English-Thai bilingual. It was observed that the high tone was high falling, which makes it similar to the falling tone of the present time. The rising tone began at mid-pitch before steadily increasing. As a result, when comparing the high tone and rising tone, their shapes are totally different in F₀ height and direction (see Figure 1).
In order to make a comparison between high tone shapes in each period, we converted each figure and set up a table to present the change.

Table 1 consists of six columns. The first column represents the period which is divided by high tone shape. The second column represents the authors and the year they conducted their research. Some social factors, sex and age, are represented in the third and fourth columns. The fifth column represents the tone shapes converted from the original. Five lines in this column were drawn. Each line represents F0 values. The lowest F0 values are represented by the lowest line (or number 1 on a Five-scale numerical system) and the highest line represents the highest F0 values (or number 5 on a Five-scale numerical system). Then the F0 values in the fifth column have been converted to a numerical system in the sixth column.
Table 1 The change of Standard Thai high tone shape

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) Periods</th>
<th>(2) Authors</th>
<th>(3) Sex of informants</th>
<th>(4) Age of informants</th>
<th>(5) Five-scale tone stick system</th>
<th>(6) Five-scale tone numerical system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bradley (1911)</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Abramson (1962)</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>23-25</td>
<td></td>
<td>44-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Potsak et al. (1994)</td>
<td>male and female</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first period, the high tone is high falling [442]. The tone shape starts from a high pitch and rises before falling to a low pitch level. Its falling curve shows that the high tone is a contour tone.

Fifty-five years later, in the second period, the tone shape is high level [44 of 45]. The tone shape starts from a high pitch and rises steadily. However, its slightly falling contour at the end still remains. Its shape is becoming less contoured compared with the first period.

In the third period, the high tone starts from mid pitch and levels off before rising. It is noted that this shape is similar to that of the rising tone (Abramson 1979). Obviously, between the first and the third periods, the high tone shape totally changes. That is to say, high tone height has changed from high to mid, and its direction has changed from falling to rising.

Language data

The language data used as test tokens were drawn from Standard Thai belonging to the Tai-Kadai language family. The language has a repertoire of nine monophthongal vowels /i, i, u, e, a, o, e, a, o/ with vowel length distinction. But all the test words contained the vowel /aa/. The reason for selecting /aa/ was to avoid an effect of intrinsic pitch. As it has been confirmed that different vowel heights can cause different $F_0$ values (Whalen and Levitt 1995), high vowels, e.g. /i/, tend to have higher $F_0$ values than low vowels, e.g. /a/. Therefore, only the low mid long vowel, /aa/, was selected for the study.

\footnote{All numbers in the sixth column are derived from $F_0$ values.}
Forty informants were chosen. As language change can be affected by age, these informants were then divided into two groups: twenty informants were over sixty years old and another twenty informants were under twenty years old. The age of the informants was used to help further confirm the claim of high tone change. It is believed that age is one of the most important factors to test the change in apparent time (Chambers 1995; Labov 1994). The informants in the over-sixty group represent the past, while the under-twenty group represent the present and the future.

Three sets of test tokens were selected for the /aa/ vowel with various kinds of initial consonants as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Set 1</th>
<th>Set 2</th>
<th>Set 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>khaa ‘logged in, remain embedded’</td>
<td>naa ‘rice field’</td>
<td>faa ‘a note’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khàa ‘galangal’</td>
<td>(นิ้ว) naa ‘custard apple’</td>
<td>faa ‘palm (of the hand), sole (of the foot)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khàa ‘servant, slave’</td>
<td>nàa ‘face’</td>
<td>faa ‘scum’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khàa ‘to trade’</td>
<td>nàa ‘aunt’</td>
<td>faa ‘sky’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khàa ‘leg’</td>
<td>nàa ‘thick’</td>
<td>faa ‘pot cover’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Methodology**

After preparing all the meaningful test tokens, the informants were asked to pronounce each test word in isolation five times. They pronounced each time at a moderate tempo, with a pause after each token. The number of total test tokens was three thousand (twenty informants x two age groups x five tokens x three sets x five times). The recordings were made directly on to Cooledit Pro in the computer. Cooledit Pro was also used when each sound was segmented. The Praat program version 4.2.09 was used to analyze the F0 of isolated words. The frequency at five points of time for each vowel was selected for measurement, at 0%, 25%, 50%, 75% and 100%. Microsoft Excel 2003 was the tool used to analyze and plot graphs of the overall means ($\bar{x}$) of F0. And to study high tone variants, F0 values were then converted to semitones to have something more like pitch before making a comparison. Line graphs were drawn as seen in Figure 4 to Figure 7.

To analyze the variants, six hundred tokens out of three thousand were selected by using a random sampling method. The constraints on the random sampling were: 1) there are twenty informants in each age group, 2) only the high tone of the three sets was selected for analysis, and then 3)

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8 Pierrehumbert (2001) indicates that a small random sample of the words can be reliable.
five-randomized tokens were selected. In each age group, the same shape of high tone was classified and categorized. The percentage of frequency distributions of each variant was calculated.

Results

The overall mean of Thai high tones in the over-sixty group

In Figure 4, the results show that the Thai high tone of the over-sixty group is similar to that found by Abramson (1962). The high tone is high level [44]. It begins with a high pitch, then steadily rises before slightly falling. This is because the informants represent the second period of tone change (see Table 1). In comparison, the rising tone begins with a lower pitch then slightly falls before rising.

The overall mean of Thai high tones in the under-twenty group

As seen in Figure 5, the under-twenty high tone shape became [334], which is more similar to the rising tone. And the starting point of the pitch for the high tone and rising tone is lower than that of the over-sixty group. Both tones seem to be more contoured, sharply falling and rising. The result confirms the gradual change of the Thai high tone from high level [44] to mid rising [334]. The findings support the high tone change reported by Abramson (1979), Panroj (1991), Tumtavitikul (1992), and Teeranon (2002a, 2002b, 2002c).

As all Thai tones are well-defined by F0 shape, the shape of the high tone is obviously changed to be more contoured. This leads to the question of whether we should place the high tone as a contour tone instead of a level tone. This confirms an observation made by Abramson (1978, 1997) that the tone percept can be improved by F0 movement.

It was also found that the mid tone and low tone are virtually the same shape but at different heights in the voice range.

In addition, it was shown that the falling tone is changing. In comparison with the
over-sixty group, falling tone shape in the under-twenty group levels off at a higher level for half of the time before gradually dropping (see Figure 5). This result supports the findings of Lertthana (2005) that the falling tone is changing. And the change of the falling tone can be used to confirm some mechanisms in directionality of tone change proposed by Pittayaporn (2007): contour reduction, peak sliding, and perceptual maximization. That is to say, the falling tone has changed its peak sliding; its $F_0$ height moves up to higher values. And to compensate for the higher $F_0$ height, the falling tone shape has changed to be less contoured to enhance the perception of a falling tone.

**High tone variants in the over-sixty group and in the under-twenty group**

**The shape of high tone variants**

After six hundred tokens out of three thousand were selected for analysis, then they were categorized by grouping the same shapes of high tone together. In the over-sixty group, it was found that there are three variants of high tone: high level [45], high level with slightly falling [44], and rising [434] (see Figure 6). In the under-twenty group, it was found also that there are three variants of high tone but the height and direction are a bit different. The three variants are high level [34], rising with slightly falling [322], and rising [334] (see Figure 7). When compared Figure 6 and Figure 7, pitch height in the under-twenty group is lower than in the over-sixty group.

![Figure 6: High tone variants in the over-sixty group](image)

![Figure 7: High tone variants in the under-twenty group](image)

**Frequency distributions of high tone variants**

In the over-sixty group, there are three variants: high level [45], high level with slightly falling [44], and rising [434]. It is shown that the most prominent high tone variant is high level with slightly falling [44], accounting for 78%. High level [45] and rising shape [434] frequency distributions amounted to 11% (see Figure 8).
In the under-twenty group, there are also three variants: high level [34], rising with slightly falling [322], and rising [334]. The variant that appears to have the highest frequency distribution is rising [334] shape, accounting for 78%. Rising with slightly falling [322] shape distribution amounted to 28%. And high level [34] distribution amounted to 2% (see Figure 9).

It is obvious that the pitch height of the high tone is moving down from high to mid. And the two high tone variations, high level-like shape and rising shape, appear in both groups. The high level-like shape is seemingly prominent in the over-sixty group. The rising shape, which is the most prominent variation of the under-twenty group, also appears in the over-sixty group but at a smaller percentage. In other words, the high level-like shape is not a prominent variation for the under-twenty group, but rising is. As rising is one variation in the over-sixty group, it is plausible that the high tone has changed its shape from high level [44–45] to mid rising. The high tone variation found in this research indicates a change in progress. It is not an abrupt change, but a gradually change. And ongoing change is observable. Based on Labov (1994), the findings confirm that variations and fuzziness show observable change.

**Conclusion**

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the phonetic characteristics of the Standard Thai high tone have changed. The high tone shape has changed from high falling [442] in 1911 to high level [44 or 45], and at the present, the high tone shape is changing to rising contour [334]. And the high tone should be regrouped as a contour tone not a level tone. Moreover, high tone variants in each age group indicate the plausibility that the high tone is changing from high level shape to rising shape, and this change is observable.

Phonetic characteristics of the high tone and rising tone are becoming the same. Tone is used to distinguish word meanings. Therefore if the high tone and rising tone become the same, it will cause homophones. In order to avoid homophones, it is possible that the high tone or rising tone shape may change again.
Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the Division of Research Services, Mae Fah Luang University for research funding. And we would like to express our gratitude to all our informants for their cooperation.

References


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SYNTACTIC PATTERNS OF ZHUANG IDIOMS

Somsonge Burusphat1
Qin Xiaohang2

Abstract

This paper describes idioms of the northern Zhuang language. Zhuang idioms are analyzed into two major types, based on syntactic structure: trisyllabic idioms and polysyllabic idioms. Tri-syllabic idioms are short, fixed common expressions consisting of a single predicate. The polysyllabic idioms comprise tetrasyllabic idioms, pentasyllabic idioms, hexasyllabic idioms, and heptasyllabic idioms. The polysyllabic idioms display four syntactic patterns, i.e., serial pattern, causative pattern, topicalized pattern, and condensed pattern. Semantically, the meanings of Zhuang idioms are not the sum of their component part but must be metaphorically interpreted as a whole. The function of Zhuang idioms is to increase effectiveness and rhetorical force in oral and literary communication.

Zhuang language

This paper describes idioms of the Zhuang language spoken by the Zhuang people in China.3 According to Qin (1995), the Zhuang comprise the largest ethnic minority in China, with a population of 17 millions as of 2001. The Zhuang people are found mainly in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and in Wenshan Zhuang-Miao Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan Province. In addition, there are Zhuang scattered throughout Lianshan Zhuang-Yao Autonomous County in Guangdong Province, Qiandongnan Miao-Dong Autonomous Prefecture in Guizhou Province, and Jianhua Yao Autonomous County in Hunan Province. Moreover, the Zhuang language is also spoken by people in the southern part of Guizhou and the northern part of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The Zhuang language belongs to the Tai language group of the Tai-Kadai language family. It is divided into two main varieties, the northern variety and the southern variety. This paper describes idioms that occur in the northern variety of the Zhuang language.

Methodology

The first step was to define idioms. Crystal (1985: 152) defines idiom as follows:

A sequence of words which is semantically and often syntactically restricted, so that they function as a single unit. From a semantic viewpoint, the meanings of the individual words cannot be summed to produce the meaning of the ‘idiomatic’ expression as a whole. From a syntactic viewpoint, the words often do not permit the usual variability they display in other contexts.

Based on the definition above, a Zhuang idiom is defined as a word group whose meaning cannot be predicted simply from the meanings of its constituent parts. Zhuang idioms are similar to Zhuang proverbs. The difference lies in the syntactic structure. That is, Zhuang idioms are a single word group typically composed of nouns, verbs, or adjectives, while Zhuang

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2 Professor, Central University for Nationalities, Beijing, PR China
3 An overview of the Zhuang language is given in Luo (2008).
proverbs contain two or more compound sentences or clauses, most of which are coordinate. Rhyme is a common feature of Zhuang proverbs, whereas it is not typical of Zhuang idioms. The contrast between Zhuang idioms and Zhuang proverbs is exemplified in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zhuang Idiom</th>
<th>Zhuang Proverb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ndaj dangj vuengzdaeq | hai
| can become emperor      | hai
| sieng dangj sien     | hai
| want become immortal | hai
| ‘be unsatisfied’      | lru

The Zhuang idiom has two clauses construed as a single word group which conveys a metaphorical meaning. The Zhuang proverb has two compound clauses which are coordinative without an overt conjunction. The last word of the first clause, [kja\(^{55}\) gyaj ‘seedling’, rhymes with the second word of the second clause, [ma\(^{55}\) maj ‘grow’.

The second step consisted of data compilation. The Zhuang data were drawn from the second author who is a native speaker of the Zhuang dialect of Hawyengz, Mashan County, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. The data were checked with other native speakers from the same area. The third step involved transcribing the compiled Zhuang idioms in phonetic symbols and Zhuang romanization. The word-by-word translation was based on the Northern Zhuang-Chinese-Thai-English Dictionary (Burushpat and Qin 2006). Additionally, since Zhuang idioms evince constructions that are not susceptible to regular or predictable semantic interpretation, a non-literal semantic interpretation, or the meaning of the idiomatic expression as a whole, is provided. The final step was the categorization of Zhuang idioms into types using the structuralist approach defined by Trask (1993: 262) as “Any approach to linguistic description which views the grammar of a language primarily as a system of relations.”
Idiom types

This study approaches Zhuang idiom formation from a synchronic perspective. Based on the internal syntactic structure, Zhuang idioms are analyzed into two major types, trisyllabic idioms and polysyllabic idioms. Trisyllabic idioms are distinguished from polysyllabic idioms in that the former have simple syntactic structures, that is, a verb and an object, whereas the latter show more complex syntactic patterns.

Trisyllabic idioms

Tri-syllabic idioms are short, fixed common expressions used by Zhuang people in everyday life; thus they may be also designated customary phrases. Trisyllabic idioms consist of a single predicate, i.e., a verb and an object, that convey a figurative or metaphorical meaning. Customary phrases are terse and vivid, and their metaphors are appropriate, popular, and interesting, as exemplified in Table 2.

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4 The term phrase as used in this paper refers to any string of words under consideration, regardless of its syntactic status. It is equivalent to the alternative term sequence.
Table 2: Examples of trisyllabic idioms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idiomatic expression</th>
<th>Metaphorical meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yi:u⁵⁵ ha:i²⁴ ca:u⁵⁵</td>
<td>‘be an assistant of somebody’ (carry straw sandals for somebody)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>riuj haiz cauj</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kin⁵⁵ pom⁵⁵ loŋ⁵⁵</td>
<td>‘boast, or brag about’ (too strong or too powerful to roll bamboo basket)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gingi boemx loengx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carry shoes straw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Polysyllabic idioms

Polysyllabic idioms are expressions consisting of four or more words which are not interpreted literally. Semantically, the meanings of polysyllabic idioms in Zhuang cannot be derived from the sum of their component parts; rather, they must be interpreted as a whole. Every polysyllabic idiom has a surface meaning which is not its real implication. Its real meaning lies inside the polysyllabic idiom. For example, the literal meaning of the polysyllabic idiom [ma²⁴ ta:i²⁴ mat⁵⁵ cau²⁴ ta:i²⁴] ma dai maet caez dai ‘dog, die, flea, together, die’ is ‘if the dog dies, the flea on the dog dies’, but its metaphorical meaning is ‘we perish together’. Syntactically, polysyllabic idioms have a fixed inherent structure. That is, the structure of a Zhuang polysyllabic idiom is fixed, the order of the constituent elements cannot be arbitrarily changed, and its constituent elements cannot be arbitrarily replaced, added to, or deleted. The polysyllabic idiom [ma²⁴ ta:i²⁴ maet caez dai] given above, for example, cannot be recast with the order [mat⁵⁵ ta:i²⁴ ma²⁴ cau²⁴ ta:i²⁴] maet dai ma caez dai, nor can an element be added as [ma²⁴ ta:i²⁴ mat⁵⁵ cau²⁴ ta:i²⁴ lo] ma dai maet caez dai lo, nor can any part of it be replaced with another word, such as in [mou²⁴] mou ‘pig’ [ta:i²⁴ maet⁵⁵ cau²⁴ ta:i²⁴] dai maet caez dai.

Similarly, it cannot be reduced to [ma²⁴ ta:i²⁴ maet caez dai] ma dai maet dai. Polysyllabic idioms are also known as set phrases. Polysyllabic idioms may be grouped into four types based on the number of syllables: tetrasyllabic idioms, pentasyllabic idioms, hexasyllabic idioms, and heptasyllabic idioms, as shown in Table 3.

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5 [lo] is a modal particle placed at the end of a sentence to indicate changed circumstances or affirmation.
### Table 3: Examples of polysyllabic idioms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of syllable</th>
<th>Idiomatic expression</th>
<th>Metaphorical meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Four syllables</strong></td>
<td>tup21 ku24 fo:ñ24 ye:ñ64 dub gu fong rek</td>
<td>‘resort to a stopgap measure detrimental to long-term interests’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ku21 çak21 ñim34 ti:u44 guh caeg sim diuq</td>
<td>‘have a guilty conscience’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pai24 na55 jau55 lañ24 bae naj yawj laeng</td>
<td>‘be overcautious and indecisive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Five syllables</strong></td>
<td>çuk21 y:ñ24 ma33 to33 tik55 cug rieng max doxid</td>
<td>‘incite one to fight the other’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ñai55 hum42 ?bou55 ?dai55 kau21 saej humz mbouj ndaej gaeu intestines itch not can scratch</td>
<td>‘have no way out’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Six syllables</strong></td>
<td>ñ:bo:n24 hai33 va:i42 ?bou55 pan52 mbon haex vaiz mbouj baenz congj</td>
<td>‘incompetent’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>?dok55 çak55 ?dok55 ndoej caek ndoej catfish in pond just be catfish in pond</td>
<td>‘a fool never becomes wise’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ha:u33 çak55 ha:u33 haux caek haux catfish in river just be catfish in river</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seven syllables</strong></td>
<td>vun42 la:i24 tum44 kjau55 va:i42 vunz lai dumq gyaeuj vaiz people many cook head buffalo</td>
<td>‘too many cooks spoil the broth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>?bou55 çuk21 mbouj cug not done</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>?dai55 ta:ñ53 vu:ñ53 tai44 ndaej dangj vuengzdaeq can become emperor</td>
<td>‘be unsatisfied’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ñi:ñ55 ta:ñ55 ñi:ñ24 siengj dang sien want become immortal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The tetrasyllabic idioms occur most frequently. Previous studies of other Tai languages have focused on tetrasyllabic idioms, which are known variously as four-syllable elaborate expressions or four-word elaborate expressions. Amara (2008) studied four-word elaborate expressions in Yunnan Tai Lue. She found that the four-word elaborate expressions were phonologically marked by repetition, rhyme, and alliteration. Semantically, each four-word elaborate expression was split into two parallel semantic units, and the meaning of the whole elaborate expression was idiomatic. Four-word elaborate expressions in Zhuang have characteristics similar to those of Tai Lue. Though rhyming is not typical of tetrasyllabic idioms in Zhuang, reduplication and alliteration are also found, as seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Examples of reduplication and alliteration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phonological characteristic</th>
<th>Idiomatic expression</th>
<th>Metaphorical meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduplication</td>
<td>te:m^24 dem te:m^24</td>
<td>‘embellish a story’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kau^24 gyeu dem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rieng add tail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliteration</td>
<td>?e:p^44 me:u^22 meuz</td>
<td>‘try to make somebody do something which s/he won’t or can’t do’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gwn mei^44 meiq</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first idiom shows a reduplication of the word [te:m^24] dem ‘add’. The second idiom has two words, [me:u^22] meuz ‘cat’ and [mei^44] meiq ‘vinegar’, which share the same initial sound [m].

Another feature shared by Tai Lue and Zhuang is the figurative or metaphorical meaning of four-word expressions. That is, the meanings of the expression must be interpreted as a whole and have to be learned as a whole through cultural transmission.

Amara (2008) has also affirmed that, syntactically speaking, four-word elaborate expressions in Tai Lue are words, not phrases or clauses, for several reasons: (1) the positions of the four words cannot be shifted, (2) none of the words can be left out, (3) the elaborate expression cannot be interrupted by any word, and (4) the elaborate expression is used as a single word. This paper likewise considers Zhuang idioms as a single word for the same reasons.

Luo (1999) studied four-syllable expressions in Tai Dehong. As is the case in Zhuang, some of these Dehong expressions had gained the status of set phrases, while others behaved more like freely combined items. Luo also found rhyme in the idioms. He noted that the rhyming “follows from the traditional practice of Tai people chanting folk songs or poems in which the favored poetic form is ‘link rhymes’, a practice which is still much preserved in many Tai dialects today” (1999: xxiii). In addition to discussing Tai Dehong, Luo (2008) makes a brief statement concerning
tetrasyllabic idiomatic expressions in Zhuang, explaining that such elaborate expressions often carry rich cultural connotations. The same can be said of the Zhuang elaborate expressions considered in the present study.

Owing to the common occurrence of four-syllable expressions in Tai languages, Amara (2008: 402) concludes that “the occurrence of four-word expressions is a common feature in Tai language and culture” and, as four-word expressions evince the typical characteristics of verse, idiomaticity, and redundancy, it can be said that “Tai people value rhetoric ability, metaphor, and wordiness in their speech.”

In addition to the Tai languages mentioned above, other languages in Southeast Asia make use of such elaborate expressions. Kanchana (1976) notes that four-word expressions are commonly found in Khmer and Thai. Nguyen Dang Liem (1970) has also found that tetrasyllabic idiomatic expressions are very frequent in Vietnamese. These tetrasyllabic idiomatic expressions are often used in ordinary conversation as well as in sophisticated literary writing. Vietnamese elaborate expressions are of either Chinese origin or pure Vietnamese origin. It is well known that tetrasyllabic elaborate expressions have been a favored feature in Chinese writing since the beginning of Chinese literature. Nguyen Dang Liem (1970: 2) remarks that “In Chinese literature, four-syllable expressions, often constructed with parallelism and symbolism, can be traced to early times, as, for instance, to the Han or Tang dynasties. The same literary form is often found in Vietnamese poems.” Tetrasyllabic idiomatic expressions not only provide students of Vietnamese with more insight into the morphology and syntax of the language but also give valuable information about Vietnamese culture.

As tetrasyllabic idiomatic expressions are found in languages from different language families, they may be considered a regional linguistic feature of Southeast Asia. If areal diffusion of this feature has occurred, it would be worth investigating its source.

**Syntactic patterns**

Trisyllabic idioms are distinguished from polysyllabic idioms by their internal syntactic structures, as discussed below.

**Syntactic pattern of trisyllabic idioms**

Trisyllabic idioms have a simple syntactic pattern. They consist of a verb and an object, as exemplified in Table 5.
Table 5: Examples of the syntactic pattern of trisyllabic idioms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Metaphorical meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jok⁵⁵</td>
<td>yoek⁴⁴</td>
<td>‘be greatly offended by’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rongz⁴⁲</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tin⁴²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wasp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>θau⁵⁵</td>
<td>saeuj⁴⁴</td>
<td>‘flattery’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nyangj⁵⁵</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nyoengq</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>straw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mess</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kutu³⁵</td>
<td>gwed³³</td>
<td>‘be responsible for some charge’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gwaenj³³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hau³³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>haeux⁴²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>roq⁴³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>thin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>outside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ksun⁴⁴</td>
<td>gwn⁴³</td>
<td>‘work somewhere away from home’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hau³³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>haeux⁴²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>roq⁴³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>outside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pjoŋ⁴⁴</td>
<td>byoengq⁴⁴</td>
<td>‘dig up somebody’s unsavory past’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hangx⁴³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>saez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fish trap</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>po⁴⁴</td>
<td>boq⁴³</td>
<td>‘smoke the home-made roasted tobacco’⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lo⁴³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>le⁴²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>suona⁴³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>horn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁶ This trisyllabic idiom has the literal meaning ‘to blow a reed trumpet (suona horn)’ but its’ metaphorical meaning is ‘to smoke home-made roasted tobacco’ which has a shape similar to a reed trumpet.”
Syntactic Patterns of Zhuang Idioms

Syntactic pattern of polysyllabic idioms

Polysyllabic idioms in Zhuang have a more complex syntactic pattern than trisyllabic idioms. Based on their internal syntactic patterns, polysyllabic idioms may be analyzed as having four different syntactic patterns: serial, causative, topicalized, and condensed.

Serial pattern

The serial pattern consists of a sequence of juxtaposed separate verbs sharing the same subject without the overt use of conjunctions. Table 6 provides examples of polysyllabic idioms with serial construction. The underlined verbs constitute the serial pattern.

Table 6: Examples of the serial pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial construction</th>
<th>Metaphorical meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to33 tuŋ21 yon42 vaŋ42 doxduenh roengz vaengz drag each other down deep river</td>
<td>‘perish together’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lo21 kaŋ21 pai24 tuk55 tin42 lohengh bae dvk dinz barebacked go attack wasp</td>
<td>‘having plenty of guts’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?au24 jou25 tau35 ceu55 ve24 va:42 get oil come fry hoof buffalo</td>
<td>‘the loss outweighs the gain’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Causative pattern

The causative pattern deals with the notion of making something happen. It consists of a verb followed by an object which concurrently acts as the subject of a subsequent predicate word group, as exemplified in Table 7. All examples in Table 7 have an agent which is left out but understood to be “someone”. The initial verbs are the causative verbs. These are followed by their objects which then function as the subjects of the verbs that follow.

Table 7: Examples of the causative pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causative pattern</th>
<th>Metaphorical meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>?e:p44 me:u42 kun24 mei44 ep meuz gwn meiq force eat eat vinegar</td>
<td>‘try to make somebody do something which s/he won’t or can’t do’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?a:u24 ma:24 to33 hap24 au ma dox haeb call dog bite each other</td>
<td>‘incite one against the other’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Causative pattern | Metaphorical meaning
--- | ---
ŋap mat hau ?daŋ | ‘look for trouble’
nyaeb maet haej ndang |

Topicalized pattern

The topicalized pattern has a topic which may be realized as a grammatical subject or a preposed topicalized element as exemplified in Table 8. The first example has the preposed topicalized words [ʔdaŋ ho] ‘inside throat’ as the topic, whereas the following examples have [ʔbon kju] ‘jar of salt’ and [mok kjaŋ] ‘club’, which are simultaneously the grammatical subjects and the topics of their respective sentences.

Table 8: Examples of the topicalized pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topicalized pattern</th>
<th>Predicate word group</th>
<th>Metaphorical meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ʔdaŋ ho] inside throat</td>
<td>miz haex</td>
<td>‘somebody has a guilty conscience’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʔbon kju] jar salt</td>
<td>fat non</td>
<td>‘there is a secret enemy agent within one’s ranks’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[mok kjaŋ] club</td>
<td>mboj doengz rumz</td>
<td>‘know nothing about (a subject)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Complement pattern

Complement is defined by Trask (1993: 51) as “Any constituent which forms part of the nucleus of a category with a lexical head and which is subcategorized for by that lexical head.” The complement pattern consists of a verbal nucleus and its complement, as exemplified in Table 9. The first example has the verb [la u] ‘fear’ and [yam tum] ‘water flooded the sky’ as its complement. The second example has the verb [ja u] ‘look’ and [ma to tik] ‘horses kick each other’ as its complement.
Table 9: Examples of the complement pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complement pattern (Adverbial)</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Complement</th>
<th>Metaphorical meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la:u 24</td>
<td>yam 23</td>
<td>tum 21</td>
<td>?bu: 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lau</td>
<td>raemx</td>
<td>dumh  mbwn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kum 42 ci: 42</td>
<td>jau 55</td>
<td>ma 33</td>
<td>to’ tik 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gwnz ciengz up wall</td>
<td>yawj</td>
<td>max</td>
<td>dox dik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>horse</td>
<td>kick each other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Condensed pattern

The condensed pattern is formed by reducing two or more full clauses into fewer words. Semantically, the two condensed clauses are related in various ways, such as conditional relation, coordinative relation, or concessive relation, as seen in Table 10. In the three examples below, the initial clause is juxtaposed with the second clauses. Both clauses are reduced to a single condensed pattern.

Table 10: Examples of the condensed pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condensed pattern</th>
<th>Clause 1</th>
<th>Clause 2</th>
<th>Metaphorical meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ma 24 ta:i 24</td>
<td>ma dai</td>
<td>maet caez dai</td>
<td>‘perish together’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dog die</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[conditional relation]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma dai</td>
<td>maet caez dai</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma dai</td>
<td>maet caez dai</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma 33 kan 55</td>
<td>?bou 55</td>
<td>?daj 55</td>
<td>hau 55 0i:n 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horse rapid</td>
<td>mbouj ndaej haeuj singz</td>
<td>not can enter city</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[concessive relation]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Function of Zhuang idioms

Idioms in any language, including Zhuang, are concise and vivid. Zhuang idioms are used to increase the effectiveness and rhetorical force of an utterance. An example of this may be seen in the short passage given below. The Zhuang idiom is underlined.
He liked criticizing others, which offended many people. These people often tossed stones on the tile roof of his house. His wife was very angry and blamed him, “Haven’t you seen that? You have invited fleas onto your body.”

In this short excerpt, the author uses the idiom [nap  mat  yon  da:η] nyaeb maet haeuj ndang lo “ask for trouble” to express the anger and blame of the wife, depicting the characteristic argumentativeness of her husband’s nature very tersely and vividly and thereby achieving good rhetorical results.

**Conclusion**

This paper describes Zhuang idioms found in the northern variety of the Zhuang language. Based on their syntactic structure, Zhuang idioms are analyzed into two major types, trisyllabic idioms and polysyllabic idioms. Trisyllabic idioms are fixed and short common expressions consisting of a single predicate. Polysyllabic idioms are grouped into four types based on the number of syllables: tetrasyllabic idioms, penta syllabic idioms, hexasyllabic idioms, and heptasyllabic idioms. Syntactically, polysyllabic idioms comprise four syntactic patterns: serial, causative, topicalized, and condensed. Zhuang idioms are viewed as a single word group. Semantically, the full meaning of a Zhuang idiom is figurative or metaphorical. The function of Zhuang idioms is to increase effectiveness and rhetorical force in oral and literary communication.

**References**

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF SYNTACTIC COMPLEXITY IN THAI CHILDREN’S NARRATIVES

Suthasinee Piyapasuntra¹

Abstract

This article aims to present two essential points. Firstly, syntactic complexity value is an indicator of language development of children, especially in relation to narratives due to maturation and increased cognitive development. Secondly, complexity is measurable and assessable. This article argues that syntactic complexity as numerically measured has benefits for studying the close development of children in different age groups in which differences of language pattern and innovation may not be readily discerned. In order for a more accurate comparison between different age groups, the information employed was narratives of Thai children in the CHILDES database, Thai Frog Story series. The age groups were divided into 4 tiers: 4, 6, 9 and 11 years old respectively. Each group contained ten children which were compared to ten adults. The study found that syntactic complexity of children’s narratives develops increasingly until it resembles to that of adults.

Introduction

Language development is a part of cognitive development (Piaget 1980, Clark 2003, Tomasello 2003), consequently, as children grow up, their potential to convey more complex stories should increase (Clark 2003). In studies of syntactic development, complexity has been frequently mentioned, albeit, with differing points of view (Lee and Canter 1971, Hirschman 2002, Rosenberg and Abbeduto 1987 cited in Charlton 2002). However, there have been no studies that accurately measure and assess narrative complexity in order to compare precisely between age groups (Charlton 2002). In the absence of such studies, complexity has been glossed by presenting differences in language patterns between each age group. If the samples belong to close age groups, however, differences in language patterns or innovation may not be detected. Conclusions may thus be drawn that children’s language patterns do not become more complex or remain underdeveloped.

This article, therefore, aims to propose an approach for the assessment of syntactic complexity through the use of value in numbers for more precision in assessing complexity and more accuracy in comparison between different age groups. It article will consider whether complexity of language use relates to age of the language users, languages and importantly, language production process. It also aims to correlate these issues to difficulties that may occur in encoding and decoding processes or even in language acquisition and learning (Kusters 2003 cited in Miestamo 2008).

There are two essential points that this article focuses on. Firstly, syntactic complexity value is an indicator of language development of children, especially in relation to narratives due to maturation and increased cognitive development. Secondly, this complexity is measurable and assessable.

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Literature review

Narratives and syntactic complexity

In order to narrate situations as a story, a narrator must possess knowledge in linguistic units containing meanings and syntactic tools to link those linguistic units as a story.

Clause is a linguistic unit showing a situation, composed of a verb indication a state or action and whatever participants are required by such verb. When situations are linked to narrative, the narrator will use a syntactic device to link these clauses into a unit called a complex sentence. In this research, a complex sentence also includes compound sentences in traditional terminology.

In relation to the narrator, Berman and Slobin (1994: 13) found that a skilful narrator would not separate each situation but would link all of them with syntactic mechanisms, resulting in a linguistic unit as large construction to convey the cohesion of the story. However, small children are not generally categorized as skilful narrators. Therefore, their narratives have special characteristics. Matthiessen (2002) found that clauses to compose larger units in children’s language were not grammatical units but were emergent language patterns that were delivered without planning. As explained by Scott (1987 cited in Owens 1997), it has been found that the coordinator “and” occurs in 80% of children’s sentences but that its use decreases markedly by the time they become teenagers around the age of 11–14 years old. Use of only 20% of “and” was found in teenagers’ sentences in narratives with other kinds of coordinator used instead. As for this article, my research on syntactic complexity in Thai children narratives is in line with the referred research that the usage of coordination declines with children’s maturation. This issue will be examined in the section “Results.”

The measurement of syntactic complexity

Existing approaches to measuring syntactic complexity include a variety such as: simple measuring such as mean length of utterance (Scott and Stokes 1995, Voster 1988), focusing on the structure of linguistic units by the use of frequency count (Scott and Stokes 1995), count of ratio of target unit in discourse (Hirschman 2002 cited in Charlton 2002), and rating and assessment of complexity from tree diagrams showing sentence structure (Hawkins 2004).

Mean length of utterance (MLU) is used to measure the mean number of morphemes in 1 out of 100 utterances. Since this mean is in accordance with children’s age and language development in other levels, this approach is popularly used for the measurement of language development (Scott and Stokes 1995, Voster 1988). Nevertheless, it has been questioned if it can really reflect children’s language development. It is widely acknowledged that sentences become longer as children age from kindergarten to primary school, but when they reach 9 until the beginning of their teenage years when growth in every aspect has become slower, no distinctive change has been detected.

In order to avoid this problem, some researchers try another approach such as counting the frequency of specific structures such as clause density considering ratio of
subordinate dependent clauses per total number of clauses. For example, a ratio of 2.0 means a sentence comprises 2 clauses as main clause and minor clause, while a ratio of 1.10 means most sentences are simple sentences (Stokes 1990 cited in Charlton 2002). However, in order to be accurate, scope of counting must be clearly defined in terms of such things as morphemes or grammatical units. If the scope is not clearly defined, counts of the number of XS per unit risk becoming subjective (Charlton 2002).

Rosenberg and Abbeduto (1987 cited in Charlton 2002) divide sentences into 7 Developmental Levels comprising Level 1: infinitival complement clause, Level 2: coordinated subject noun phrase and coordinated clause, Level 3: relative clause modifying phrasal noun that is object or verb inflection of complement clause preceded by “that” all the way through to Level 7: the highest level of complexity. They contend that several different embedded clauses in a complex unit is the most complex structure imaginable. This approach seems to clearly grade complexity levels, however, it doesn’t avoid the problem of scope defining.

In order to avoid subjective influences in, defining the scope of counter units, Lee and Canter (1971 cited in Charlton 2002), have developed a measurement system for syntactic complexity by setting up score systems of found linguistic patterns. This system is called Developmental Sentence Scoring (DSS) and focuses on syntactic development from the ages of 3–7 years. If sentence pattern appears, 1 score is given, 2 is awarded if pronouns are used, 3 is given if verbs are used, if there is a negative sentence, 4 is scored. 5 is given if a yes-no question is used, while a WH-question earns 6 points, and 7 points is given if there is use of secondary verbs, embedded clauses, infinitival complements, coordinators or subordinating conjunctions. Lee and Canter found that the score becomes higher when children are more highly developed. Nevertheless, measuring tools to indicate whether sentence one is more complex than another is an interesting point of contention in the literature.

Another approach to explain complexity levels of structure is the use of tree diagrams since complexity is a function of structure that links terminal elements or words into sentences. The more components there are in the structure, the more linguistic categories required to be employed in language production (Hawkins 2004: 8).

Frazer (1985 cited in Charlton 2002) believes that characteristics indicating syntactic complexity can be gleaned from tree diagram complexity that indicates relations of sentence components. By counting the number of non-terminal nodes per terminal nodes found in one sentence making s and s bar higher than other non-terminal nodes, he could calculate the complexity.

For example, a sentence containing a complement clause such as “That John was sick surprises Sue” was considered to have a higher ratio of non-terminal nodes per terminal nodes compared to “It surprises Sue that John was sick.” Although the subject “it” was used, the number of higher level structure remained the same. Therefore, the ratio is less.
The Development of Syntactic Complexity in Thai Children’s Narratives

The above approaches are part of an attempt to explain syntactic complexity in the study of children’s language development. Hawkins (2004) calculated complexity value from Non-terminal nodes per Terminal nodes and gave higher scores to s and s bar higher than other nodes (see figure 1. This approach makes the tree on the left hand side more complex than that on the right. The one on the left has eleven Non-terminal nodes per six Terminal nodes comprising one node as s and one node as s bar. The ratio is 13:6 or complexity degree of 2.16. The tree on the right has thirteen Non-terminal nodes per seven Terminal nodes comprising one node as s and one node as s bar. The ratio is 15:7 or complexity degree of 2.14.

A potential problem with this approach is that the researcher views syntactic complexity as the ratio of units to complex units but does not differentiate hierarchical relations that also affect the degree of complexity. The degree of complexity could be compared using mathematic calculation which would help make analyses more efficient.

Another problem is that the measurer does not consider complexity indicator units that have unclear scope such as the number of sentences per entirely of text. Selection of counter units to indicate complexity should be considered based on linguistic theory. Moreover, information to be measured should be stylistically scoped to prevent different results caused by other factors such as variable complexity of spoken and written languages.

This study, therefore, would like to present an alternative consideration of complexity based on ratio of units that is components of complex units having clear scope. Also it will consider differences in hierarchical relations and present calculation formula for complexity results based on objectivity in order to use the results for developmental comparison. The data used is already devoid of stylistic factors.

Research methodology

In this part, research methodology comprising data and analysis unit will be explained in more detail.

Thai frog story: the comparable narrative data

The story from a picture series “Frog: where are you?” in CHILDES database encourages
readers to learn about events by viewing 24 pictures. (MacWhinney, B. 2000; Zlatev and Yangklang 2003) These pictures show a series of events that happen to three main characters, a child, a dog and a frog and that require a skilful narrator to link all the events into a story. Studying the information of this narrative should enable a comparison of syntactic structure development of narrators of different ages. This article focuses on syntactic complexity in narrative of Thai children aged 4, 6, 9 and 11 years old and of adults, using as indicator the number of clause and clause linking via the use of syntactic mechanism into complex units. The research is conducted in the hope of being useful for teaching clause combination in text narrating to Thai children. Moreover, it is aimed to offer guidelines for developmental grammatical study in spoken language.

**Units of analysis and analysis methodology**

Main units used for study of syntactic complexity in this research are units of discourse with a linguistic pattern scope based on discourse index showing discourse fragment division or the beginning of new clause without clause linking units or that are not categorized as serial verb constructions.

(1) \{[dèk kamlà] nàŋ mòøø sù-nàk\} 1 \{[sù-nàk kam-la] dũûm nà̂m nàj kēew
Child ASP. sit watch dog dog ASP. drink water in glass
naj khuât] lēëw [khłaaw nĩ dēk là̂p] [kòp krai-dòot ŋòk maa câ̂ak nàj khuât] in bottle then time DEM child sleep frog jump out come from in bottle
lēëw [dèk kǒ̂o nō̈n hà̂n nà̂a maa] CONJ child CONJ sleep turn face come
[duu nàj khuât] [sù-nàk kǒ̂o khù̂n maa nōn tháp]} 2
look in bottle dog CONJ up come lie on top
\{[dèk kamlà] thòot mûak řòk] lēëw [dèk kǒ̂o ŋòøøj khù̂n pà̂j duu nàj mûak
Child ASP. take off hat out CONJ Child CONJ turn up go look in hat
[wàa mii řa-raj řû-plàaw]} 3 \{[thii mìi dèk pà̂t nâ-taù] maa duu]
COMPL. has anything YES-NO P. time this child open window come see

[sù-nàk kǒ̂o řaw khuàît khrøøp hùa wáj] lēëw [dèk kǒ̂o phìøø maa duu]
dog CONJ take bottle cover head ASP. CONJ. child CONJ show come see
The Development of Syntactic Complexity in Thai Children's Narratives

The example above suggests that \( \mathcal{1} \) and \( \mathcal{4} \) are positions without linking by any syntactic mechanism which in this research is counted as scope of discourse unit symbolized by \{..\}. (Please note that [..] is for clause boundary. [/] is for repetition.)

Units of discourse in this study are divided into 2 types: firstly, simple unit which is a sentence comprising one clause without any dependent clause or down grading clause presenting one proposition that may be separated by a pause with one speech act, secondly, complex unit, which is a unit of narrative having a pattern of discourse. Most simple units found in the studied narrative are serial simple unit construction and are mostly separated by complex units. Example (2) below shows nine simple units in a serial construction.

(2) \{[mii dêk]\} \{[mii mǎa]\} \{[mii kòp]\} \{[mii phra-can]\} \{[mii faj]\} \
\{[mii tia]\} \{[mii phâ-čêt nǎa]\} \{[dêk nôon]\} \{[kòp kra-dòot]\} [04B1-9] \\
have child have dog have frog have moon have fire \
have bed have handkerchief child sleep frog jump \\

\{[There is a child]\} \{[There is a dog]\} \{[There is a frog]\} \{[There is the Moon]\} \{[There is a lamp]\} \{[There is a bed]\} \{[There is a handkerchief]\} \{[A child sleeps]\} \{[A frog jumps]\}
The above example is from a child aged 4 narrating two serial pictures. The child described entities and actions of participants without linking such events. A number of simple unit constructions in sequence are always found at the beginning of narratives and especially in small children aged 4–6 but these are not found in adults.

As for complex units in the narratives, several patterns were found whether being linked by the same and different syntactic mechanisms, linked by the same syntactic mechanism or being a series of clauses linked by the transitional words kôn “then” or “and then” as in example (3) below.

(3) {[mãa nóôj tûk loj maa] [lôo kôn têèk] [thoo-nû kôn kroòt
dog little fall down come jar CONJ. break Tony CONJ. angry
mãa nóôj]}={[11D25-27]
dog little
{[The little dog then falls] [the jar is then broken] [Tony is then angry with the little dog] }

The above example was given by an 11-year-old child using the transitional word kôn “then” in the second and third clauses signifying a balance of linkage between it and the preceding clause of a coordination type.

Moreover, there are complex units created by placing clauses in sequence in subordination type that are linked by subordinators mû¹ “when” and cû¹ “since”. While the complex units created by clauses placed in sequence through embedding are always linked by complementizer thû¹/wàa “that” or relativizer thû¹ sù¹ y/ ʔan that” or “which”. The other complex units are made through serial verb constructions.

Results

The pilot study on syntactic complexity in Thai children’s narratives found that the majority of complex units are linked with diverse syntactic mechanisms. From my research, 11 patterns have been found: Pattern 1 {coordination+subordination}, Pattern 2 {coordination+subordination+embedding}, Pattern 3 {coordination+subordination+embedding+serial verb construction}, Pattern 4 {subordination+embedding}, Pattern 5 {subordination+embedding+serial verb construction}, Pattern 6 {embedding+serial verb construction}, Pattern 7 {coordination+subordination+serial verb construction}, Pattern 8 {coordination+serial verb construction}, Pattern 9 {coordination+embedding}, Pattern 10 {coordination+embedding+serial verb construction} and Pattern 11 {subordination+embedding+serial verb construction}. However, the range of links is not limited to this number. An interesting point to explore is the order of such links.

Moreover, it is found that the usage of coordination has declines with age while the use of other connectives rises.
Figure 2 shows that children of 4 years use coordination at the rate of 88.5% of the narratives, children of 6 years use 83.8%, children age 9 use 46%, 11 use 46.4% and adults use 44 %, while other relations all increase.

Nevertheless, counting only the number of clauses with different kinds of relations may not efficiently show the overall picture of complexity from the point of view of text structure. Measuring syntactic complexity of linguistic units that are larger than clauses is indispensable and needs to be precisely done. It is considered that in terms of narrative process, complex description for the whole structure of the text is key. This article believes that a study of complex unit structure could portray the whole structure of the text.

In what follows, complexity measured from the structure of complex units in Thai children’s narratives will be explored. The subject will be divided into overall complexity of narrative text and complexity value of complex unit in details.

**Complexity measured from structure of complex unit in Thai children narratives**

Study of structural complexity in this research relies on 2 descriptive parts. Firstly, complexity of narrative text is studied via the overall picture of the text narrated by a child considering ratio of simple units per complex units in a story. Secondly, complexity in structure of each complex unit is studied by creating tree diagrams. The complexity may be discerned via the pattern of the tree diagram in terms of whether it is a horizontal tree or a vertical tree. Moreover, complexity can be calculated numerically for comparison among age groups, thus enabling a more accurate assessment of the complexity in which subjectivity is reduced.
Overall complexity of narrative text

From 50 narrators, there was a total of 1,693 units of discourse fragment categorized as 799 simple units (47.19%), and 894 complex units (52.81%). In terms of information between children and adults, the rate was equivalent. From children’s narratives, 47.73% was simple units and 52.27% was complex units while adult narratives comprised simple units of 46.25% and complex units of 53.75%. Although, the complex unit ratio was higher, it was still very close. From this point of view, it can be concluded that children’s and adults’ narrative complexity was similar.

However, if considered by age, it was found that children aged 9–11 and adults made use of complex units more than simple ones, while children aged 4–6, on the other hand, made greater use of simple units. It could be concluded that the description of complexity with the ratio of units of discourse shows language ability development to a certain extent.

Deeper analysis of complexity value of complex units

In this section, simple units are not taken into account. The focus of analysis here are complex units created by the researcher who divided the text into units based on criteria of syntactic linkage. The linked clause clusters are analyzed in terms of hierarchical relations and presented via a tree diagram. It is believed that such an approach offers strong potential for understanding and producing the complexity of the narrator to place information in order and transfer it to the receiver.

Normally, the number of constituents in a unit indicates complexity; that is, the higher the number, the more complex the unit becomes. However, with complex units in narratives that are focused on the number of clauses, it is found that if two units have the same number of clauses, the tree diagram must be used since it gives information in terms of hierarchical relations of such components.

Analysis of complex unit structure using tree diagrams shows hierarchical relations of clauses in terms of coordination and serial verb construction. To decide which clauses relate most fully to each other, meaning and syntactic characteristics are used. Therefore, it is possible that a tree diagram can show subordination at levels higher than coordination. For example,

(4) [[[căw đīk-kīi son] lè?] [sūm-sām]] [con tham héj khuát tọŋ tẹ́ẹk]]
Fellow Dickey naughty and careless so make bottle must broken

[[[Dickey is naughty] and [careless]] so the bottle is broken]]
Significance of tree diagram characteristics and levels of complexity

This section considers the number of levels and nodes at second level. Testing some information showed that the number of levels varies according to complexity value, while the number of clauses in the second level nodes of complex unit will be in reverse variation. Briefly, if the number of clauses in the second level node of complex unit is low, the value of complexity will be high because the tree diagram becomes more vertical. Thus, number of levels becomes higher and more complex (see figure 3).

For the same reason, it can be concluded that the shape of the tree diagram showing each type of complex unit structure signifies complexity to different degrees. A horizontal tree shape is a tree with one level as shown in example (5) and figure 4.

(5) [dêk  tôk phû̀m] [hâo-nók- huûk kôc  lêaj [/] hâo-nók-huûk kôc  lêaj
Child fall  floor  owl CONJ. so  owl CONJ. so

[/] maa  duu ] lêw [mâa [/]mâa  kôc  ?âa  pàak  wîn] lêw
Come see  CONJ. dog  dog CONJ. open mouth  run  CONJ.

[khon[/]lêw dêk  khùn  bon  hin]
Man  CONJ. child  get  on  on  rock

{(A child falls on the floor the owl then, the owl then comes to see and then the dog
the dog then opens his mouth and runs) then a man then the child gets on a rock)
The clauses (1), (2), (3) and (4) are linked by the coordinating conjunctions “then” and “and then” showing relations between of the four clauses at the same level. They are neither dependent nor subordinating clauses in structure. The tree diagram consequently at a horizontal level as follows:

![Tree diagram showing structure of sampling complex unit](image)

**Figure 4: Tree diagram showing structure of sampling complex unit**

A vertical tree shape is a tree diagram having two levels or more. This kind of diagram, although without many clauses, will, if it has a small number of nodes, still have several levels resulting in more complexity than a counterpart having only one level. The following example (6) of a vertical tree shape has the same number of clauses as the previous example but a different number of levels, namely an additional level.

(6) {[[mii kòp tua nûn] [jüu káp mäa]] lëw [[mii dëk]

Have frog CLASS one be with dog CONJ. have child

[kaµ-laµ nöøn]]} [0411-4]

ASP. lie

{[[There is a frog] [being with a dog]] then[[There is a child] [sleeping]]}

The pair of clauses (1) and (2) are in a serial verb construction, and (3) and (4) are in different serial verb constructions. The two serial verb constructions are linked with the coordinator “then” indicating coordination. The hierarchical relation can be analyzed as a tree diagram having two levels of nodes in vertical direction as shown in figure 5.
In summary, a vertical-shaped tree is less complex than the horizontal counterpart. As a result, figure 4 is less complex than figure 5.

**Calculation of complexity value**

In this section, calculation methods will be discussed in terms of applicability for each form of tree diagram and efficiency in showing difference of complexity on an actual basis.

If comparing the vertical and horizontal tree shapes outlined in the previous section, a good formula should show that the tree diagram in figure 4 has less complexity. This is because there is only one level nodes while hierarchy is detected in the tree diagram in figure 5, although having the same number of clauses as figure 4. Therefore, a good formula must show different results.

The formula presented in this research is as follows:

\[
\text{Complexity Value} = \frac{\text{No. of Clauses in a sentence} \times \text{No. of Levels of tree diagram}}{\text{No. of second level nodes}}
\]

This formula, when calculated using the horizontal tree shape in figure 4, will give 1 as a result, regardless of the number of clauses the tree has. Such a result is acceptable in this research since the linking of clauses of the horizontal tree shape does not have a hierarchical relation.

The number, therefore, will not show hierarchy. If wanting to find complexity in terms of number of clauses, counting should be chosen without calculation using this formula. The result is now appropriate and when compared to figure 5, this formula will render a greater complexity.
value of \((4x2) \div 2 = 4\), which means this formula can point out differences between the horizontal and vertical tree shapes.

Moreover, this formula shows the distinctiveness of vertical tree shapes that have different level numbers. When using this formula with the vertical tree shapes that have two or more levels, it will give different complexity values.

Now, two complex units each containing four clauses are being compared. However, the tree diagram shows that one unit has two levels of nodes while the other has three levels of nodes, as seen when comparing figure 5 and figure 6 as follows:

\[
(7) \{[\text{de\k chaaj deen }2\text{b\k paj thi chaaj p\a}a] \text{ le\w [r\o\o] ta-koon b\o\k c\w k\o\p}] \\
\text{Child male walk out go at edge wood CONJ yell shout tell fellow frog} \ \\
[[\text{wa\a c\w k\o\p kha\a ja\k h\a\j}] [c\w kl\a\p maa}] \ [09B22-25] \\
\text{COMPL fellow frog I want fellow back come} \ \\
\}
\]

This example has three levels of nodes since there are clauses relating in the manner of a serial verb construction (Clause 3 and 4) in the complement clause starting with “that.” When adding clause 2, it is combined as a coordination clause relating to clause 1.

Figure 6: Tree diagram showing structure of sampling complex unit
If applying the formula presented in this article with the same case study, the result of the complex unit having 2 complexity levels is \((4 \times 2) \div 2 = 4\) as in figure 5 compared with the result \((4 \times 3) \div 2 = 6\) as in figure 6. It is thus found that complexity value will be in actual order of complexity value.

Other calculation methods may not give as good a result. For example, dividing the number of clauses with the number of levels cannot give an accurate value for a tree shape with deeper node levels.

### Analysis Result

For the presentation of results, the researcher would find the mean of complexity result from complexity unit calculation for each age group. Studying five age groups of narrators indicates that complexity value has increased in line with higher age as can be seen in figure 7.

![Figure 7: Mean of syntactic complexity value in each age group](image)

It was found that children aged 4 had a lower mean of 1.61, while the complexity value increases with age, with children aged 6 was 2, aged 9 at 2.33. And although the result for those aged 11 is slightly decreased to 2.06, it is not obvious. However, the complexity value of children from age 9 was similar to that of adults at 2.25.

The complexity value found showed that change in the value reflected development of each age and could explain linguistic phenomenon in terms of language perception and learning that will be later explained.

### Conclusion

Development occurs as an attempt to communicate. In order to narrate a number of combined events, children must learn about rational and temporal relations. Also, they must acquire knowledge to
They must know which information is a main clause or minor clause and know how to link two (or more) clauses (Clark 2003).

As a result, to study syntactic complexity in Thai children’s narratives, a researcher needs to see the overall picture of complexity of a unit as a unit occurring in discourse. Importantly, a tool must be created to measure complexity as compared among age groups and examine children’s development. This article has presented two key points dealing with the development of complexity units and an alternative measuring method for complexity and comparison among age groups.

As for development of complex units, the research found that use of complex sentences, as defined by the research, can be found in four-year-old children. In previously conducted research, Diessel (2004) found that small children start making use of complex sentences at the age of 2 years old and are able to command a variety of sentences. The found pattern starts from (1) complement-taking verb “wanna” followed by infinitival verbs and not long thereafter children can coordinate clauses with “and.” A few months later, they can start using (2) complement clauses, verb inflections followed by (3) a complement clause that always co-occurs with a matrix clause. After that, they can use (4) clausal and adversative clauses linked by “because”, “but” and “so” followed by (5) relative clause modifying nouns preceded by copular verbs or noun phrases.

The sequence of such patterns is in line with the amount of information used in the research. The database used in the research started with children aged 4 since the children are required to narrate a story first. Thus, no primary development has been noticed but it could be supplemented to see development after two years old in a compatible way. Children aged four still use patterns that they have initially developed, mostly coordination clauses such as lèéw “and”. Secondly, they have developed the use of complement clauses with a slight use of adjectival clauses. However, no relative clauses are found in children at this age. Moreover, only single clause structures are found in children at age six.

Coordination is where complex units are created by placing clauses in sequence in order to foreground meaning. This type of complexity unit happens a lot in the narration of serial events and pictures; the simplest way is to show equal relations between those events in chronological order.

The most commonly found complement clause is that which co-occurs with a verb of saying. Moreover, adjectival clauses function as a modifying unit complementing the main clause in terms of time, place, manner, purpose, reason, circumstance, simultaneity, condition, negative condition, concession and result like function of adjective. All of these are for background linking and children will start to use them when they have grown up.

As for measuring syntactic complexity, there are different points of view ranging from measuring the average length of utterance, and counting ratios in several types of structure. However, boundary setting is a problem. The measuring unit categorizes sentences into seven levels based on complexity, while defining the score weights of language patterns is difficult to achieve with precision in language pattern complexity. Tree diagrams
showing sentence structure should be more accurate but these have not been extended scope to cover units larger than a sentence. As a result, they cannot be used comprehensively to study narratives.

This article, therefore, depends on ratio of units that are components of complex units paying attention to precise boundary setting of such components such as clauses and units of discourse comprising simple and complex units. This complexity measuring does not view only one aspect such as ratio, but also encompasses hierarchical relations that will be useful for showing structural complexity in every dimension. Study results from this calculation formula can inform numerical levels of complexity to be used for comparison in terms of development.

Complexity degree tends to increase in children between the ages of 4–9 years but no obvious tendency can be predicted after that. It can be concluded that syntactic complexity concerning tree structure obviously shows complexity units in children until they reach age 9. As for children of 11 years old and adults, development has slowed down. There is no significant difference between children of age 9 and adults.

Moreover, it can be noticed that children of age 11 have less complexity. When focusing on relations of clauses, it is found that coordination has slightly increased from children of age 9 (see figure 2). This may cause the complexity of children of age 11 to be slightly less than their 9-year-old counterparts.

However, from close observation, it is noticed that children aged 11 have pragmatics similar to that of adults in terms of role playing and narrative stylistics. The narrator will narrate the story in a simple way as if he narrated it to a child. This issue may affect the similarity of complexity of children aged 11 and adults. As a result, study of the linguistic development of children aged 11 compared to adults should be examined in more detail.

A more interesting point is the obvious development of a tree structure that clearly shows complexity units in children of age 4 and 6. Those of 6 years old have higher complexity value by 0.39 than those of 4 years old, much higher than other groups of close age range. This is possibly because 6 is the age to start education at school where they have a chance to learn a lot of syntactic knowledge very quickly.

Study of syntactic complexity in Thai children’s narratives indicates the complexity’s compliance with the ages of the narrator and so it may be concluded that complexity is an indicator of development. Moreover, in terms of potential benefits, this study offers an approach to discover new methods for studying syntactic complexity. Furthermore, in terms of application, the perspectives advanced in this article may support new understandings of spoken language grammar in terms of descriptive method or applications for teaching language to children.

References


THE POLYSEMY OF “chɔ̂ɔp” IN THAI: A PRAGMATICALLY MOTIVATED PHENOMENON

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the word chɔ̂ɔp in Thai, which normally signifies three different meanings, namely ‘to be right’, ‘to like’ and ‘often’. The result of the analysis shows that it is more likely that the polysemy of chɔ̂ɔp arises from pragmatic motivation. Pragmatic motivation, which covers factors such as speakers’ attitude, intention, point of view, behavior and social standing, can affect actual use of language. Pragmatically, the word chɔ̂ɔp that means ‘to be right’ can easily lead to an action of agreement. In other words, when we regard something right; we tend to agree on it without argument. This attitude is related to another meaning of chɔ̂ɔp in the way that the degree of agreeability is strengthened into the meaning ‘to like’, or even ‘to love’ and ‘to enjoy’ sometimes. Also, when we like something, or even love and enjoy some activity, this kind of feeling can motivate us to do it again and again and thus we come to have a characteristic behavior. This typical behavior can consequently cause semantic features like [habitual] and [iterative] to occur. With the semantic feature [iterative], the word chɔ̂ɔp then has yet another meaning as ‘often’. This paper also discusses the grammaticalization of the word chɔ̂ɔp from a verb which means ‘to like’ into an adverb of frequency that means ‘often’ i.e. there is a change of word class or part of speech. It was found that there are many cases of chɔ̂ɔp that appear syntactically and semantically ambiguous, or, in other words they are in a transitional period of word class change. This paper indicates that such an ambiguity or incipient grammaticalization is motivated by the speaker’s attitude and point of view.

Key words: polysemy, pragmatic motivation, Thai, grammaticalization

Introduction

In Thai, one has often been made fun of or teased back when saying a sentence that contains the word chɔ̂ɔp in the sense that relates to frequent events, especially those events that have a negative effect on the speaker. For example, if you say a sentence like chan chɔ̂ɔp pen wát (which normally means ‘I often catch a cold’), you may be teased back thâa chɔ̂ɔp kɔ̂ɔ pen tɔ̀ɔ paj sì meaning ‘if you like it, so go on catching it’.

This kind of joking can occur due to the ambiguous meaning of the word chɔ̂ɔp. One meaning is ‘to like’, ‘to love’ or ‘to enjoy’, the other ‘often’ or ‘frequently’. Apparently, they can be judged as homonyms i.e. two words that accidentally have the same form but with completely different meanings. Consequently, they become, needless to say, a good resource for making jokes.

In Thai, there is another chɔ̂ɔp which means ‘to be right’. Let us consider a sentence with this chɔ̂ɔp.

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thing this not be right
by law
By law, this is not right.

Semantically, these three tokens of chɔ̂ɔp appear to belong to three lexemes, which have nothing to do with one another i.e. they are homonyms. However, based on syntactic rules, many Thai dictionaries group the word chɔ̂ɔp ‘to be right’ together with chɔ̂ɔp ‘to like’ and separate the other chɔ̂ɔp ‘often’ due to the fact that they are different parts of speech—the first two are regarded as verbs, while the other is an adverb.

So far there has been no literature in Thai that tries to explain the relationship between these 3 (apparently separated) words chɔ̂ɔp either from meaning related perspective or from the grammaticalization process. Therefore, this paper proposes to study chɔ̂ɔp from not only the meaning related perspective but also its grammaticalization process. Both topics are studied in this paper with the focus on polysemy with pragmatic motivation.

Homonymy and Polysemy

Before analyzing the case of chɔ̂ɔp in Thai from a pragmatic perspective, let us consider some basic concepts in semantics first as good grounding for the following study of chɔ̂ɔp in depth. Semantically, Lyons (1995: 58) explained the difference between homonymy and polysemy in that the former is a relation that holds between two or more distinct lexemes, whereas the latter is a property of single lexemes i.e. one lexeme with multiple meanings. He also proposed criteria to separate homonymy from polysemy which can be summarized as follows:

1. homonyms are unrelated in meaning
2. all their forms are identical
3. their identical forms are grammatically equivalent.

According to Lyons (1995: 55), the three criteria above are used to judge what he called “absolute homonymy.” Absolute homonyms refer to two or more lexemes that have the same phonological and orthographic form, grammatical equivalence (for example, they belong to the same part of speech), but have no relation in meaning. The word “bank” in English is a good example: one means a financial institution, whereas the other refers to the sloping side of a river. Clearly, the two meanings have nothing in relation to one another, so they pass the first criterion. Also, they pass the second criterion as they share the same form <bank>. Moreover, they both grammatically belong to the same word class, that is, noun class.

In the case of chɔ̂ɔp in Thai, on the other hand, it is hard to say that the first criterion is adequately a clear-cut tool to separate them into 3 lexemes. At first glance, the chɔ̂ɔp meaning ‘to like’ and the chɔ̂ɔp meaning ‘often’ can be said to be unrelated in meaning. Therefore, they appear to pass the first criterion: homonyms are unrelated in meaning. Besides, they share the same form, so they pass the second criterion. Syntactically,
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however, they form different parts of speech. To prove this, one can put the negative marker mâj before the former in order to produce the opposite meaning (‘not like’), but one cannot do the same to the latter (to get the negative meaning ‘not often’). Therefore they do not pass the third criterion and thus it can be concluded that they are not homonyms.

Let us go back to consider the first criterion which concerns the words’ different meanings. Based on this criterion, as I have mentioned earlier, it seems that the meanings of the two chɔ̂ɔp’s have nothing to do with each other: one concerns emotion whereas the other concerns the frequency of time. Nevertheless, the verb chɔ̂ɔp which means ‘to like’ can sometimes co-occur with other verbs in a form of so-called “serial verbs” and this causes chɔ̂ɔp to have a meaning of ‘to love’ or ‘to enjoy (doing something).’ Let us consider an example:

(2) chân chɔ̂ɔp kin chɔ̂kkoolæt
   I like eat chocolate
   I like eating chocolate.

(3) chân chɔ̂ɔp lën intaænæt
   I like play Internet
   I like surfing the Internet.

Pragmatically, what we like to do or enjoy can motivate us to repeat doing it very often and consequently it becomes our habit or characteristic behavior. As a result, considered from a semantic point of view, the meaning of enjoyment can metonymically covers features like enjoyable, habitual and iterative. According to De Smet and Cuyckens (2005), the sense of habituality involves iterativity due to the fact of a situation’s repeated occurrence. Therefore, the chɔ̂ɔp which is an adverb that means ‘often’ is semantically related to the chɔ̂ɔp ‘to like’ by the feature iterative. Both of them are in fact polysemous words, not homonyms at all.

The other chɔ̂ɔp ‘to be right’ happens to share the same form with the chɔ̂ɔp ‘to like’ and belongs to the same part of speech, i.e. verb, and therefore it passes both the second and third criteria. For the first criterion, however, I will argue that it does not pass, since it has a relation in meaning with the chɔ̂ɔp ‘to like’ and should be considered as a polysemous word. I will discuss this point in more depth later.

Polysemy as Semantic Extension

Lyons (1995: 58) mentioned earlier that polysemy was a phenomenon in which one lexeme had multiple meaning. By multiple meaning, numerous literatures in cognitive semantics describe polysemy as meaning extension, or more specifically speaking, metonymical and metaphorical extension (e.g. Talmy 1985, Taylor 1989, Lakoff 1987, 1990, Kövecses 2002). A good example in English is the word “see”: one refers to “to have visual experience”, while the other “to understand.” Metaphorically, the former belongs to physical space as one needs eyes to perform such an action, whereas the latter extends to mental space.

The study of three visual perception verbs in Thai by Rungthip Ratanaphanusorn (2006) corroborates this cognitive theory...
of polysemy. The researcher found that the 3 verbs, which are ɔɔŋ ‘to look’, duu ‘to watch’ and hên ‘to see’, share the basic sense of direct visual perception in a physical domain and then extend to the mental domain. For example, hên ‘to see’ extends metaphorically from ‘to perceive with eyes’ to ‘to know’ and ‘to believe.’

Let us get back to consider the word ɔɔp in Thai through the following sentence:

(4) khârâatchakaan khon níi
civil servant person this
prâphrit mí ɔɔp
behave not right
This civil servant does not behave right.

The word ɔɔp in (4), which means ‘to be right’, can be said to belong to both physical and mental spaces as it is still concerned with a description of human behavior as well as making judgment on one’s behavior based on law and social value. Another ɔɔp ‘to like’, on the other hand, probably extends from the former towards mental space as it only concerns emotion. The other ɔɔp ‘often’ finally extends into a time dimension.

Even though we can describe the path of its extension from the physical dimension to the very abstract one with a cognitive-semantic approach, the description is nonetheless inadequate to explain what motivates this path.

### Polysemy and Pragmatic Motivation

In the previous section, I have clearly shown that the two senses of ɔɔp ‘to like’ and ‘often’ are semantically related by pragmatic motivation. In other words, if we do not take the real use in context of this word as well as the related behavior and the attitude of the speaker into account, this phenomenon cannot be explained clearly from a broader perspective. It is likely that pragmatics motivate the emergence of semantic features. Therefore it can be said that polysemy is a pragmatically motivated phenomenon i.e. pragmatics come first, and only then do semantic features or new related meanings arise.

The 20th-century philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1978) contends that meaning is related to usage. Hence, words are neither defined by reference to the objects or things which they are designated by the world nor by the thoughts, ideas, or mental representations that one might associate with them, but rather by how they are used. In his view, meanings emerge from what he termed "forms of life", roughly speaking, the culture and society in which those words are used.

John Langshaw Austin occupies a place in the philosophy of language alongside Wittgenstein in staunchly advocating an examination of the way words are used in order to elucidate meaning. His famous work “How to Do Things with Words” (1962) gives priority to illocutionary acts to analyze meaning. His speech act theory has since become world famous. And this has partly lead to a new perspective of meaning: the “speaker’s meaning” which includes aspects such as the speaker’s intention, point of view, attitude and the
way or manner by which the speaker delivers his/her words.

Following Wittgenstein and Austin who give priority to the way we use a language, the way the speakers live their lives, and how the speakers think or feel, we can explain the $chɔ̂ɔp$ which means ‘to be right’ and consider that it is also related to the $chɔ̂ɔp$ which means ‘to like’ as well. Pragmatically, if we consider something or someone to be right, we tend to agree on it or agree with him or her without any argument. Based on Austin’s key notions of locutionary and illocutionary acts, or what is said and what is communicated or how it is communicated respectively, it can be said that when Thai people use the word $chɔ̂ɔp$ ‘to be right’, they are simultaneously performing the act of agreement as well as communicating a positive attitude. In other words, they are not just saying something but also doing something as well. As the act of agreement with a positive attitude has been repeated along with the frequent use of $chɔ̂ɔp$ ‘to be right’, the degree of agreeability with positive feelings is then strengthened and this possibly motivates another meaning ‘to like’ to emerge. Along with the way Thais use $chɔ̂ɔp$ ‘to be right’, which is associated with social values and laws (in order to make a judgment), it is likely that these social values and laws have the power to possibly direct or influence one’s opinion and emotion (either consciously or unconsciously). This is possible since the speaker’s meaning is context sensitive.

There is further evidence that can help support the idea that $chɔ̂ɔp$ ‘to be right’ has motivated us to perform an act of agreement. The best evidence that I am going to talk about is the compound $hênchɔ̂ɔp$. Literally, this verb compound is composed of two verbs $hên$ ‘to see’ and $chɔ̂ɔp$ ‘to be right’. The outcome of their combination is the meaning ‘to agree’.

Even though this paper is limited to synchronic study, it is likely that the word $chɔ̂ɔp$ ‘to be right’ had emerged first, then lead to the emergence of the compound $hênchɔ̂ɔp$ and the verb $chɔ̂ɔp$ ‘to like’ respectively. This assumption can be partly proved by the use of $chɔ̂ɔp$ ‘to be right’ at the present where it occurs only in a formal style of language use such as in law and in teaching words by the Lord Buddha. My observation conforms to other research by Thompson and Mulac (1991) and Moore (2007) which show that polysemy and grammaticalization are associated with frequency and register. That is, when a word’s meaning is being extended and grammaticalized, the original one tends to be restricted in everyday use as well as in certain registers.

Let us take the assumption that the $chɔ̂ɔp$ ‘to be right’ had emerged first as a starting point; the $chɔ̂ɔp$ ‘to be right’ can be then semantically linked to the $chɔ̂ɔp$ ‘to like’ as polysemous words. As mentioned earlier, it is possible then that the degree of agreeability is consequently strengthened to ‘to like’, ‘to love’ and also ‘to enjoy’. Pragmatically, when we agree on something, either someone else’s idea or action, we tend to have a positive attitude or good feeling toward it. The positive attitude and good feeling can motivate us to have the emotion of (or the meaning) ‘to like’. After that, the degree of ‘to like’ is possibly strengthened into ‘to love’ and ‘to enjoy’.
Grammaticalization and
Pragmatic Motivation

Grammaticalization is a phenomenon in which a word comes to be more than one part of speech or have more grammatical functions. Also, its meaning is changed while being grammaticalized. On the whole, a content word tends to change into a function word (Hopper and Traugott 1993). Numerous researchers such as Traugott (1982) and Rossari, Ricci and Spiridon (2009) contend that grammaticalization is not a phenomenon of syntactic and semantic change alone but also a pragmatically motivated phenomenon.

As already mentioned earlier that one çɔ̂ɔp is a verb meaning ‘to like’ and the other is an adverb meaning ‘often’, in this section their grammaticalization process will be examined. Based on the syntactic environment, they have already been analyzed to show that they belong to different word classes; it can be proved by the negation process. In this way, semantic bleaching also helps explain their grammaticalization process. The semantic feature enjoyable is bleaching while the feature iterative is being highlighted. Speaking from a pragmatic viewpoint, the feature iterative has emerged due to the fact that whatever one likes to do is normally repeatedly done. Therefore the çɔ̂ɔp ‘to like’ is grammaticalized into an adverb which means ‘often’.

However, when the grammaticalization is in progress or getting started, there are normally some ambiguous cases i.e. one form is possible to be interpreted as belonging to two word classes or to have two possible meanings. Let us consider an example:

(5) ʦn çɔ̂ɔp lêntua
she like/often play hard to get
She likes playing hard to get./
She often plays hard to get.

From the point of view of the speaker, who is a man (according to the corpus of the Thai Online Concordance Program provided by Chulalongkorn University), it seems that çɔ̂ɔp in (5) means ‘often’. In other words, this utterance may imply that she often performs the action (of playing hard to get) which I dislike. However, from the viewpoint of the woman who is being referred to, it might be possible that she enjoys doing such a thing.

(6) Nákkaanmueaŋ sùanjàj
politician most
çɔ̂ɔp kɔɔrápchân
like/often be corrupt
Most politicians like to commit corruption/ most politicians often commit corruption.

Likewise, çɔ̂ɔp in (6) is ambiguous. If we interpret this from the point of view of common people who feel like they are being taken advantage of, çɔ̂ɔp should be the adverb ‘often’. It implies that what most politicians have done is too much to bear. On the contrary, it is possible to say from the point of view of the politicians that they love to do it. Furthermore, sentence (6) can be interpreted as stating the fact that most politicians enjoy being corrupt and indeed frequently doing so. Therefore, it is the context which is important e.g. who the speaker is, the purpose of uttering this sentence (just to report a fact or to complain about something) etc.

Based on data from the Thai Concordance Program (Chulalongkorn University), the
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cases that are not ambiguous or where chɔ̂ɔp is surely the adverb, is when chɔ̂ɔp co-occurs with a verb or phrase that implies a negative sense or concerns a situation with negative effects as in (7).

(7) phôm chɔ̂ɔp pùathūa
I often have a headache

tocn cháw
in morning
I often have a headache in the morning.

The verb pùathūa ‘have a headache’, when standing alone in the dictionary, does not have a negative or positive sense; it just describes a symptom. However, when it is used in context, it turns into having a very clear negative sense, since nobody wants to undergo such a painful event. Therefore it cannot be said that chɔ̂ɔp in (7) has the meaning ‘like’ at all. Syntactically, we cannot put the negative marker ‘mâj’ before this chɔ̂ɔp to get the opposite meaning ‘not often’.

(8) phôm chɔ̂ɔp tihn khîn
I often wake up

klaaŋ dik phrɔ̀ fânráaj
mid night because nightmare
I often wake up at night because of nightmares.

Like (6), tihn khîn ‘wake up’ when standing alone does not imply any negative sense at all. However, the context or co-text phrɔ̀ fânráaj ‘because of nightmares’ helps support the chɔ̂ɔp to be interpreted as an adverb ‘often’ (instead of ‘to like’), since nobody likes to experience a situation as in (8). Or putting it another way, everyone wants to sleep well throughout the night.

As can be clearly seen, the attitude and viewpoint of the speaker plus the context of language usage are probably the main factors that motivate chɔ̂ɔp to be grammaticalized.

Conclusion

This paper analyzes the word chɔ̂ɔp in Thai, which is normally used to signify three (apparently) different meanings, namely ‘to be right’, ‘to like’ and ‘often’. These three apparent separate words are actually polysemous words and it can be said they are originally related due to pragmatic motivation. This analysis is just a case study to show that semantics alone cannot explain polysemy well enough, but a study of pragmatics does. In addition, this paper studies the grammaticalization of the word chɔ̂ɔp, which is also concerned with polysemy. The results show that incipient grammaticalization of chɔ̂ɔp is pragmatically motivated as well. In conclusion, it can be said that originally, polysemy, either as one topic studied within semantics or in a grammaticalization concerned phenomenon, is pragmatically motivated.

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A HISTORICAL PRAGMATIC STUDY OF APOLOGIES: A CASE STUDY OF THE ESSEX PAUPER LETTERS (1731–1837)

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Abstract

In this paper, the realizations of apologies as evidenced in the Essex pauper letters of 19th century England are explored. The paper takes a critical look at the forms and functions of apologies, arguing that apologies in such texts are conventionalized in form. Taking into consideration the social norms of writing specific to this speech community, the study makes a distinction between two main functions of apologies and argues that apologies under scrutiny are not a politeness device that repairs and redresses an offence; rather, they exemplify a politic behavior that helps in the negotiation of interpersonal relationships and the attainment of the writers' discursive goal.

Introduction

Over the past three decades or so, pragmatics have sought to explore, elaborate, and compare and contrast the differences in apologies across cultures, as produced by both native and non-native speakers (see, for example, Bergman and Kasper 1993; Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989; Olshtain and Blum-Kulka 1985; Reiter 2000; Trosborg 1987). These studies have shown that what counts as an apology, how it is realized and when it is called for vary in different speech communities. Furthermore, much of the research on apologies has been influenced by Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory (1987). Holmes (1998: 217), for example, clearly links the function of apologies to politeness, contending that “the apology is quintessentially a politeness strategy.”

While studies on this type of speech act abound, they are all synchronic, and to date, there has been only one historical pragmatic study of apologies (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2008), aiming to compare the realizations of apologies in two different periods of English, namely, Early Modern and Present-day English. It is argued that a diachronic analysis of speech acts may be viewed as a contrastive analysis which investigates two or more stages of the same language, instead of two or more languages or cultures. While the aim of this paper is not to contrast different periods of English, it nevertheless pursues the line of research on apologies in the history of the English language further by examining the ways in which interlocutors in late eighteenth to early nineteenth-century England realized apologies and deployed them to achieve their communicative goal, asking such questions as “How did the members in this particular speech community use language to express apologies?”, “What forms did apologies take?”, and “What pragmatic functions did the apologies serve in the context under investigation?”

To such end, the present study has chosen a group of the Essex pauper letters (1731–1837), preserved in Sokoll (2006), as the

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source of data. The pauper letters are an excellent source for a historical study of apologies. For one reason, they preserve authentic language used by a particular group of people who shared more or less similar communicative goals and context, thereby allowing access to spoken language of the past (see further discussion of the socio-historical background of the Essex pauper letters in Section 3). Drawing upon a corpus of seven hundred and fifty-eight letters to answer the above questions, this article finds that apologies show a fairly small inventory of syntactic forms, and those forms are highly conventionalized and embedded within a larger syntactic unit. In the context under investigation, the writers apologized for two primary reasons: to repair an offence for which the writers take responsibility, and to show politic behavior in observance of genre-specific norms of writing. Although such a claim about the historical use of apologies is brought to bear only in the context of the Essex pauper letters, this pilot study certainly contributes to future historical study of apologies or of other types of speech acts and, thus, can be used as a basis for further research and a larger study.

This article is organized as follows. In Section 2, I provide a detailed discussion of apologies, as doing so will help ensure that a present-day theoretical framework on apologies can be applied to historical data—a problem known as the tertium comparationis (Krajeszowski 1984 and 1989, as cited in Jucker and Taavitsainen 2008: 229). In Section 3, I discuss relevant socio-historical background of my corpus and proceed to explain my methodology in Section 4. In Section 5 and Section 6, I examine, respectively, the forms in which apologies are realized and the pragmatic functions that these apologies serve in the texts, paying particular attention to the relationships between the interlocutors and their communicative goal.

Apology: A speech act

An apology is issued to acquit oneself of a wrongdoing and as a plea for forgiveness. The main function of an apology is to support the hearer who is eventually adversely affected by a violation (Olshtain 1989: 156). In rendering an apology, the speaker is willing to humble himself or herself and to concede the mistake and responsibility, aiming to restore a harmonious relationship with the interlocutor.

In their diachronic analysis of apologies, Jucker and Taavitsainen (2008) draw upon the criteria provided by Deutschmann (2003) and Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) to identify apologies. Such criteria will be critically discussed, reviewed, and expanded on below. According to Deutschmann (2003: 44–47), an apology includes the following components:

- an “offender”, who takes responsibility for some offence or who feels directly or indirectly responsible for something,
- an “offended”, who is affected, potentially affected or just perceived to be affected by the offence,
- an “offence”, which may be real, potential or only perceived as an offence, and
- a “remedy”, which is “a recognition of the offence, acceptance of responsibility and a display of regret.”

According to Jucker and Taavitsainen (2008: 230), cross-culturally (or even within a culture), speakers may differ with respect to any of the above components. For example, what is perceived as an offence by the speaker may vary: some
speakers render apologies because they feel directly or indirectly responsible for a particular act although they have not committed such an act. Tannen (1995) reports on women’s frequent use of apologies, arguing that for women, apologizing with “I am sorry” means more than regret for a past event, as it is also part of a ritualized means of expressing concern, while for men, doing so is seen as putting the speaker in a one-down position.\(^2\)

Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989: 290), on the other hand, give a comprehensive list of strategies consisting of a potential range of strategies that constitute an apology. These strategies can be used one at a time or in combination:

- Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID) (i.e. routinized, explicit expression of an apology),
- Taking on responsibility (i.e. expressing responsibility for the offence which creates the need to apologize, such as explicit self-blame, lack of intent, justification, etc.),
- Explanation or account (i.e. covering any external mitigating circumstances offered by the speaker)
- Offer of repair (i.e. offering a way to repair the offence)
- Promise of forbearance (i.e. offering a promise that the offensive act will not happen again)

The first two of these are general and explicit ways of apologizing, while the other three are situation-specific and will reflect the content of the situation. Vollmer and Olshtain (1989: 198) comment that either of the first two, or both, are likely, though not always, to occur in almost any kind of apology situation, while the others, which can be used in lieu of the main ones, are much more situation-dependent. Furthermore, these strategies are subject to being modified by several means of linguistic expressions that either emphasize or soften the violation of the offence (Vollmer and Olshtain 1989: 199), such as downtoners (“possibly”, “perhaps”), hedges (“kind of/sort of”, “somehow”), mental state predicates (“I suppose”, “I think”) or intensifiers (“I’m terribly sorry”). The strategies above can be seen in operation in the following example (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989: 290):

\[
(1) \text{I’m sorry (IFID), I missed the bus (RESPONSIBILITY), and there was a terrible traffic jam (EXPLANATION). Let’s make another appointment (REPAIR). I’ll make sure that I’m here on time (FORBEARANCE).}
\]

What can be observed from the above example is that each strategy, when used in isolation, is a speech act in its own right, but when used together in a particular context, is comprised of a combination of individual speech acts that together constitute a speech act of apology. Murphy and Neu (1996) term this combination “a speech act set”, which itself can be embedded in a larger unit, known as a “speech event”.\(^3\) Although differing in specific terminology used, Cohen and Olshtain (1981) also argue along the same

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\(^2\) See also Holmes (1989), who also finds gender differences in the use of apologies as well.

\(^3\) Here, I use the concept of a speech event to refer to a larger unit, which can consist of several speech act sets (Hatch 1992).
While the above suggestions are useful in identifying apologies, several difficulties present themselves in historical speech acts. Jucker and Taavitsainen (2000: 69–70) acknowledge, for example, that what counts as a particular speech act function may have changed through time, and that speech acts are vague or ambiguous as to what their illocutionary forces are. In the case of apologies, for example, it is possible to use “sorry” merely as an expression of regret, as in “I am sorry that you have been ill”, without implying any sense of personal responsibility. One way to solve such problems, according to Kohnen (2000: 238), is to “base our analysis on a deliberate selection of typical patterns which we trace by way of a representative analysis throughout the history of English”. This approach has been taken by Jucker and Taavitsainen (2008), who identify apologies mainly through their routinized forms or IFIDs.

In this paper, I adopt such a method and use these forms as the main search keys for my corpus investigation of apologies in late 19th century England, while at the same time, I also consider the illocutionary force behind each instance of apology as well (which admittedly may be subject to interpretative subjectivity, but this will be acknowledged as such). Relying on IFIDs has two advantages: an IFID represents what Taavitsainen and Jucker (2007: 112–113) call the “performative use” of speech act verbs, i.e. “direct evidence of the speech acts in their prototypical form”, and because, as discussed above, it is very likely to occur in almost every kind of apology situation as well. Typically, these direct apologies are those forms that include sorry-based units or some form of “apologize” as a performative verb. Although it is possible that “many speech acts, perhaps most, are not realised with an explicit speech act verb” (Taavitsainen and Jucker 2007: 110), I believe that the inventory of apologies in my corpus are sufficient and can offer insight into how apologies function in the texts. In the following section, I proceed to provide relevant socio-historical background of my corpus.

Socio-historical background: The Essex pauper letters

In studying language use of the past, a researcher is bound to face “the bad data problem” (Labov 1994), which refers to the fact that historical linguists have to rely on written evidence, as they do not have direct access to real speech data. What this means for a study of speech acts is that there are no informants who can provide information about apologies or can answer a questionnaire on the use of apologies.

However, research studies in the last decade or so (for example, Biber and Finegan 1992; Hope 1993; Kryk-Kastovsky 2000; Moore 2002) have shown that such a problem can be overcome, for there are data that serve as a better class of data, namely, those types of data that are speech-based, such as court records, dialogues in plays, church sermons, and personal letters. Jucker and Taavitsainen (2008), for example, rely on the Renaissance fiction and drama sections of LION, the Chadwyck Healey on-line

4 This concept of a speech act set is widely applied in other speech acts as well. See, for example, Chen (1996) on refusals and Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) on complaints.
Corpus (1500–1660), to collect instances of apology. Although not instances of real speech, these examples provide representations that are closer to real speech than other forms of written language.

In this paper, I use a different type of data for my examination of apologies in 18th and 19th century England. The pauper letters are products of the Poor Law system in England, which, functioning much like the social security system in the USA today, was a system and method that dealt with and provided relief to the poor in England. These letters were used as a means of communication between poor people who lived and located outside of their original parishes (i.e. local units of government) and the overseers in the original parishes. The poor wrote these letters to request financial assistance as allowed by the Poor Law, and “apart from a few exceptions, pauper letters were always sent from elsewhere” (Sokoll 2006: 11). The pauper letters, thus, documented requests for assistance made by the poor “often under conditions of extreme necessity, privation and despair” (Sokoll 2006: 4).

The pauper letters were important for historical pragmaticians and sociolinguists because of their proximity to speech and their unadulterated content. Their speech-related property is due to the fact that when the writers, who, belonging to the lowest strata of the society, put their own words in writing (if they could do it at all), their writing would take the shape of what otherwise they would have said in words, as Sokoll (2006: 5) puts it: “For once, therefore, the labouring poor were in a position where they could justifiably write just as they spoke.” The letters, thus, “represent oral pieces of writing, produced by people who were quite obviously acting along the boundaries between the spoken and the written word” (Sokoll 2006: 7). However, at the same time, there may be similar patterns, especially in terms of rhetorical moves, that can be observed amongst these letters, as it is possible that a writer may have written his or her letter based on a model letter, or that people were familiar with this specific genre of writing.

Furthermore, in comparison to court records, the pauper letters were unadulterated data, thus forming a better class of “bad data” for at least two reasons. First, these letters were not edited: the morphological endings or the address formulae were in the same forms as they were written in. Second, they were not “second-hand” data in the sense that they were linguistic products of the poor themselves, unlike court records in Early Modern England, which were almost always written by professional scribes or someone from a higher socio-economic class and background who was literate and employed to do the work. Thus, although we had court records where the speech of lower-class people was said to be preserved, those records were at best made by the hands of others, and not the poor’s, let alone the faithfulness of such data. Even though certain poor people applying for aid did not know how to write and even though a letter may exhibit more than one hand of writing, they were likely to seek help in writing the letter from people of the same social standing, as they could not afford to hire a professional scribe to write the letter for them. Still, the letters were linguistic products of the poor.

While these letters, as explained above, are valuable for our study, we have to bear in mind some important issues. To begin with, since the main purpose for the composition of a pauper letter is to request financial aid, each letter bears a request, which itself is a different type of speech
act from apologies. However, this should not affect our examination of apologies in these letters for at least two reasons. First, the speech act set of apology can be further embedded within a larger speech unit (i.e. speech event), and such a unit can be a request. Second, although differing in illocutionary force, requests and apologies can be related and can share the same semantic formulae. Coulmas (1981) reports, in his typological examination of apologies and thanking, that the common link between the two is indebtedness; that is, expressions of thanks convey a speaker’s indebtedness as a recipient of a benefit whereas apologies express the speaker’s indebtedness to his or her interlocutor for having performed an action detrimental to the hearer. This close relationship between apologies and thanks has also been observed in Japanese, where the expression “sumimasen” is used for expressing thanks and apologies (Ide 1998; Kotani 2002). Thus, in our case, we can scrutinize the speech act of apology as manifested in the pauper letters in its own right, as long as we bear in mind the nature of this genre of writing and the ways in which it may interact with apologies. The second caveat is that I do not claim that these pauper letters provide us with an exhaustive set of forms and functions of apology expressions in 19th century England, as apologies lodged within the speech event of request may be relatively limited. Nonetheless, they offer us a fairly substantial set of apology expressions in this period and show us how apologies function within a larger speech event. Thus, like other studies of this incipient nature, this study should be taken as a preliminary study on apologies from a historical perspective.

Methodology

For this study, I manually analyze a corpus of 758 pauper letters, as presented in Sokoll (2006). This edition provides a strictly diplomatic transcription, without any correction or standardization, as it intends to reproduce the original. Since an electronic corpus of these letters is not yet available (see, however, Laitinen (2003), who is currently compiling such a corpus), my approach represents a text-driven methodology. In other words, I go through the corpus “hunting” for expressions relating to apologies. I adopt the criteria suggested by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989: 290) discussed earlier, paying special attention to the occurrences of “excuse”, “pardon”, “I beg your pardon”, “I am sorry”, “forgive”, and their variants. These expressions, Jucker and Taavitsainen (2008: 233) argue, represent a substantial set of lexical elements that function as apologies in earlier periods of English. Finally, I examine the structure of apology expressions and discuss their pragmatic functions as well as their use in negotiations of interpersonal relations. The findings are discussed in the following sections.

Forms of apologies in the pauper letters

In my corpus, apologies are found to occur in isolation; that is, there are no instances of detached apologies, consisting of only the IFID (Deutschmann 2003). However, some instances can be argued to be more detached than others:

2) Gentlemen pardon the Liberty we take in Writing to you so Often but
Necessity obliges Us to do so from the grate distress we are…(231/191)5
3) Forgive me the Liberty, Sir, I have taken of writing…(391/419)

In these two examples, “pardon” and “forgive me” are not fully detached because they are followed by nominal complements, but they are the closest to being detached apologies and resemble real speech data, as they are commands. Notice also that each instance occurs with a term of address, “gentlemen” and “sir”, as if the writers were speaking with the addressee.

Most of the apologies, however, are embedded in an expanded group of sentences, with the following pattern: “I am sorry” followed by an infinitive:

4) I am Sorry to inform you that I am at this time in grate distress Owing to a bad state of health for above 4 months and my daughter is still worse being afflicted with fitts…(96/7)
5) I am Sorry To write this but I am Forst Sir I have done my best Endeavor to gett my Brother a plase but Trade is so Dull that I am sorry to <say> that I cannot gett him one…(109/22)
6) Sir I am Soray to put you to thes truble but I resoved a letter from the Jantlmen and the told me hat the could not alou me anay thing for my boay…(524/600)
7) Sir I am sorry to say I have got a very bad breast it has been coming nearly this three years and I am Nothing else to expect but what it is a cancer and I am not been able to do anything for a month and I hope the Gentlemen will consider my affliction and send me a little money…(243/210)

While the apologetic expression “I am sorry” is identical in form, as each is followed by an infinitive in examples 4) to 7), semantic differences exist. In 4), the writer apologized for informing the recipient of a potentially troublesome piece of news, in 5) for writing the letter, and in 6) for bringing trouble to the recipient. Examples 4) and 7) are interesting in that while it was possible that the writer only expressed regret without implying any sense of personal responsibility, it is more likely that the writer apologized for being burdensome and for their need of assistance, due to illness and other family problems. In this sense, these instances can be considered apologies.

The same expression can also be followed by a that clause:

8) I am sorry I have To wright to you the Second time…(177/108)
9) I am sorry that my particular distress forces me to trouble you for relief as I am very ill and not able to do any work for this long time…(273/257)
10) I am very Sorry that I have to trouble you for assistance But I Cannot Do without any longer for I am Not abel to Do any thing at Present and I have No money…(167/96)

In examples 8) to 10), the expression “I am sorry” is followed by a complement clause. Considering the complement clauses in 8) and in 10), it can be seen that the writers blamed themselves in their
apologies, while in 9) the writer shifted the blame to “my particular distress”. In doing so, the writer in 9) strategically exploited “my particular distress” to his or her advantage to linguistically disassociate himself or herself from the imposition.

The writers can also use more embedded forms of apologies:

11) I hope you will excuse my freedom and parding my Liberty I Take in wrighting to you As want and Necesity Forsess me So to Do… (238/202)
12) Your goodness I Hope, will Excuse my writing to you…(391/419)
13) You will Excuse me in writing to you, you are not a Stranger to my Application…(395/423)
14) I have to beg your Excuse, for again troubling you, with a few Lines…(394/422)

In 11), the apology is prefaced by the interpersonal plea: “I hope”, and it is interesting that the writer uses the second person pronoun “you” and the modal “will.” This can be regarded as an attempt to pre-empt the possibility that the addressee will be offended by the freedom the writer took in writing the letter, while in 12), the interpersonal plea is a parenthetical verb (Urmson 1952), and here the writer cast as the subject “your goodness”, which again can be seen as a pre-emptive strategy. Because the addressee had the goodness, he would excuse the writing. In the same fashion, 13) also demonstrates this pre-emptive attempt, albeit without the interpersonal plea and is more direct in that the writer apologized for writing. Example 14) is different in that the writer used the semi-modal “have to” and the speech act of apology is a complement of the verb “beg”. In this case, “excuse” is realized as a nominal.

Other apology expressions include the verb “regret” and the impersonal construction “it is with regret/sorrow that…”, as in the following examples:

15) I regret I was not at home when you Called had I been at home I would have taken you to my Marsters… (140/64)
16) It is with severe regret that I must now address you on a subject– the most galling and distressing to my feelings…(196/137)
17) It is with great grief and sincere regret–that I am again obliged to apply to you for pecuniary aid …(206/154)

In 15), the speaker apologized through the verb “regret”, while in 16) and 17) he did so through the nominal form. In all these cases, the responsibility was realized in a complement clause.

While examples 2) to 17) show that the writers expressed apologies for different reasons, depending on what they perceived to be the cause of offence, these apologies unite in their rhetorical move: the writers acknowledged responsibility in their invasion of the addressees’ freedom or privacy in one way or another. Thus, these instances can be argued to represent true apologies, not only declarative statements of the writers’ state of the mind.

Having identified and examined the patterns of apology expressions in isolation, let us now move on to show how the IFIDs interact with other speech acts that comprise the speech act set of apology in the pauper letters by way of examples:
After formally addressing the recipient, the writer started off with a speech act of apology, which is typical in most of the pauper letters. In this case, the writer apologized for having to bother the addressee. The reason for so doing was unemployment. The writer then went on at length to explain the job market situation and smoothly transitioned into the request with the use of a preparatory. Having politely requested “a trifle” of money, the writer promised that he would not need to bother the addressee once again, an offence for which he apologized in the beginning.

The letter then proceeds to support the forbearance with his future plan before ending on a strong note that pre-empted the denial of request.

While the above letter is typical in that the writer often rendered an apology only once in the beginning for the inconvenience that his or her writing might cause, other writers might apologize several times during the course of writing, as in the following example:
Sir

Your goodness I Hope, will Excuse my writing to you, I am Sorry to trouble you, or to be under the Necessity, to make any Application for relief, I know you are not in Office, but if you can Consistantly speak for me, it will proberbly be of some service to me, & my family, your past kindness, I thank you for, and as my friend, I am induced to write to you.

I wrote to Mr Carr, some short time back, stateing to him, my Uncomfortable situation, the Ill state of health of my Wife, since the first three weeks, of coming to Chelmsford, and the continued Ill state of my Daughter…I find I am totally unable to support, and what to do I know not…let me Intreat with all humbleness if Possible, something to be done for us…

Forgive me the Liberty, Sir, I have taken of writing I humbly pray for some advice to be given, to releave our minds…

Sir, Your Humble Servt W James

…

I am aware I should pay the Postage, you will Excuse it, as I really have not six pence to pay it with

(391/419)

In this letter, although we do not see such strategies as forbearance or repair, we see several instances of IFIDs. The first three (i.e. “excuse my writing”, “I am Sorry”, and “Forgive me”) were arguably rendered for a similar purpose, namely, to apologize for writing the letter. The last instance (“you will Excuse it”), however, was given for a different purpose, in which case the writer apologized for not having paid the postage. It is interesting to note that the responsibility was realized through a direct acknowledgement of the guilt and an obligation “I am aware I should pay the Postage.” In doing so, he attempted to establish common ground with the addressee, conveying to him or her that he would have paid the postage if it had not been for his lack of means.
From the examples shown above, it can be seen how apologies and other strategies that comprise the speech act set are embedded and function together with other speech acts such as requests. It seems that for at least a large group of writers, apologies are an integral part of successful request letters. Instead of straightforwardly requesting financial assistance, the writers felt the need to include apology expressions in their letters. This will be explained further in the following section, where the pragmatic functions that these apology expressions served are discussed.

Functions of apologies in the pauper letters: Politic and polite behavior

In examining the functions of apologies in the pauper letters, Holmes (1995: 155) is a useful point of departure. She argues that “an apology is a polite speech act used to restore social relations following an offence. Apologies therefore redress face-threatening behaviour, and they acknowledge the need of the addressee not to be imposed upon or offended.” Thus, for Holmes, apologies are a politeness strategy for avoiding conflict, and they function to maintain the fabric of interpersonal relations.

Holmes’ premises are rooted in Brown and Levinson’s theory of linguistic politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987). In their framework, it is assumed that all individuals have “face”, or social self-image, that any speech act is potentially face threatening, and that speakers employ linguistic strategies in order to avoid or limit the effects of such threats. In other words, linguistic interaction is always potentially face threatening, and polite behavior is primarily a way of avoiding any conflicts that result from linguistic interactions.

However, in the case of the pauper letters, while some of the apologies function as repairs (see example 19) above, where the writer apologized for not having paid the postage fee), I argue that most apologies do not function as repairs by which social relations are maintained through the redressing of an offence, and thereby do not represent a polite speech act. Adopting Watts (1992) proposal, I argue that these apologies should be regarded as politic, rather than polite linguistic behavior, as they were expected and anticipated in this communicative context, and as a result, the writers, having been aware of such an expectation, felt the need to render apologies.

According to Watts (1992: 50), politic speech refers to the norm of language use in a particular situation, for such behavior is unmarked. Politic speech, on the other hand, is that which is in excess of this politic speech that contributes to “an enhancement of ego’s standing with respect to alter.” Thus, politeness, in Watts’s framework, is always (positively) marked as it goes beyond the expectations of the encounter, and at the same time it is also relative, as “what counts as polite behaviour depends entirely on those features of the interaction which are socially marked by the speech community as being more than merely politic” (Watts 1992: 50).

Watts (1992: 50) defines politic speech as “socio-culturally determined behavior direct towards the goal of establishing and/or maintaining in a state of equilibrium the personal relationships between the individuals of a social group, whether open or closed, during the ongoing process of verbal interaction.”
Although Watts’s notion of politeness is different from Brown and Levinson’s, it is not incompatible with the notion of face or with the notion that politeness is strategic. In the words of Locher and Watts (2005: 10):

Brown and Levinson’s framework can still be used, however, if we look at the strategies they have proposed to be possible realizations of what we call relational work.

Here, Locher and Watts see politeness as merely a part of relational work—the work that individuals invest in negotiating interpersonal relationships with others as they pursue their goals. Therefore, it can be said that relational work, which encompasses not only politeness but also other aspects of social interaction such as (in)direct, (im)polite, or (in)appropriate behavior, is a broader view of face work and is more suitable for explaining social interaction.

Unfortunately, Watts (1992) does not give specific criteria for use in classifying which linguistic behavior is politic and which is polite, but this absence of criteria is to be naturally expected, as these concepts are situation-sensitive (see, for example, Pan 2000) and perceptions of these concepts vary across native speakers of a language, who more or less share certain thresholds of appropriateness as dictated by social norms (Eelen 2001). Moreover, it should be noted that for Watts, polite behavior is one species of politic behavior or, at the very least, overlaps with it. Thus, in this way, one and the same linguistic behavior may be politic or polite, relative to some kind of situation-specific social norms. These norms are essentially expectations about what a speaker should show he thinks of others or about what he should show he thinks of himself in relation to others. If one behaves according to such norms, his behavior will be unmarked and politic behavior will arise, but if his behavior is in excess of such norms, his behavior will be marked and will be considered polite. For example, if in a given situation, such as in a conversation between a child and a mother, there is the expectation (or anticipation based on the part of the interlocutor) that the child will always say “please” and “thank you”, then these speech acts should be considered politic, rather than polite. On the other hand, if there is no such expectation, then both speech acts would be considered polite.

Based on Watts’s distinction between politic and polite behavior discussed above, let us consider in detail why apologies under scrutiny should be considered politic, rather than polite. I begin with the following examples:

20) I beg pardon for the Libberty I have takin In wrighten to you but As my moaney Is stopt this Last Week I feale very much hurt as my Famileay Is very Large and my husbands Irnasings are so small that I find It hard to git my children brad a lone… (529/606)

21) I am sorry, and it is painfull to me, to trouble you again, you will pardon me for so doing–it is pressing Necessity, Compels me to state, that I have made every possible Effort, in my power, to procure a maintainance, and support… (417/454)

In 20), the writer apologized for taking the opportunity to write to the addressee, while in 21), the writer did so for having to trouble the addressee. Both of these are
apologies, for they have explicit IFIDs and declarations of responsibility. However, the apologies are not repairs for politeness for two reasons. As to the first, we have to bear in mind that, as explained earlier in the socio-historical background section, under the Poor Law, all parishes in England were statutorily required to relieve their poor, and thus it was the duty of the overseers to take care of the poor as they were taking advantage of the right to relief. It was not, arguably, their fault to ask for relief by means of letters, and the addressers were there to facilitate the process.

Second, although a detailed quantitative analysis is not possible at this point without a computerized corpus, a claim can still be made, based on my observation, that apologies in the letters occur with such sufficient regularity that they can be said to be a norm of writing in this, for lack of a better term, speech community. It is also interesting to note that this pattern remains the same across the period. Such a pattern can be seen not only in their forms (see the above section regarding the forms of apology expressions) but also their prevalence. Sokoll (2006: 59) points out that there is “the frequent use in the pauper letters of rhetorical devices, particularly in the opening gambits, which are replete with rather conventional apologetic phrases”. Sokoll (2006: 57–58) traces the pattern of the pauper letters back to the Classical model of petition writing, in which the writer begins first by greeting the recipient (salutatio), and by appealing to his or her goodwill (captatio benevolentiae). Then, he or she turns to an account of a particular case (narratio), moves to a specific request (petitio), and finally brings the letter to a close by polite subscriptions (conclusio). Although it was unlikely that the pauper writers were formally exposed to Classical rhetoric or to any manuals aimed to teach the art of letter writing, “people reproduced that model even if the ordinary letter writer would not normally have been aware of it” (Sokoll 2006: 57). If so, it can be said that apologies were something that was expected by language users in this speech community.

These conventional apologies, furthermore, reflect the writers’ and the addressees’, to use term, habitus, or shared value system, defined in Bourdieu (1990: 53):

Systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organise practices and representations that can be objectively adopted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them.

Certainly, Bourdieu’s dispositions include linguistic dispositions such as writing norms and conventions (be it words or grammatical constructions), and such knowledge is tacit and not something one has rational control over, as habitus is acquired by means of experience and socialization within other members in a speech community. Owing to the reasons above, therefore, the majority of apologies found in the pauper letters did not function to repair any particular offence and were unmarked expressions (almost to the extent of being formulaic) that became one of the writing conventions for this
particular group of writers and addressees, thereby passing unnoticed when used.7

As a form of politic linguistic behavior, apologies in the pauper letters, which exhibit the writers’ attempt to follow a linguistic norm, function as a strategy that the writers deployed to construct themselves as concerned individuals who was responsible for the potential inconvenience that the act of writing or the message might cause, and to express regret even though it is, arguably, not directly the writers’ fault. In other words, these apologies are instruments for their negotiation of financial assistance. The norm was followed not only because it was customary for people in the period to do so as Sokoll (2006) suggests, but also because the adoption of such a norm shows that the writers attempted to achieve a perlocutionary effect; in this case, the writers hoped that by adhering to the accepted norm, they would likely increase the chance of achieving the discursive goal (i.e. the granting of the request).

Conversely, if the norm was violated, writers would face the risk of putting themselves, along with their request, in an unfavorable position, for the absence of an apologetic expression would attract attention and be perceived as a (negatively) marked behavior in this speech community. For those letters that did not begin with an explicit apology (i.e. routinized IFID), the writers acknowledged invasion of the addressee’s freedom or privacy in one way or another, thus not violating the norm:

22) I hope you will not offended at my troubling you concerning an affair that I wish very much to have settled (258/233)

23) I have made free to Trouble you and the Rest of the Gentlemen With a few Lines to Inform you that I am Not in Content Employe…(267/247)

24) I am very Unpleasantly, and totally contrary to my Inclination, under the necessity of writing again…(459/511)

In examples 22) to 24) above, despite the absence of apology expressions, the writers did not push their request over to the negatively marked category; on the contrary, they still show politic behavior in writing, and these declarative sentences function in the same way as apologies would otherwise do in this context.

To sum up this section, I have considered possible functions of apologies as used in the pauper letters. While some apologies are truly repairs intended to redress an offence, thus serving to express politeness, most apologies demonstrate the writers’ politic behavior in following the norm of writing. In this way, these apologies emerge as one of the safest bets the writers could use to attain their discursive goal of writing.

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7 This does not imply that polite apologies would have other forms that differ from the writing norms. But, it is that in this speech community, apologies were regarded as one of the writing norms, thus a politic speech act. In other words, language users in this community were (tacitly) aware of what apologies were conventionally used for.
Conclusion

In this paper, I have attempted to explore both the forms and functions of the speech act of apology in an earlier period, and in doing so, have exhibited that apologies, as manifested in the pauper letters, consist mostly of routinized and formulaic expressions identifiable through IFIDs such as “I am sorry” or “It is with regret that...”. As to their functions, I have suggested that in the context under investigation, most apologies are not polite expressions intended as repairs in the way Brown and Levinson’s model of politeness suggests. More likely, the function of apologies comes to light only when distinctions are made between politic and polite behavior, as suggested by Watts’s model of politeness. Under this view, conventional apologies are best viewed as a politic behavior that, when adopted, turns out to be a strategy that the writers used in negotiating and constructing a smooth, harmonious interpersonal relationship with their interlocutors.

References


A Historical Pragmatic Study of apologies


Abstract

Thai students appear to have problems communicating in English as a second language, especially students of low ability. This may be caused not only by the lack of basic grammar and vocabulary but also by deficiency in the use of appropriate communication strategies. Low-ability students experience difficulties in selecting the most appropriate strategies for many communicative contexts. This study aims to obtain empirical data on the types of communication strategies that low-ability students select which may affect their oral communication abilities. Three hundred Thai university students participated in the initial part of this study, 100 of whom were randomly selected to complete the Strategies Used in Speaking Task Inventory, which was developed to elicit responses related to their use of communication strategies. In addition, content analysis was employed to confirm the quantitative analysis. It was found that low-ability students tended to employ risk-avoidance techniques, especially time-gaining strategies, and needed assistance in developing risk-taking techniques such as social-affective, fluency-oriented, help-seeking, and circumlocution strategies.

Introduction

Some speakers of English as a second language (English L2) are able to communicate effectively by uttering just a few words, while others find it difficult to achieve the same level of communication. The former group may use certain devices known as communication strategies (CSs), such as hand gestures, imitation of sounds or movements, paraphrasing, and invention of new words. Poor selection of strategies by students to accomplish language tasks can lead to unsuccessful communication (Cohen and Macaro 2007; Rubin 2005; Oxford et al. 2004; Gu 2003). While CSs are appropriately used by able students, lower-ability students have greater difficulties, and a lack of basic grammar and vocabulary in English L2 speakers increases the limits on oral communication for this latter group (Dörnyei 1995).

There are but few studies investigating students with different language abilities and their employment of different types of CS, particularly in the Thai context. Some studies have focused on the relation between CSs employed and other variables, such as interaction with native speakers or frequency of using CSs (see Ton 1989; Khaopet 1996; and Wannaruk 2003). This study examines the types of CS used by students...
of lower abilities and the differences from those used by more able students.

**Conceptual background of communication strategies**

An approach to understanding a ‘strategy’ is to regard it as ‘problem-solving’ but not in the usual way of producing a solution. The act of students uttering expressions in an attempt to communicate in English L2 is not normally referred to as a strategy. However, if these students have problems using a particular word in English L2, the notion of strategy emerges. Then, they might use description or circumlocution instead of the problematic word or use gestures as a device to reach the communication goal. In this way, a strategy is a possible means of problem-solving that the users select because it works effectively and they are most comfortable with it (Swan 2008).

The interest in CSs has grown over the last four decades. In the 1970s, the study of CSs was introduced as a new area of applied linguistic research by four researchers: Selinker (1972), Savignon (1972), Varadi (1973), and Tarone (1977). Selinker (1972) published papers about interlanguage in which the notion of CSs in English L2 arose for the first time. Meanwhile, Savignon (1972) introduced pedagogical research focusing on student training in CSs. Varadi (1973, 1980) expanded on the ideas of Selinker (1972) by initiating a systematic analysis of CSs, and introducing several taxonomies and terms used in CS research.

Generally, CSs can be seen as systematic, communication-enhancing devices used to handle communication difficulties and to avoid communication breakdown (Canale 1983, Long 1983, Dörnyei 1995, Nakatani 2006). CSs should not deal with problem-solving only (as mentioned in the traditional conceptualization) but may be used to avoid conversational trouble or failure in achieving communicative goals (Long 1983).

Although several definitions have been proposed for second-language CSs (for example, Canale and Swain 1980; Corder 1981; Færch and Kasper 1983; Dörnyei and Scott 1997; Dörnyei and Cohen 2002; Nakatani 2005, 2006), there has not been complete agreement on a single definition of CSs because of the range of strategies involved (Dörnyei 1995). Different definitions have focused on different aspects. Some emphasized the interaction process in communication (Gass and Varonis 1990; Rost and Ross 1991; Williams et al. 1997), but others considered the behaviors of problem-solving arising from gaps in speakers’ linguistic knowledge (Nakatani 2005, Poulisse 1990). In some studies, the CSs were seen as problem-solving devices divided into two levels: consciousness and problem-orientedness. The former was studied by Dörnyei and Scott (1995a, 1995b), Schmidt (1994), Yule and Tarone (1991), and Varadi (1983), while the latter was examined by Varadi (1992), Færch and Kasper (1983), and Bialystok (1984, 1990). As different types of definitions evolved, they led to many different categories of CSs (see Dörnyei and Scott (1997) for a summary of the various definitions).

CSs have recently been categorized into two major types: “achievement or compensatory strategies”, used by “good language learners” (Nakatani 2006), and “reduction or avoidance strategies”, commonly used among “low ability learners” (see Bialystok 1990; Dörnyei and Scott 1997; Dörnyei and Cohen 2002; Nakatani 2005, 2006). Apart from these categories, risk-taking strategies and risk-avoidance strategies were adopted as the
main types of CSs based on the framework of Corder (1983), taking into account tolerance of risk as one of the influences that makes individual students vary (Carton 1966).

In the Thai context, some students are encouraged to avoid ‘loss of face’ as a result of making mistakes. Thus, they are likely to employ risk-avoidance strategies to maintain the conversation. In contrast, other students might have been raised in an environment where people communicate naturally without worrying seriously about correctness. These students are more likely to take risks to expand their resources in order to solve communication breakdowns.

Considering CSs used by Thai students, Luangsaengthong (2002) has stated that Thai university students use Approximation, Paraphrasing and Circumlocution strategies most frequently. This result is in line with Wannaruk’s study of the use of CSs by Thai university students in the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) process, in which it was found, that students used different CSs to varying degrees according to their language levels and that the most frequently CS type used was Modification Devices. Thai researchers have focused on several different aspects of CS use, most of them examining the frequency of CSs used by students at a particular level (Wannaruk 2003; Khaopet 1996). However, few studies have tried to differentiate types of CSs used by speakers with different language ability levels. That is one of the reasons why this study aims to examine this aspect.

The taxonomies of CSs have generally been based on criteria such as whether the target group chooses to achieve or reduce the goal, or whether they consult sources of information in their first language (L1) or English (L2). Most of the existing taxonomies are quite elaborate in distinguishing several types of CSs (Færch and Kasper 1983; Dörnyei and Scott 1995a, 1995b; Dörnyei and Cohen 2002), and some of them become downright daunting with their multiple levels of subcategorization (Færch and Kasper 1983, Paribakht 1985). In this study, we have adopted a different classification system based on the use of risk-taking strategies vs. risk-avoidance strategies made up of nine subcategories modified from Corder (1983), Dörnyei and Cohen (2002), and Nakatani (2005, 2006), as follows.

One list was made up of risk-taking strategies, referring to strategies speakers used to expand their linguistic resources to achieve communicative goals. These included:

1) social-affective strategies for dealing with emotions and attitudes;
2) fluency-oriented strategies emphasizing speech clarity and pronunciation;
3) accuracy-oriented strategies for paying attention to forms of speech;
4) non-verbal strategies such as giving hints by using gestures and facial expression;
5) help-seeking strategies such as asking for repetition, clarification or confirmation; and
6) circumlocution strategies for paraphrasing or describing the properties of target objects.

The other list was made up of risk-avoidance strategies, referring to strategies speakers use to adjust the message to match their linguistic resources. These included:

1) message abandonment strategies for leaving a message unfinished;
2) message reduction and alteration strategies to allow the substitution of familiar words;
3) time-gaining strategies, consisting of gambits or fillers, to keep the communication channel open and maintain discourse in times of difficulty.

According to the ideal concept of oral communication, CSs are essential in terms of the relationship between the means and the ends of communication (Corder 1983: 17). The ideal assumes that speakers’ linguistic resources and the message are in balance, i.e., speakers have enough linguistic knowledge to express the message. However, sometimes L2 speakers wish to convey a message which their linguistic resources may not permit them to express successfully. In this situation, there are two options to choose from: speakers may either attempt to increase their resources to reach the communicative goals, although it is risky to do so—the risk-taking strategies, —or they may tailor the message to the available resources—the risk-avoidance strategies, so called because there is no risk to take as the speakers may simply leave the message unfinished (Corder 1983: 17).

Many studies, dealing with both international and Thai contexts, have reported that, although students with lower language abilities employed CSs (Yoshida-Morise 1998; Purpura 1999; Fulcher 2003; Wannarak 2003), they were not successful in communication. For this reason, this study investigates the types of CSs that less-able students use in their oral communication and the reasons for their lack of success.

This study mainly provides information about how high- and low-language-ability students invoked strategies in speaking tasks. The results have numerous implications for language educators as they can potentially learn how high-ability students differ from low-ability students in their use of CSs. Moreover, the study provides further insight into the roles of the various types of CS in expanding the language ability of Thai university students. Since the findings reveal which type of CSs are used by high-ability students, this may indicate that this type can help students succeed at a higher language ability level, and this suggests the need to provide the low-language-ability students with specific strategies to improve their language proficiency.

Practically, the teacher can apply the Strategies Used in Speaking Task Inventory (SUSTI) to elicit students’ responses relating to their use of CSs. It might be effective if teachers realize which types of CS students tend to use before planning lessons, selecting materials, and designing methods of teaching. In addition, the Oral Communication Test (OCT) can be useful for graduating students as an instrument for self-assessment of their actual oral communication ability. Furthermore, the test and the questionnaire, can act as guidelines for educators to design in-house instruments.

**The study**

This study forms part of a dissertation entitled *The Effects of English Language Ability and Types of Communication Strategies on Oral Communication Ability of Thai University Students* (see Chaunchaisit, forthcoming). The researchers investigated the employment of risk-taking and risk-avoidance CSs, by students with different language ability levels. The study posed two research questions:
1. What the types of CSs are used by lower-ability students?
2. What are the pedagogical implications of helping lower ability students to improve their oral communication ability through the selection of effective CSs?

Methodology and design

Population and sample

The sample of population for the study consisted of 300 third-year students enrolled in the speaking course in the Faculty of Humanities of a private university in the second term of the academic year 2008. At that stage, the students had studied English for 15 years in school and university. They appeared homogeneous in terms of nationality and background knowledge as they were Thai students studying in the same faculty and university. Most of them were about the same age and it could be assumed that they had similar cultural and educational backgrounds.

These students were categorized into two groups, high- and low-ability, based on their average grades in the English speaking course and the highest and the lowest grades that they had received in their previous English courses. So, the two language-ability groups referred to overall language ability, rather than only speaking ability. The high-ability group consisted of the students who obtained average grades above the +1 S.D. in these courses and the low-ability group comprised students whose grades in the courses were lower than –1 S.D.

From this total of 300 students, 50 students were used in the pilot study to validate the instruments. This left 250 students to participate in the main study. After that, a sample of 100 students’ results were selected randomly for quantitative data analysis purposes (see “Data Collection” below and appendix C for the sample selection procedure). Only 100 were selected because, as a rule of thumb, “in the survey research literature a range of between one percent to ten percent of the population is usually mentioned as the magic sampling fraction, with a minimum of about 100 participants” (Dörnyei 2007: 99). The rough estimates of sample sizes for multivariate procedures are at least 100 participants, as well (2007: 100).

In addition, the sample size in this study could not exceed 100 because of the study’s research design, called randomized block design, and the criterion of categorizing student ability level based on boundary lines of +1 and –1 S.D. Two hundred and fifty students of mixed language ability levels were needed to produce the language ability level classifications. Then, 50 students were randomly selected from both the high-ability group and the low-ability group.

The mean of the students’ average grades equaled 3.13, with a S.D. of 0.36. Therefore, +1 S.D. was 3.49, and –1 S.D. was 2.77. From this, the high language ability group was defined as students with an average grade greater than 3.49 (n= 89), while the low ability group included those students whose average grade was less than 2.77 (n= 63). Once students had been assigned to these two groups according to their language ability levels, 50 were randomly selected from each group to investigate whether there was a significant difference between high- and low-ability students in terms of their use of different types of CSs. Additionally, content analysis was employed to confirm the findings obtained from the quantitative approach. Twelve
audio-recorded OCT performances (six speech samples in each cell) were selected randomly, transcribed, and analyzed.

Instrumentation

The main instrument used in this study was a self-report questionnaire, the Strategy Use in Speaking Task Inventory (SUSTI). A 32-item Likert-scale questionnaire was designed to assess the frequency with which students used CSs in their English oral communication. The five-point scale on the SUSTI ranged from one (never true for me) to five (always true for me). The SUSTI was written in Thai to avoid the problem of questions being misunderstood (see appendix A).

Items included in the SUSTI were drawn from systematic lists of two major types of CSs: risk-taking and risk-avoidance strategies. These were derived from Carton’s classical notion that tolerance of risk is one of the factors that makes individual language learners vary (Carton 1966: 18). In addition, the framework of CSs from Corder (1983) and the taxonomies proposed by Nakatani (2005, 2006) and Dörnyei and Cohen (2002) suggested the classification of CSs into risk-taking and risk-avoidance strategies.

The SUSTI was developed to be used as an instrument for assessing the CSs students used during their communication in English. The test specification development and needs assessment were based on a review of CS literature (e.g. Tarone 1980; Færeh and Kasper 1983; Poulisse 1987; Dörnyei 1995; Dörnyei and Scott 1995a; and Nakatani 2005, 2006). Content and construct validity was checked, using an Item—Objective Congruence (IOC) test validating form; the classificatory agreement among three independent experts in the field of language teaching who matched each item with the specific behaviour domain to be observed was 77%. There was consensus among the raters that the SUSTI reflected the specific descriptions of the domain being tested. Moreover, the specific language used in the SUSTI occurred in actual conversations which established a high degree of authenticity. The measure of internal consistency for the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach’s alpha was .80. This promised that the test results would be consistent regardless of how many times the test was repeated.

The study also used the Oral Communication Test (OCT) (see appendix B) as a tool for assessing test-takers’ oral communication ability in the area of general English. It focused on authentic oral communication in students’ daily lives. The OCT format was made up of a semi-direct speaking test consisting of four tasks: a warm-up task, an interview task, a description task, and a problem-solving task. The students’ oral performance was elicited through the use of a tape recorder.

With regard to specifications of the OCT constructs, Anastasi (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1996) suggest that the specifications for the test tasks should be developed based on a review of related literature illustrating the content areas to be covered by the test to ensure its content validity. All contents of the OCT items are thus based on the speaking proficiency guidelines of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL).

Regarding its content and a priori construct validation, three experts were asked to investigate the contents and constructs (abilities) to be measured and they agreed with the constructs and contents of the OCT using the IOC index.
Data collection

The population of 300 students was classified into two groups, high- and low-ability, based on their average grades in the three English courses mentioned above. Fifty students were used in the pilot study. For the main study, the remaining 250 students were asked to complete the OCT at the university language laboratory. The students responded to a tape recorder, and scores were assigned by three raters for each student based on his/her oral communication ability. Students completed the SUSTI questionnaire directly after the OCT.

Since this paper focuses on types of CSs used by the students with different language ability levels as evidenced by their self-report questionnaire and recorded OCT speech sample performances, the OCT scores are not given in the article. However, the inter-rater reliability coefficients among the three raters ranged from .70 to .85.

Fifty students each were randomly selected from the high- and low-ability groups, and their results were analysed. Additionally, the contents of 12 speech sample performances in OCT (six randomly selected from each group) were transcribed and analyzed to triangulate the results of the SUSTI.

Data analysis

Independent t-test and descriptive statistics were computed to determine whether there was any significant difference between the high- and low-ability students in their use of different types of CS. Content analysis using the data obtained from the audio-recorded OCT was performed to check the findings from the questionnaire analysis.

The transcriptions of student speech samples were analysed for the obvious features elicited from each type of CS in order to differentiate between high- and low-ability students in terms of types of CS used. For example, social-affective strategies have clear features of controlling anxiety and avoiding silence to communicate smoothly. So, number of words produced was compared with periods of silence. Moreover, as speakers use fluency-oriented strategies to increase the clarity of their speech, there was a comparison between the number of words produced and the number of unclearly pronounced words. Another example involves message-abandonment strategies in which speakers give up on their attempts to communicate by leaving messages unfinished. The use of such strategies was detected through a comparison between the number of words produced and the number of unfinished sentences in the response.

Results and discussion

To determine the difference in types of CSs used by the two groups, the means of the self-reported scores in the SUSTI were compared. Table 1 shows the difference in the selection of the types of CSs by the two language ability groups.

An independent t-test was performed on the comparison of the means of CSs used by the two groups. It was found that the uses of three strategies were strongly different, one was different, one was slightly different, and the uses of four strategies were not different in terms of the t-values. As for overall risk-taking strategies, the results indicated that there was a significant difference between the two groups, showing that the high-ability group employed risk-taking strategies significantly more than the low-ability group. An
examination of the subcategories revealed that the high-ability students used social-affective, fluency-oriented, help-seeking, and circumlocution strategies significantly more frequently than the low-ability students, the t-values being 5.17, 4.54, 5.40 \((p \leq .001)\), and 2.23 \((p \leq .05)\), respectively.

For the overall risk-avoidance strategies, there was no significant difference between the two groups. However, it is interesting to note that the low-ability students used time-gaining strategies more frequently than their high-ability counterparts, the t-value being 3.65 \((p \leq .01)\). This probably occurred because time-gaining strategies are surface strategies which do not involve making connections between known and unknown knowledge (Leaver et al. 2005).

It is possible that the low-ability students, having more difficulties due to their limited L2 knowledge, had to resort to this type of strategy more frequently to compensate for their limitations (Qingquan et al. 2008). Also, the use of time-gaining strategies does not require much effort or time and contributes less to language learning (Leaver et al. 2005).

Investigation of the differences showed strongly significant differences in the use of social-affective, fluency-oriented, and help-seeking strategies. Regarding the significant difference in employing social-affective strategies, it may be inferred that students with a high ability level often have a positive attitude towards English, while low-ability students likely will not. This may plausibly be taken to indicate that the higher ability group knows how to regulate their emotions better by coping more efficiently with emotional problems that occur. Thus, this group intentionally seeks out opportunities to interact with the target language communicatively in order to enhance their language proficiency (Qingquan et al. 2008, Stern 1983).

The difference in use of fluency-oriented strategies seems to support the idea that the higher level group may be attempting to keep the conversation flowing by avoiding silence. This may reflect their awareness of the communicative nature of language use and their confidence in their ability to manage any communication breakdown.

As for help-seeking strategies, high-ability students’ more frequent use of this kind of CS indicates that they are more active and tend not to be afraid of losing face when turning to others for help. On the other hand, the low-ability students in this study may have been unwilling to look foolish and afraid that others would regard their questions as silly and laugh at them.

In addition, time-gaining strategies were employed quite differently by the two groups. It is interesting to note that the low-ability group evinced more use of this type of CS. This may be because their limited language proficiency causes them to use fillers such as ‘um’, ‘uh’, and ‘okay’ in order to gain time to think what to say.

Furthermore, the study revealed a slight difference between the two groups in terms of their use of circumlocution strategies. The high-ability group’s tendency to employ this type of CSs may be due to their greater repertoire of English resources for circumlocution. They seemed to have a larger stock of vocabulary in their word-banks than the lower ability students, so they were more likely to be risk-takers, trying to use their available resources to express what they wanted.
Content analysis was considered along with the results of SUSTI to examine specific types of CSs used by the two groups. The following are the results of the qualitative approach with explanations relating to each type of CS use.

### Table 1: The nine communication strategies (CSs) employed by the two groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>High Ability Mean (N=50)</th>
<th>Low Ability Mean (N=50)</th>
<th>t-Value</th>
<th>Mean Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk-Taking Strategies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Social-affective strategies</td>
<td>3.84 0.38</td>
<td>3.33 0.52</td>
<td>5.17***</td>
<td>H&gt;L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fluency-oriented strategies</td>
<td>3.97 0.63</td>
<td>3.41 0.51</td>
<td>4.54***</td>
<td>H&gt;L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Accuracy-oriented strategies</td>
<td>3.64 0.47</td>
<td>3.52 0.37</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Nonverbal strategies</td>
<td>3.97 0.40</td>
<td>3.85 0.50</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Help-seeking strategies</td>
<td>3.85 0.49</td>
<td>3.41 0.53</td>
<td>5.40***</td>
<td>H&gt;L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Circumlocution strategies</td>
<td>4.00 0.78</td>
<td>3.67 0.74</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>H&gt;L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3.88 0.14</td>
<td>3.53 0.19</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>H&gt;L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk-Avoidance Strategies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Message-abandonment strategies</td>
<td>3.06 0.59</td>
<td>3.00 0.45</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Message-reduction and-alteration strategies</td>
<td>4.07 0.53</td>
<td>3.86 0.93</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Time-gaining strategies</td>
<td>2.82 0.56</td>
<td>3.22 0.51</td>
<td>3.65**</td>
<td>L&gt;H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3.32 0.66</td>
<td>3.36 0.45</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

H = high language ability students, L = low language ability students, NS = no significant difference
* p ≤ .05, ** p ≤ .01, *** p ≤ .001

The first explanation relates to the use of social-affective strategies. According to Nakatani (2006), students might try to control their own anxiety and encourage themselves to use English. They behave in such a way as to give a good impression and avoid silence during the test. Therefore, the attempt to control their periods of pauses were used as a feature to elicit the strategies used by comparing the number of words produced and periods of silence in responding to the description task, “Please describe a person who is important to you” (see Table 2). In this study, the word referred to “Number of words produced” refers to “a unit of language which means something” (Oxford dictionary 2003). Thus, incomplete words were not counted.

It was found that the group of low-ability students employed this type of CS more. This finding is in line with the studies of Nakatani (2006) and Nakatani and Goh (2007), which stated that the high-ability group tended to control affective factors to
react smoothly and maintain their interactions. High ability students may cope more efficiently with emotional problems and intentionally seek out opportunities to interact with the target language communicatively, so they spend less time leaving the conversation in silence. (Qingquan et al. 2008). Moreover, these students may take more risks in actively encouraging themselves to express what they want to say, even though this could cause mistakes. Also, because of their high language ability, they are able to control their use of the target language, thus making them feel at ease with the use of English.

Table 2: Number of words produced and periods of silence when using social-affective strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Number of words produced</th>
<th>Periods of silence</th>
<th>Average no. of words produced/average period of silence</th>
<th>Average percentage between words and pause time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High ability</td>
<td>X = 113 words</td>
<td>X = 8.84 seconds</td>
<td>113 words/8.84 sec.</td>
<td>7.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(8.84x 100/113)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low ability</td>
<td>X = 51 words</td>
<td>X = 20.25 seconds</td>
<td>51words/20.25 sec.</td>
<td>39.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(20.25x100/51)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low-ability student

"Please describe a person who is important to you"

"my: mom, father euh grandparent euh she’s too. when I gave something her (1.0) she (.5) she gave everything that I met she...(4.0) she take care me (.5) in everything (1.0) gave money? (4.0) when I sick she (5.0) she (1.0) she take care me (5.0) she gave (2.0) money (2.0) love (1.0) she love me I love my parent (1.0) very euh the most. (7.0) I am stay... I am stay in J (.5) now because she...[laugh]"

Note: (   ) refers to periods of silence

The second explanation relates to the use of fluency-oriented strategies, as students pay attention to the pronunciation and clarity of their speech, they try to speak clearly and take their time in order not to send inappropriate messages (Nakatani 2006).

Table 3 shows a comparison between the number of words produced and the number of unclearly pronounced words resulting from slips of the students’ tongues in response to the test question about their plans to use English in the future. The results of both the SUSTI and the content analysis indicate that the high-ability group was markedly more likely to attend to pronunciation than the other group. The average percentages between the number of words produced and the number of unclearly pronounced words of the high-ability and the low-ability groups were 2.39% and 7.32%, respectively, indicating that the high-ability students tended to be more aware of their pronunciation.

Apart from the issue of language ability, extroverted personality types and confidence in the use of language are factors which
might promote the use of this strategy (Takeuchi et al. 2008). In general, higher language ability students tend to be more confident with their ability, so they are able to speak more comfortably and produce smoother conversation. However, many slips of the tongue may arise due to the high-pressure environment of the test, leading to words being uttered improperly or pronounced incorrectly.

The use of accuracy-oriented strategies points to students who desire to speak English accurately paying attention to speech forms and seeking to improve grammatical accuracy by self-correcting when they notice mistakes (Nakatani 2006). Table 4 presents a comparison between the number of words the students produced, the number of failures or grammatical mistakes, and the number of attempts at self-correction in students’ responses to the problem-solving task.

Table 3: Number of words produced and unclearly pronounced words when using fluency-oriented strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Number of words produced</th>
<th>Number of unclearly pronounced words</th>
<th>Average no. of words/average no. of unclearly pronounced words</th>
<th>Average percentage between no. of words and no. of unclearly pronounced words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High ability</td>
<td>69 words</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>69 / 1.65</td>
<td>2.39% (1.65x100/69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low ability</td>
<td>27.34 words</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27.34 / 2</td>
<td>7.32% (2x100/27.34)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low-ability student

"What is your plan to use English in the future?"

"I think that... major (1.0) major I study (1.0) can help me good job or high salary (1.0) and maybe (.5) [unidentified phrase] umm I ca::n study in abroad”

In this study, the high-ability students employed this type of CS more than their low-ability counterparts. For the high-ability group, grammatical mistakes rarely occurred (less than 1 mistake occurred per 100 words produced). Moreover, all mistakes occurring in high-ability students’ conversations were corrected as soon as they were noticed. In contrast, the low-ability students tended not to use this type of CS.

The example provided in Table 4 illustrates some of the problems created by many major grammatical mistakes occurring in a very short response and the respondent not noticing his/her own mistakes. This finding is in line with Yoshida-Morise (1998) and Lee (2004) who discovered that high-ability students self-correct more than those at a low ability level. It seems that the greater English L2 knowledge speakers possess, the more chance they have of noticing and correcting the mistakes while trying to get their message across.

In sum, a high use of accuracy-oriented strategies reflects the ability to notice and correct language mistakes, positive attitudes towards mistakes, and the ability to monitor
the production of language (Qingquan et al. 2008). This explains why accuracy-oriented strategies were employed more frequently by the high-ability students in this study.

When students face communicative problems, they might use nonverbal language to express themselves, using gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact to give hints (Nakatani 2006). As nonverbal strategies are behaviour aids to verbal output (Lazaraton 2002), content analysis could not be used to illustrate the strategies the students used. Therefore, observation was conducted instead. The researchers recorded the frequency of students’ gestures as they occurred during the conversation before tallying the frequency of gestures used by the high- and low-ability students, with the result that no significant difference was found between the two groups in their use of nonverbal strategies, although most studies have asserted that less competent groups rely more heavily on paralinguistic knowledge (Paribakht 1985; Fulcher 2003; Nakatani 2006). In the present study, both groups used non-verbal strategies sparingly. Thai students’ infrequent use of nonverbal strategies may be explicable in terms of Chamot’s idea that cultural values influence choice of CS as Thai culture considers many gestures impolite (Chamot 2004. In the Thai culture, younger people are considered impolite if they wave their hands as a gesture of denial or refusal. Such things are supposed to be expressed verbally, e.g., by saying “no.”

Help-seeking strategies are seen in situations where speakers try to solve communicative problems by asking for assistance either directly or indirectly. Not only may they ask for repetition, clarification, and confirmation; they may also use rising intonation or pauses to signal a need for help form their partners (Nakatani 2005). As the semi-direct interview employed in this study did not indicate the students’ direct help-seeking, the frequency of pauses may suggest indirect signs of help-seeking. Table 5 presents the number of words produced and the frequency of pauses in response to the test instruction “What do you like most about studying English?”
Table 4: Number of words produced, failures or grammatical mistakes, and attempts at self-correction by students when using accuracy-oriented strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Number of words produced</th>
<th>Number of failures/grammatical mistakes</th>
<th>Number of attempts at self-correction</th>
<th>Average percentage between no. of words and failures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High ability</td>
<td>$X = 167$ words</td>
<td>$X = 1$</td>
<td>$X = 1$</td>
<td>0.60% (1x 100/167)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments: There were some simple mistakes. Students noticed the mistakes and corrected them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low ability</td>
<td>$X = 64$ words</td>
<td>$X = 2.83$</td>
<td>$X = 0.34$</td>
<td>4.42% (2.83x 100/64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments: There were serious mistakes that the students did not notice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low-ability student

“Your close friend invited you to his or her birthday party, but you will have an examination tomorrow. You don’t want to miss the party and also don’t want to fail the test. What should you do?”

“I call (1.0) I call girlfriend is name Daring (2.0) err I will talk with her: err Daring (1.0) I (1.0) can’t Birthday party? with you: (1.0) because (1.0) tomorrow I will (.5) test and I don’t (2.0) I don’t know this exam (3.0) is difficult? to (2.0) examination (1.0) and I don’t read (4.0) please please please angry me (1.0) next day I will I will do anything for you that you that you want I can I promise. If I go to birthday party err I I will fail exam because: so (5.) umm I regret I sorry (3.0) to tell you (1.0) but hope you understand me? (4.0) um I think I love you(9.0)”

Table 5: Number of Words Produced and Frequency of Pauses in Using Help-Seeking Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Number of words produced</th>
<th>Number of pauses</th>
<th>Average no. of words produced/ no. pauses</th>
<th>Average percentage between no. of words and no. of pauses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High ability</td>
<td>$X = 45.67$ words</td>
<td>$X = 3.17$</td>
<td>$45.67$ words/3.17 pauses</td>
<td>6.94% (3.17x100/45.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low ability</td>
<td>$X = 23$ words</td>
<td>$X = 3.5$</td>
<td>$23$ words/3.5 pauses</td>
<td>15.22% (3.5x100/23)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low-ability student

“What do you like most about studying English?”

“I(.5) like... I like to most think (. ) think (. ) think about speaking umm partish for (1.0) foreign language (1.0) I like to learn [unidentified phrase]”

Regarding the SUSTI results, the high-ability students’ more frequent use of this kind of CS indicates that they were more active and tended not to be afraid of losing face when turning to others for help. The low-ability students, on the other hand, may have been unwilling to look foolish and afraid that others would regard their questions as silly and laugh at them (cf. Qingquan et al 2008).
Although the low-ability group seemed to employ help-seeking strategies more often than the high-ability group (15.22% and 6.94%, respectively) most of the pauses from the low-ability group were micro pauses. Examples of the pauses are given at the bottom of the table.

One explanation for this finding may be Kirtikara’s (2000) suggestion that Thai students with any level of proficiency seem not to have individual thoughts and questioning minds, even tertiary-level students. Generally, they do not appear to be inquisitive, being rather passive and lacking in enthusiasm instead, so they rarely asked for clarification or confirmation. Another explanation may be that language teaching and learning encourages individual competition, so students who are competitive and want to reach their goals may prefer the types of CS that allow them to think and work alone rather than collaborate with others (Chamot 2004).

This part of the present study strikes the researchers as inadequate because using pauses to study help-seeking strategies seems both unusual and superficial and, furthermore, no references support the idea that pauses signify the use this type of strategy. To check this, a follow-up interview was conducted after the test had been administered. The researchers contacted 10 of the original 12 students to be interviewees and asked them “When you paused at that time, what were you thinking about?” Seven students responded that they had paused because they needed someone to assist them by providing something like clarifying sentences. The rest of the students needed time to think but were not seeking help. Therefore, one might conclude that pauses do not constitute an appropriate measure of help-seeking strategies in this study.

With the use of circumlocution strategies, students try to approach relevant linguistic items or expressions using paraphrase and approximation (Nakatani 2005). Paraphrasing takes the form of exemplification in describing characteristic properties or functions of the intended term. In using approximation, students use alternative expressions with semantic features similar to those of the intended term. These two techniques may result in indirect and unnecessary utterances. Table 6 compares the number of words produced and the number of indirect and unclear sentences given in response to the test prompt “Please describe a person who is important to you.” These types of CS were more popular among the low-ability students. The low-ability students tended to paraphrase and exemplify for the sake of better communication.

Several scholars (Fulcher 2003; Yoshida-Morise 1998; and Poulisse 1990) have agreed that low-ability students use description or alternative expressions instead of specific ones to compensate for their lack of English L2 linguistic knowledge. Their limited English L2 vocabulary makes it difficult for them to cope with problems (see the example in Table 6). In contrast, high-ability students can select the appropriate words to express themselves, so it was not necessary for them to attempt to add clarification.
Table 6: Number of words produced and unnecessary sentences used in circumlocution strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Number of words produced</th>
<th>Number of unnecessary sentences used or repeated sentences</th>
<th>Average no. of words/average no. of unnecessary sentences</th>
<th>Average percentage between no. of words and repeated sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High ability</td>
<td>X = 113 words</td>
<td>X = 1.5 sentence</td>
<td>113 words/1.5 sentence</td>
<td>1.33% (1.5x100/113)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low ability</td>
<td>X = 51 words</td>
<td>X = 2.5 sentences</td>
<td>51 words/2.5 sentences</td>
<td>4.9% (2.5x100/51)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low-ability student

"Please describe a person who is important to you."

"my: mom, father euh grandmum grandparent euh she’s too. when I gave something her (1.0) she (.5) she gave everything that I met she. . .(4.0) she take care me (.5) in everything (1.0) gave money? (4.0) when I sick she (5.0) she (1.0) she take care me (5.0) she gave (2.0) money (2.0) love (1.0) she love me I love my parent (1.0) very euh the most. (7.0) I am stay. . . I am stay in err(.5) now because she. . .[laugh]"

Table 7: Number of words produced and unfinished sentences in message-abandonment strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Number of words produced</th>
<th>Number of unfinished sentences</th>
<th>Average no. of words produced/average no. of unfinished sentences</th>
<th>Average percentage between no. of words and unfinished sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High ability</td>
<td>X = 113 words</td>
<td>X = 0.33 sentence</td>
<td>113 words/0.33 sentence</td>
<td>0.29% (0.33x100/113)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low ability</td>
<td>X = 51 words</td>
<td>X = 1 sentence</td>
<td>51 words/1 sentence</td>
<td>1.96% (1x100/51)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low-ability student

"Please describe a person who is important to you."

"my (3.0) my puh.. my important (4.0) my important person are my parents (1.0) my father is a soldier (1.0) he’s:: (3.0) take care of me all the time and my mom (3.0) she (1.0) she’s nice kind (2.0) and best (1.0) of"

Among the risk-avoidance strategies, there was a dramatic use of message-abandonment strategies by the low-ability students, which did not match the results of the SUSTI. These types of CSs are common among students of low proficiency and low enthusiasm (Nakatani 2006; Khanji 1996). Nakatani (2005) has stated that speakers use these strategies to avoid engaging in communication when they face problems in the target language. When they are not able to find appropriate forms or rules, they stop speaking, or in the worst case, they kept silent without
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any response. So, unfinished sentences may indicate the use of this type of CS. Table 7 shows the use of message-abandonment strategies, comparing the number of words produced with the number of unfinished sentences in response to the task “Describe the person who is the most important in your life.” There seemed to be a dramatic use of this type of CS by the group of low-ability students. On average, the low-ability students left two sentences unfinished for every 100 words produced. In contrast, the high-ability students rarely left sentences unfinished (less than one sentence per 100 words produced).

The low-ability students appeared to lack strategic competence and had no other choice but to end the interaction. An example of such a breakdown is shown in Table 7, e.g., the utterance “she’s nice kind (2.0) and best (1.0) of”.

Message-reduction and alteration strategies consist of speakers tending to use familiar words and avoiding the risk of using new or unfamiliar words even though they may realize that the utterance is far from their communicative goal (Nakatani 2006).

Table 8 illustrates the use of this type of CS by comparing the number of words produced with the number of familiar words used to replace the correct words in response to the question “When did you begin studying English?” The results showed message-reduction and alteration strategies being employed more by the low-ability students. On average, the low ability group used familiar words to replace the target words approximately three times per 100 words produced, while the high-ability group tended to go straight to the exact words in the context as substitution of familiar words accounts for only 1% of the total.

The low ability students used familiar expressions confidently to avoid communication breakdown even though they sometimes realized that their utterances were irrelevant to their communication goal. The example in Table 8 shows a representative change from using “grade five” to the simpler “year five.”

Time-gaining strategies involve the conscious use of fillers to keep the communication channel open and the conversation going (Nakatani 2005). Table 9 presents a comparison between the number of words produced and the number of fillers or hesitations in response to the problem-solving task “Give some advice to your friend to solve the problem.”

Content analysis agreed with the results of the SUSTI that the low-ability students used time-gaining strategies more than those in the high-ability group. This supports the finding of Yoshida-Morise (1998) that use of fillers showed significant differences across student proficiency levels.

This can be seen from the example in Table 9, where the limitations in language proficiency of the low-ability group may have caused them to use fillers to gain more time to think of what to say next. In addition, fillers provide students with a sense of security by allowing them to manage times of difficulty (Dörnyei 1995).
Table 8: Number of words produced and number of familiar words used to replace correct words in message-reduction and -alteration strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Number of words produced</th>
<th>Number of familiar words used to replace correct words</th>
<th>Average no. of words produced/ no. of substituted words</th>
<th>Average percentage between no. of words produced and substituted words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High ability</td>
<td>X = 34.17 words</td>
<td>X = 0.34</td>
<td>34.17 words/0.34 substitutions</td>
<td>1% (0.34x100/34.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low ability</td>
<td>X = 18.17 words</td>
<td>X = 0.5</td>
<td>18.17 words/0.5 substitutions</td>
<td>2.76% (0.5x100/18.17)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low-ability student

“When did you begin studying English?”
“I began studying English in (2.0) grade: er year five (1.0) five primary school (2.0) um eleven year old it’s very inter. umm it’s very (1.0) exciting”

Table 9: Number of words and fillers or hesitations produced in time-gaining strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Number of words produced</th>
<th>Number of fillers or hesitations produced</th>
<th>Average no. of words produced/no. of fillers or hesitations</th>
<th>Average percentage between no. of words and no. of hesitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High ability</td>
<td>X = 167 words</td>
<td>X = 4.17</td>
<td>167 words/4.17 fillers</td>
<td>2.50% (4.17x100/167)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low ability</td>
<td>X = 64 words</td>
<td>X = 4</td>
<td>64 words/4 fillers</td>
<td>6.25% (4x100/64)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low-ability student

“When your close friend invited you to his or her birthday party, but you will have an examination tomorrow. You don’t want to miss the party and also don’t want to fail the test. What should you do?”
“umm: I will buy the er present for her (1.0) and give it (1.0) hhh to her before party and I don’t er I don’t come to I don’t go to (1.0) her birthday party hhh (4.0) I want to take the time for reading for my examination tomorrow (4.0) yeah I know she will understand me”

Conclusions and Implications

In this study, the high-ability students preferred risk-taking strategies, such as social-affective, fluency-oriented, help-seeking, and circumlocution strategies, whereas the low-ability students tended to employ more risk-avoidance strategies, like time-gaining strategies. The reason for this finding may be that high-ability students employ most of the risk-taking strategies because of their proficiency in English. Additionally, with their higher degree of cognitive flexibility, they were likely to apply social-affective strategies to manage their feelings during communication. In contrast, the lower English proficiency
of low-ability students may lead them to utilize risk-avoidance strategies, e.g., time-gaining strategies. This supports Yoshida-Morise’s (1998) finding that less competent language learners rely more on their world-knowledge than on linguistic knowledge.

The types of CSs employed by the high-ability students made them more successful in oral communication. Their use of risk-taking strategies was more effective in conveying their meaning or concepts since all necessary and appropriate information was provided in a clear and direct way.

The question of whether CSs should be taught is a contentious one. The results of this study suggest that it might be profitable to teach students not only linguistic knowledge but also communication strategies which they can use to promote more effective language learning. As Rubin (1990: 282) has stated:

Often poor learners don’t have a clue as to how good learners arrive at their answers and feel they can never perform as good learners do. By revealing the process, this myth can be exposed.

In addition, there is a belief that, if students do not select strategies in the service of tasks, skills, and goals, they might not easily find the most appropriate strategies and be successful language learners (Gu 2003; Oxford et al. 2004; Rubin 2005; Rubin et al. 2007). Hence, more effectiveness could be obtained if both process and product were integrated in the teaching methods (Rubin et al. 2007). Consequently, strategic competence and language-skills development can be supported by a particular learning system in which students can foster their ability to select appropriate strategies and be more successful (Rubin et al. 2007).

Due to the scope of this study, the researchers did not perform a fine linguistic analysis of the information units used by the high-ability and low-ability groups. So, there is no evidence of how the two groups perform in terms of their use of intelligible information units in the OCT. Further research should be done to see whether both linguistic competence and communicative competence can be enhanced for better communication or not.

Students should be introduced to CSs and the kinds of strategies that can be used, as suggested by Cohen (1998), Chamot et al. (1999), Macaro (2001), and Cohen and Macaro (2007). One possible way to help low-ability students improve their oral communication may be to introduce them to the use of risk-taking strategies employed by high-ability students. Cohen et al. (1998) and Dörnyei (1995) have claimed that communicative skills can be improved by developing specific CSs and raising low-ability students’ awareness of strategies for solving potential communication problems, leading to the development of their oral communication ability. These suggestions are supported by Nakatani (2005), who has stated that trained participants significantly improved their oral proficiency test scores and their success partly due to an increased awareness of CSs. More importantly, a focused and explicit program of CSs teaching and/or training is needed (Dörnyei 1995; Rubin et al. 2007) and should be designed specifically for implementation in Thai context.
References


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International Review of Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching 42.1: 1–42.


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Appendix A

Strategies Used in Speaking Task Inventory (SUSTI)

Part One: Demographic Information

Please put a ☑ in front of the item you choose and write required information.

1. Gender: ☑ Male ☑ Female
2. Age: ______
3. GPA: ______
4. The grade received in the speaking course:

   ____ A  ____ B+  ____ B  ____ C+  ____ C  ____ D+  ____ D  ____ F

5. The highest grade received in a previous English course:

   ____ A  ____ B+  ____ B  ____ C+  ____ C  ____ D+  ____ D  ____ F

6. The lowest grade received in previous English course:

   ____ A  ____ B+  ____ B  ____ C+  ____ C  ____ D+  ____ D  ____ F

7. Which of the following standardized tests have you taken, please write your scores?

   ____ TOEFL  _____ CU-TEP
   ____ TOEIC  _____ TU-GET
   ____ IELTS  __________
   ____ Others, please specify  __________
   ____ Never taken any standardized test.

Part 2: Communication strategies use in speaking tasks

Please put a ☑ in front of the item you choose.

5 = Usually; 4 = Mainly; 3 = Sometimes; 2 = Rarely; 1 = Never

During a communication in English, …………………………

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>5 Usually</th>
<th>4 Main-ly</th>
<th>3 Some-times</th>
<th>2 Rare-ly</th>
<th>1 Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I pay attention to the conversation flow, and avoid silence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I try to relax when I feel anxious.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I notice myself using an expression which fits a rule that I have learned.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>When I am talking, I try to make eye-contact.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I use words which are familiar to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. I think of what I want to say in Thai, then construct the English sentence.
7. When the message is not clear, I ask my interlocutors for clarification directly.
8. If I face some language difficulties, I will leave a message unfinished.
9. I pay attention to the intonation and pronunciation.
10. I give up expressing a message if I cannot make myself understood.
11. I try to elicit help from my interlocutor indirectly; such as using rising intonation.
12. I use fillers; such as ‘well, you know, okay, um, or uh’ when I do not know what to say.
13. I try to enjoy the conversation.
14. I correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake.
15. I describe the characteristics of the object instead of using the exact word when I am not sure.
16. I reduce the message and use simple expressions.
17. I encourage myself to use English even though this may cause mistakes.
18. I use gestures if I cannot express myself.
19. I give a good impression to the listener.
20. I pay attention to grammar and word-order.
21. I ask for repetition; such as ‘Pardon?’, or ‘Could you say it again?’, when a message is not clear to me.
22. I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say.
23. I replace the original message with another message because of feeling incapable of executing my original intent.
24. I use some phrases; like ‘It is a good question.’ or ‘It is rather difficult to explain’, in order to gain more time to think what I should say.
25. I use facial expressions if I cannot express what I want to say.
Appendix B

The Oral Communication Test
This test consists of four tasks, comprised of warm-up, interview, description, and problem-solving. The first task begins with a simple question. There is no score given in this task. The second task is an interview about one’s personal background. The subject is required to answer three questions. The next task is descriptive in which the subject has to talk in detail about a topic like family or friends. The final task is problem-solving, which requires the subject to give advice on how to solve a problem.

Task One: Warm-up task. Please respond to this question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hello, could you tell me your name in full, please?</th>
<th>☑ Answer (15 seconds)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Now, let’s move to the second task. There are three questions. You have 10 seconds to prepare for each question and 30 seconds to answer each question. When you hear this sound ( ), it means that you have to start answering.</td>
<td>☑ Think (10 seconds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When did you begin studying English?</td>
<td>☑ Answer (30 seconds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK. And, what do you like most about studying English?</td>
<td>☑ Think (10 seconds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your plan to use English in the future?</td>
<td>☑ Answer (30 seconds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please describe a person who is important to you.</td>
<td>☑ Think (30 seconds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your close friend just invited you to his or her birthday party tonight. Unfortunately, you will have a final examination tomorrow morning, so you need time to prepare for the exam. You don’t want to miss the party and also don’t want to fail the test. What should you do?</td>
<td>☑ Answer (1.5 min)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you very much. This is the end of the speaking test.

125
Appendix C
The Procedures for Sample Selection

Population

300 students

300 students with language ability levels (high and low)

50 students were used in the pilot study

250 students (with high & low-language ability levels)

250 completed the OCT and the SUSTI to participate in the main study.

250 students with language ability levels, types of CSs, and performance of the OCT

250 students were assigned to three groups, which were the groups of 89 high-language-ability students and 63 low-language-ability students, with the remaining 98 students in the average-language-ability group.

High ability (n=89) Low ability (n=63)

Σn=100

In each cell, 50 students were randomly selected. So, the total number of students participating in the main study equaled 100. A t-test and descriptive statistics were computed to determine whether there was a significant difference between the students with high and low ability in terms of using different types of CSs.

High ability (n=50) Low ability (n=50)

High ability (n=6) Low ability (n=6)

Σn=12

Six samples (n=12) were randomly selected from each group in order to conduct the content analysis to confirm the results of the SUSTI.
**BOOK REVIEW**


This book provides knowledge of change in the grammar of English. It is based on empirical research and is different from many other linguistic text-books. In the introduction, the authors tell about what motivated them to do this work. They say, “…there is very little we know about grammatical change in written standard English in the twentieth century….What, then, are the causes of this apparent ‘grammatical blindness’?” (Leech et al 2009: 1).

Chapter 2 describes the methodology used in research, which is labeled “comparable corpus linguistics.” Four corpora are used as data: 1) the Brown corpus (created by Nelson Francis and Henry Kucera) representing 1961 American English; 2) the Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen or LOB corpus representing 1961 British English; 3) the Freiburg-Brown or Frown corpus representing 1992 American English; 4) the Freiburg-Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen or F-LOB corpus representing 1991 British English. These four corpora are matched for the comparison as shown in the following diagram.

![Diagram of corpora comparison](image)

Therefore, the authors conducted research so as to be able to state how certain features in English grammar have changed. Based on English corpora, the study focuses on a consensus list of grammatical topics, e.g. decline of the inflected form whom; increase in the use of get-passive; a tendency towards analytical comparison (e.g. politer, politest → more polite, most polite); elimination of shall as a future marker in the first person; use of BE going to instead of modal auxiliaries, etc.
Frequencies of the occurrences of each grammatical feature were presented in the form of graphic representations with the authors’ explanation and interpretation.

Chapters 3 to 10 provide the results of the analyses covering the following grammatical features:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Feature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>The subjunctive mood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>The modal auxiliaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>The so-called semi-modals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
<td>The progressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>The passive voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
<td><em>Take or have a look at a corpus? Expanded predicates in British and American English</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>Non-finite clauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
<td>The noun phrases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In each of the chapters, clear statistical tables and figures are given, which enable the reader to follow the content and the authors’ interpretation. The results of the comparative analyses can be summarized briefly chapter by chapter. Concerning the subjunctive mood (Ch.3), it is found that the mandative subjunctive (e.g. *He insisted that they go. I ask that they not leave.*) is in the process of replacing periphrastic constructions with *should*, more so in AmE than in BrE. In contrast, the use of *were* subjunctive in counterfactual if-clause (e.g. *I wonder if it were possible.*) is a recessive feature of standard written English. It is being replaced by *was*.

The chapter on modal auxiliaries (Ch.4) shows the declining use of the modal auxiliaries (especially *would, may, must*) in written standard English, the changing use of the modals in different genres (decrease in the use of *may* and increase in the use of *can*), and the decline in the use of auxiliaries that express the meaning of strong obligation (e.g. *must*).

The next chapter (Ch.5) concerns the so-called “semi-modals” (e.g. *have to, BE going to, BE to, have got to*). The ones that have increased strikingly over time are *Be going to, have to, want to (=need to)*. The authors explain that the increase is due to the decline of the meaning of strong obligation and necessity; i.e., *Be going to, have to and want to* are semantically softer than *will, must, and need to*, respectively.

Regarding the progressive (e.g. *I know that you are studying Chinese, Have you been waiting long?*), Chapter 6 shows a significant expansion of the progressive in BrE and AmE in the late twentieth century. The pattern of development is, however, highly variable across genres. Also, the use of progressive *BE-passive and will+be +ing* have expanded significantly in BrE, but not AmE.

The chapter on the passive voice (Ch. 7) focuses on passive and passive-like constructions; namely, 1) the central *be-passive(e.g. The book was sold.)*, 2) the *get-passive (e.g. The book got sold.)*, and 3) “middles” or “mediopassive constructions” (e.g. *The book sold well.*). The authors hypothesize that the be-passive is decreasing whereas the get-passive and the mediopassive are being used more frequently. The findings support the hypothesis.

Concerning expanded predicates in British and American English (e.g. *Take or have a look at...*), Chapter 8 reveals that they are stylistically marked; i.e., their frequency of use depends on text type. Indeed, the data show that expanded predicates with *have, take and give* are used more frequently in fictional than in non-fictional texts, and more in spoken than in written...
language. They are also found more in BrE than in AmE. With reference to change, the corpus does not provide conclusive evidence that the use of expanded predicates has increased over time.

Chapter 9 on non-finite clauses (e.g. Lewis told him what clothes to bring along.) shows that they have increased dramatically in the press in the period under study. The authors explain that non-finite clauses serve as a convention device to compress information into fewer words and that it may be this functional advantage which makes them particularly suitable for use in journalistic writing.

Chapter 10 concerns the noun phrase including noun modifiers, such as the genitive and relative clauses. The findings show that wh-relatives (e.g. the people with whom they live) on the whole have been declining and that zero relatives (e.g. the people they live with) and that-relatives (e.g. the people that they live with) have been increasing. The authors interpret that this change is caused by the impulse towards a more speech-like style of writing or colloquialization. It is also found that N+N and N’s+N constructions (e.g. the room atmosphere and the room’s atmosphere) have increased whereas N+PP including the of-genitive (e.g. the atmosphere of the room) has declined. The authors explain that this trend is caused by the impulse towards greater information density or densification.

In the last chapter (Chapter 11) entitled “Linguistic and other determinants of change,” the authors attempt to give functional explanations of the syntactic changes found in the earlier chapters. The topics they discuss are the functional and social process of change, grammaticalization, colloquialization, densification of content, Americanization, and other trends, such as democratization or ironing out differences, language prescriptions, and analyticization (the movement from synthetic to analytic structures). A summary table is provided so as to match postulated explanatory trends with the increases and decreases of frequency they help to explain.

In the conclusion, the authors say that they have made use of the resources that are available to present a synthesis of what can be known about the evolution of English grammar in the very recent past. However, they admit that the synthesis is incomplete because many topics that might have been included in this volume have been omitted. As many mysteries and challenges still remain, they encourage further studies to be conducted in the same line.

At the end of the book, three appendices are provided: Appendix I on the composition of the Brown corpus, Appendix II on the C8 target used for part-of-speech tagging of the four corpora, and Appendix III on additional statistic tables and charts.

To evaluate, this book is very well-written. The details of the content are carefully arranged and presented. Even though the information is heavy and dense, the book is easy to read and follow. The authors provide clear hypotheses, vivid statistical tables and figures, elaborate explanation and interpretation, and plenty of examples for each topic or feature under focus.

Based on empirical approach and reliable corpora, the findings are striking and convincing as to how fast the English language has changed beyond the speakers’ consciousness. The authors have adopted a non-prescriptive view of language change and present the change as a natural phenomenon that we should be aware of
and keep up with. Unlike some research reports that present statistical charts, and tables mechanically, this book always provide a satisfactory explanation and discussion of each quantitative evidence so as to help the reader understand what is found and how significant it is.

Another strength of this book is its attempt to show three dimensions of linguistic variation: diachronic variation (change in real time), regional variation (BrE vs. AmE), and stylistic variation (across different genres). The reader would learn from this book not only about how English has changed over time, but also about how the two major standard varieties of English (BrE and AmE) have drawn apart from each other, and how English varies according to text types. However, the findings about the three dimensions of variation are not systematically shown; i.e., they are differently presented in different chapters, which may cause difficulty or confusion to the reader. This seems to be the only drawback of the book. However, considering the main focus on change through time, the findings on regional and stylistic variation, even though sporadic, could be regarded as a bonus for the reader.

To end this review, it is easy to say that this is a very informative and unbiased book, which is worth reading, and especially suitable for syntacticians, grammarians, historical linguists, linguistic typologists, and teachers of English.

Reviewed by

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ABSTRACTS IN THAI

TONE VARIATION IN THE LUE DIALECTS OF THAILAND

Kanita Chaimano

งานวิจัยนี้มุ่งประสงค์เพื่อวิเคราะห์และเปรียบเทียบการแปรเสียงวรรณยุกต์ของภาษาลื้อที่ใช้พูดในประเทศไทย และมักแต่ที่ได้มาใช้เป็นเกณฑ์ในการแบ่งภาษาลื้อที่โดยน่าสนใจด้วยแผนที่ภาษา การศึกษาครั้งนี้เก็บข้อมูลภาษาลื้อที่พูดทางภาคเหนือของประเทศไทย 7 จังหวัด รวม 45 หมู่บ้าน หมู่บ้านทั้งหมดได้ผู้บอกภาษา 3 คน รวมทั้งสิ้น 135 คน ผู้วิจัยทำการตัดสินเสียงวรรณยุกต์ของวิลเลี่ยมเจ เกิดนิยามใช้สำหรับเก็บข้อมูลเสียงวรรณยุกต์ การวิเคราะห์และ_INSTALLATION_NAME_วรรณยุกต์ของการลื้อมาถึงยังใช้การฟังและโปรแกรมสำเร็จรูป PRAAT ผลการวิเคราะห์พบว่าภาษาลื้อแบ่งเป็น 2 กลุ่ม คือกลุ่มที่มี 5 และ 6 หน่วยเสียง ทั้งสองกลุ่มมีระบบเสียงวรรณยุกต์และลำดับวรรณยุกต์ที่แตกต่างกัน ตามการรวมตัวและการแตกต่างของวรรณยุกต์ในช่อง A ได้แก่ A1-2-3-4, A1-23-4, A1-234, A12-34 และ A123-4

THE FUNDAMENTAL FREQUENCIES OF TAI YUAN TONES SPOKEN BY LUÁ’ (MAL) SPEAKERS IN NAN PROVINCE, THAILAND

Chommanad Intajamornrak

ภาษาลัวะมัลเป็นภาษาตระกูลมอญ-เขมรซึ่งถูกสืบสานไว้เป็นภาษาไม่มีวรรณยุกต์แต่ปัจจุบันพบว่า ภาษาลัวะมัลพูดที่บ้านตาหลวง อําเภอปว จังหวัดนาน ซึ่งเป็นภาษาที่มีผลกระทบจากภาษาไทยที่พูดในจังหวัดนี้ โดยพบว่ามีรูปแบบระดับเสียง 2 กลุ่ม ได้แก่ ระดับเสียงสูง และระดับเสียงต่ํา วัตถุประสงค์ของงานวิจัยนี้คือวิเคราะห์และเปรียบเทียบค่าความถี่มูลฐานของวรรณยุกต์ภาษาไทยที่ออกเสียงโดยผูพูดภาษาลัวะบ้านตาหลวง และผูพูดภาษาไทยเป็นภาษาแม่ ซึ่งมีภูมิลำเนาอยู่ในอําเภอปว

CHANGE IN THE STANDARD THAI HIGH TONE: AN ACOUSTIC STUDY

Phanintra Teeranon
Rungwimol Rungrojsuwan

วรรณยุกต์ในภาษาไทยสามารถแบ่งได้เป็น 2 ประเภท ได้แก่ วรรณยุกต์ระดับ (วรรณยุกต์กลางระดับ (สามัญ) วรรณยุกต์ต่ำระดับ (ตก) และวรรณยุกต์สูงระดับ (ตรี)) และวรรณยุกต์เปลี่ยนระดับ (วรรณยุกต์ตก (โท) และวรรณยุกต์ขึ้น (จัตวา)) งานวิจัยในช่วงปี 1911 ถึง 2006 แสดงให้เห็นว่าวรรณยุกต์ตรีในภาษาไทยเปลี่ยนแปลงทั้งระดับเสียงและการขึ้นตก (Bradley 1911; Abramson 1962; Tumtavitikul 1992; Morén and Sziga 2006) วรรณยุกต์ตรีเปลี่ยนแปลงสัทลักษณะจากกลางตกในปี 1911 เป็นระดับในปี 1962 และเปลี่ยนแปลงเป็นกลางขึ้นในปี 2006 งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาวรรณยุกต์ตรีในภาษาไทยเปลี่ยนแปลงสัทลักษณะจากสูงระดับเป็นกลางขึ้น ผู้บอกภาษาในงานวิจัยนี้แบ่งได้เป็น 2 รุ่นอายุ ได้แก่ รุ่นอายุ 60 ปีขึ้นไปและรุ่นอายุต่ำกว่า 20 ปี แต่ละรุ่นอายุมีจำนวนผู้บอกภาษา 20 คน งานวิจัยนี้เน้นวิเคราะห์ทางสัทศาสตร์ด้วยโปรแกรม Praat ผลการวิจัยพบว่าสัทลักษณะของวรรณยุกต์ตรีในผู้บอกภาษาต่ำกว่า 60 ปีขึ้นไปเป็นแบบสูงระดับ แต่ผู้บอกภาษาต่ำกว่า 20 ปี วรรณยุกต์ตรีมีสัทลักษณะกลางขึ้น ผลการวิจัยแสดงให้เห็นว่าสัทลักษณะของวรรณยุกต์ตรีในปัจจุบันมีลักษณะเดียวกับสัทลักษณะของวรรณยุกต์ตรีในภาษาไทยในปัจจุบัน ผลการวิจัยนี้สามารถสรุปว่าวรรณยุกต์ตรีในภาษาไทยได้รับการจัดประเภทใหม่ขึ้นจากวรรณยุกต์ระดับเป็นวรรณยุกต์เปลี่ยนระดับหรือไม่ แนวคิดของสัทลักษณะของวรรณยุกต์ตรีในภาษาไทยแสดงให้เห็นการเปลี่ยนแปลงที่ก้าวตามนัยของระบบวรรณยุกต์ในภาษาไทย
SYNTACTIC PATTERNS OF ZHUANG IDIOMS

Somsonge Burusphat
Qin Xiaohang

บทความนี้ศึกษาส่วนในภาษาจู่เหนือ โดยใช้เกณฑ์ของทางภาษาของส่วนพันธ์ กำหนดแผนสอบออกเป็น
สองแบบ ได้แก่ ส่วนผู้หมายของและส่วนหลายผู้หมาย ส่วนผู้หมายของเป็นข้อความเฉพาะที่มีลักษณะ
สันดานที่มีส่วนประกอบคือ ประยุกต์การแสดงหนังสือการแสดง ส่วนผู้หมายของประกอบด้วยส่วนใน
ผู้หมาย ห้าผู้หมาย และความประสงค์ส่วนผู้หมายของมีรูปแบบทางไวยากรณ์ 4 รูปแบบ ได้แก่
รูปแบบเรียง รูปแบบร้อยเรียงหรือร้อยห้า รูปแบบแก่นความ และรูปแบบย่อ ทางด้านความหมายส่วนจู่เหนือได้
มีความหมายจากคำที่ประกอบกันเป็นส่วน แต่ส่วนที่ความหมายโดยรวมทั้งส่วนนี้เป็นความหมายเชิง
อุปถัณฑ์ หน้าที่ของส่วนนี้จู่เหนือคือเพื่อไม่มีการใช้ภาษาใด ๆ การสื่อสารด้วยคำพูดและในการเขียน

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SYNTACTIC COMPLEXITY IN THAI CHILDREN’S NARRATIVES

Suthasinee Piyapasuntra

บทความนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อทำเสนอสาระสำคัญ 2 ประการ ประการแรก คือ ความซับซ้อนทางภาษาของส่วนพันธ์
เป็นเครื่องชี้ให้เห็นพัฒนาการทางภาษาของเด็กโดยเฉพาะในการเล่าเรื่อง เนื่องจากเด็กเติบโตขึ้นและมี
พัฒนาการทางภาษาปัญญามากขึ้น ประการที่สอง ความซับซ้อนเป็นสิ่งที่สามารถวัดและประเมินค่าได้
บทความนี้เสนอแนวทางการประเมินความซับซ้อนทางภาษาของส่วนพันธ์ด้วยตัวเลข เพื่อความสะดวกในการ
ศึกษาพัฒนาการในกลุ่มอายุที่ใกล้กันและอาจไม่พบความแตกต่างทางภาษาหรือประดิษฐกรรมทางภาษา
ใหม่ ๆ อย่างเด่นขึ้น ทั้งนี้เพื่อช่วยให้การเปรียบเทียบข้อมูลกลุ่มอายุกระจายได้อย่างแน่นอน สุดท้ายสุดที่ได้คือเรื่องเล่าของเด็กไทยในฐานะข้อมูล CHILDES ชุด Thai frog story แบ่งเป็น 4 กลุ่มอายุ คือ 4 ปี 6
ปี 9 ปี และ 11 ปี จำนวนกลุ่มอายุละ 10 คน เปรียบเทียบกับผู้ใหญ่ 10 คน ผลการศึกษาพบว่าเรื่องเล่าของ
เด็กไทยค่อนข้างมีความซับซ้อนทางภาษาของส่วนพันธ์มากขึ้นจนใกล้เคียงกับผู้ใหญ่ในที่สุด
THE POLYSEMY OF “ชื่อป” IN THAI: A PRAGMATICALLY MOTIVATED PHENOMENON

Kandaporn Jaroenkitboworn

บทความนี้เกิดจากความหมายของคำว่า “ชอบ” ในภาษาไทย ผลการศึกษาพบว่าคำว่า “ชอบ” มีหลายความหมายที่มีความเกี่ยวข้องกับเหตุปัจจัยทางวัจนปฏิบัติ เหตุปัจจัยทางวัจนปฏิบัติหมายรวมถึงทัศนคติ ความรู้สึกทางสังคม ซึ่งมีผลต่อการใช้ภาษาของผู้พูด เหตุปัจจัยทางวัจนปฏิบัติทำให้คำว่าชอบ ที่หมายถึง ‘ถูกต้อง’ สามารถนำไปสู่การกระท่าที่แสดงออกว่าเห็นด้วย หรือกล่าวอีกนัยหนึ่งได้ว่า เมื่อคนเราเห็นสิ่งใดถูกต้องแล้วก็มีโอกาสจะแสดงออกถึงกันไปกับสิ่งนั้น ๆ อาการเห็นด้วยเมื่อเห็นสิ่งใดถูกต้องก็สามารถไปสู่ความรู้สึกที่ดี จากลายนปีความพึงพอใจในที่สุด เมื่อเป็นผลดังนี้ความหมายของคำว่าชอบ ว่า ‘พึงพอใจ’ ซึ่งเกิดขึ้นได้ และเมื่อพึงพอใจมากก็อาจไปสู่การเห็นด้วย ก็อาจทำให้ความหมายเห็นด้วยขึ้นจากกล้ายเป็น ‘รัก’ และ ‘สุขใจ’ ที่จะกระท่าสิ่งใดสิ่งหนึ่ง เมื่อเป็นผลดังนั้น ก็อาจทำให้เกิดการกระท่าข้าวๆ นอกจากจะมองกล้ายเป็นนิสัย จนในที่สุดจะส่งผลให้คำว่าชอบ ขยายขอบเขตกลายเป็นสุขใจและ ‘รัก’ ซึ่งบทความแสดงให้เห็นว่าเกิดจากกระบวนการกลายเป็นคำไวยากรณ์ จากคำกริยา ‘พึงพอใจ’ สรุปคือ มี 3 ความหมายได้แก่ ‘ถูกต้อง’ ‘พึงพอใจ’ และ ‘มักจะ’

A HISTORICAL PRAGMATIC STUDY OF APOLOGIES: A CASE STUDY OF THE ESSEX PAUPER LETTERS (1731–1837)

Krisda Chaemsaithong

บทความฉบับนี้มีจุดประสงค์ที่จะศึกษารูปแบบและหน้าที่ของรูปแบบการขอโทษในภาษาอังกฤษสมัยใหม่ตอนปลาย (ช่วงคริสต์ศตวรรษที่ 18-19) โดยใช้อัยการจดหมายคุมข้อมูลของจดหมายจายก (Pauper Letters) จากเขตเอจิชชิร์ (Essex) ในประเทศอังกฤษ ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ด้านรูปแบบการขอโทษมีลักษณะที่เป็นแบบแผนเดียวกัน ไม่ต่างจากในสมัยปัจจุบันมากนัก และในด้านหน้าที่ รูปแบบการขอโทษยังคงอยู่ในเจตนาในมิติของหน้าที่หลัก คือ เพื่อแสดงความสุภาพ ที่มีจุดประสงค์ในการแก้ไขการละเมิดและคุกคามของผู้อื่น และเพื่อแสดงพฤติกรรมที่เป็นมาตรฐาน ( politic behavior) ที่มีจุดประสงค์ในการตอบสนองความสิ่งพื้นที่ระหว่างบุคคลและการบรรลุจุดประสงค์ในการสื่อสาร
A STUDY OF ENGLISH COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES OF THAI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Suttinee Chuanchaisit
Kanchana Prapphal

งานวิจัยนี้ศึกษาประเภทของกลวิธีทางการสื่อสารที่นักศึกษาไทยที่มีความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษระดับอ่อนใช้ร่วมกัน และอิทธิพลต่อความสามารถทางการสื่อสารด้านการพูดหรือไม่ กลุ่มตัวอย่างในการศึกษาครั้งนี้ประกอบด้วยนักศึกษาไทยที่กำลังศึกษาอังกฤษในชั้นปีที่สามวิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษจากคณะมนุษยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยหอการค้าไทยจำนวนหนึ่งร้อยคนโดยการสุ่ม

เครื่องมือในการวิจัยคือ (1) แบบสอบถามกลวิธีทางการสื่อสารในการสนทนาภาษาอังกฤษ (Strategy Use in Speaking Task Inventory, SUSTI) (2) แบบทดสอบวัดความสามารถทางการสื่อสารด้านการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ (Oral Communication test, OCT)

สถิติที่ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลคือ การแจกแจงความถี่ ร้อยละ ค่าเฉลี่ย ค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน ค่าความเชื่อถือได้ของข้อสอบ และค่าที (t-test) นอกจากนี้ผู้วิจัยใช้การวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา (Content analysis) เพื่อให้ได้ข้อมูลเชิงลึกและเป็นการยืนยันผลของการวิเคราะห์ปริมาณ

ผลการวิจัยพบว่า นักศึกษาที่มีความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษระดับอ่อนส่วนใหญ่ใช้กลวิธีทางการสื่อสารที่หลีกเลี่ยงความเสี่ยง (Risk-avoidance strategies) โดยเฉพาะการใช้กลวิธีการยืดเวลา (Time-gaining strategies) ซึ่งตรงข้ามกับกลวิธีที่นักศึกษาที่เก่งภาษาอังกฤษใช้ได้แก่กลวิธีใช้ความเสี่ยง (Risk-taking strategies) เช่นกลวิธีทางอารมณ์และสังคม (Social-affective strategies) กลวิธีที่เน้นความคล่อง (Fluency-oriented strategies) กลวิธีขอความช่วยเหลือ (Help-seeking strategies) และกลวิธีการใช้ถ้อยคำทางอ้อม (Circumlocution strategies)
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