

A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF ADVERBS IN
ENGLISH AND THAI, AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON
LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

This article presents a contrastive analysis of adverbs in English and Thai, focusing on how morphological and syntactic features of adverbs in Thai may interfere Thai learners in using derivational adverbs in the English language. It postulates that due to different derivational processes of adverbs in the two languages, L1 interference may be found with regards to forms, functions, and positions, and a combination of these in particular. In terms of derivation, adverbs in English are morphologically devided, whereas those in Thai are lexemically derived. These influence their modificational functions in a sentence, which eventually affect their transmobility. That is, adverbs in English receive a much higher potential in being juxtaposed with and separated from the modified syntactic units than do those in Thai. However, the semantics of adverbs depends on the interrelationships among these and various other variables, further complicating the difficulties encountered by Thai learners. The results of the analysis suggest that teaching and learning of adverbs in English at a surface level is insufficient and more research in this area is needed.

Introduction

A large number of references and student's grammars discuss various aspects of adverbs in English such as their structural definitions and derivational processes (cf. Francis and McDavid, 1958; Fries, 1977; Kaplan, 1995). Later, Master (1996) defined adverbs, showed the distinctions between adverbs and adverbials¹, and related them to possible sentential positions and learners' problems.

Among the present literature, there are perhaps only two studies (Greenbaum, 1969; Nickel and Nehls, 1981), which comparatively investigate the pattern of use of adverbs in English in any two languages. However, they focus on morphological languages (e.g. English and its varieties, or English and other European languages), whereas the Thai language employs lexemic derivations and, hence, leads to different likelihood of use and problems with respect to adverbs in English.

Moreover, the works discussing English adverbs from the perspectives of the Thai language (e.g., Banpo, 2000; Pankhuenkhat, 1978) have been examined only briefly within the larger framework of general syntax and are based primarily on English grammar with minimal reference to its Thai counterpart. The study entirely devoted to adverbs in Thai (cf. Ritthaporn, 1969) or a contrastive analysis of adverbs in the two languages (cf. Pankhuenkhat, 1978) is even rarer.

In addition to the research gap in this area, from the standpoint of second language writing, grammatical and textual parameters of a language often govern how a writer of the language processes with his/her text (Sanchez-Macarro and Carter, 1998). When he/she has to write in another language, there is often a transfer (i.e., interference) of L1 writing structure to L2 (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). For example, difficulty in writing was found among learners whose native language makes less use of morphology than does English, particularly in terms of modificational collocations (Rutherford, 1987).

¹ The distinction between adverbs and adverbials will be discussed below.

This paper, therefore, is aimed at discussing the syntax of adverbs² in English and Thai with regard to their forms, functions, and positions. It also presents a contrastive analysis of adverbs in the two languages and possible problems facing language learners after which suggestions on the teaching of adverbs in English are tendered. Due to the limitation in the Thai literature, the findings presented here are hypothetical in nature; nonetheless, they should be beneficial for language teachers in serving as a foundation from which lessons on morphology and further research in the area can be substantiated.

Adverbs in English: An Introduction

A traditional definition of adverbs is “a word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb” (cf. Delahunty and Garvey, 1994; Kaplan, 1995: 121). Accordingly, based on their structural and semantic relations with other parts of speech, adverbs are classified by their functions in giving additional information about the modified verb, adjective or adverb, as shown respectively in the following examples:

- (1) She slept *soundly*³ last night.
- (2) The last election was *politically* unsound.
- (3) It rained *very* heavily last night.

The terms ‘adverb’ and ‘adverbial’ are often used interchangeably to describe the part of speech that performs the functions above, but they are in fact different. According to Hoyer (1997), adverbs are treated as a word class and characteristically represented by a single-word unit. Adverbials, on the other hand, are syntactic units that can be typified in either “simple one-word

² There are three types of adverbs in English: manner, place, time (Master, 1996). This paper explores adverbs without particularly addressing any one of them.

³ Henceforth, the modifying constituent(s) will be typographically shown in italics, and the modified underlines. Regarding this, it shall be helpful to note that there might be some degrees of inconsistency in the typographical representations of the modified units as, firstly, the modificational boundary (cf. Francis and McDavid, 1958; Fries, 1977; Kaplan, 1995) related to the semantics of different adverbs is beyond the scope of this article, and, secondly, there has been very little research conducted in this area and the research findings are still inconclusive.

forms” or “multiple-word units” (Ibid, p. 141). Thus, an overlap found in adverbs may be referred to as either adverbs or adverbials. Prepositional phrases (PPs), adverbial clauses, and prepositional noun phrases (PrepNPs) are all adverbials (Liles, 1979; Master, 1996). An example for each of these categories is shown below:

- PP (4) Put the mixture into the oven.
- Adverb clause (5) Although I'm poor, I'm quite content. (Ehrlick and Murphy, 1976: 114)
- PrepNP (6) Don't talk (about) *business* with me.

Although adverbs and adverbials primarily modify a single syntactic unit, they can also express a larger one (i.e., phrases or clauses) (Banpo, 2000; Ehrlich and Murphy, 1976; Hurford, 1994), as in the following examples.

- (7) You certainly know how to show a person a good time.
(Kaplan, 1995: 127)
- (8) Obviously you aren't interested in me. (Ibid, p. 127)
- (9) I found out what you're really like luckily. (Ibid, p. 127)

The realisation of adverbs' relations with other parts of speech, lexical features, and functions leads to a revised *functional* definition of an adverb as a single-word unit that serves to modify either the whole clause or its verbal, adjectival, or adverbial constituents.

Forms⁴

Most adverbs in English are created by morphological derivations. By this criterion, adverbs can be characteristically classified into those in *simple, compound, or derivational* forms (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990).

Simple (nonderivational) adverbs include words like just, only, well, late, fast, tight, enough, well, and so on. They

⁴ To attain a specific scope of the study, adverbs that are formed by the -ly suffixation will be the main focus.

encompass lexical entries of other parts of speech that homophonically perform adverbial functions when appearing in an adverbial slot (i.e., sentence-initially or sentence-finally) such as today, yesterday, downstairs, home. Furthermore, simple adverbs cover those adjectives and adverbs that share identical lexical realisations such as fast, right, little, straight, enough, low, well, even, much, near, far (examples taken from Ehrlich and Murphy, 1976: 111).

Compound adverbs are those that derive from affixing two lexemes⁵ such as somehow, somewhere, therefore (examples taken from Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990).

Derivational adverbs are those that derive from a suffixation, with or without prior morphological transformations, to the root such as quickly, frequently, awkwardly, lengthwise (examples taken from Delahunty and Garvey, 1994). This class of adverbs can be further classified in terms of their derivational bases and affix forms. The majority of adverbs is created from adjectives by adding the suffix *-ly* (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990) and termed *adjective-suffixed adverbs*. Adverbs can also be derived from nouns by adding the suffix *-wise* (e.g., clockwise, weatherwise (Master, 1996)) and thus called *noun-suffixed adverbs*. In addition, adverbs can be formed from prepositions or PrepNPs by adding the suffix *-ward(s)* (e.g., backwards, homewards (Ibid, 1996)) and called *PrepNP-suffixed adverbs*. Finally, derivational adverbs can be created “by adding the derivational prefix *a-* to nouns, verbs, adjectives, and stems” (e.g. aloud, ahead, away, aboard, adrift, alike (Francis and McDavid, 1958: 284)), and called *stem-* or *root-prefixed adverbs*, depending on the morphological process(es) involved.

Functions

The function of adverbs is to express manner, place, and time (Liles, 1979; Master, 1996), and they may also pronounce on

⁵ “A lexeme is any set of lexical units which have the same meaning and which either do not contrast in any single environment, or contrast in a manner not regarded as significant by standart Thai (ST) speakers; or it is any single lexical unit which does not belong to such a set” (Noss 1964: 37).

cause, purpose, assertion (Ehrlich and Murphy, 1976), and degree (Delahunty and Garvey, 1994).

Structurally, adverbs may express a single syntactic unit as well as a larger one (Kaplan, 1995). The modificational boundary seems to depend on their structural relations with the modified constituents and their semantic denotations. That is, some adverbs, when juxtaposed with the modified unit, give further information to only such a certain unit. Others, despite being placed in close proximity to the modified unit, may articulate a larger structural constituent or the whole clause. In this respect, adverbs can be categorised into adjuncts, subjuncts, disjuncts, and conjuncts (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990: 148-149).

Adverbial adjuncts are “integrated within the structure of the clause” (Ibid, p. 148), specifically enunciating verbs, adjectives and adverbs (Zandvoort and Ek, 1975). Although adjuncts are normally placed adjacently to the modified constituent, they can be disintegrated from it, as exemplified below:

(10) *Slowly* they walked back home. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990: 148)

(11) They *slowly* walked back home.

(12) He spoke to me about it *briefly*. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990: 148)

(13) He *briefly* spoke to me about it.

By comparison, subjuncts are always juxtaposed with the syntactic unit(s) they modify:

(14) We haven't finished *yet*.

(15) Would you *kindly* wait for me? (Ibid, 1990: 149)

While adjuncts and subjuncts semantically modify a specific unit and have a *constituent boundary*, disjuncts, albeit being placed at the same positions as adjuncts or subjuncts, express the writer/speaker's evaluation of the whole clause and, as a consequence, have a *sentential or clausal boundary*:

(16) *Frankly*, I'm tired. (Greenbaum and Quirk 1990: 149)

(17) *Fortunately*, no one complained. (Ibid, p. 149)

(18) They are probably at home. (Ibid, p. 149)

(19) She wisely didn't attempt to apologize. (Ibid, p. 149)

Conjuncts relate the writer/speaker's assessment of two adjoining sentential units. In other words, they serve a connective function (Quirk and Greenbaum 1973), thus having an *intersentential boundary*, as illustrated in the following examples:

(20) She has bought a big house, so she must have a lot of money.

(21) All our friends are going to Paris this summer. We, however, are going to London.

(22) I didn't invite her. She wouldn't have come, anyway.

Positions⁶

The most comprehensive description of adverbial positions is that of Quirk (1985) in the model called CGEL⁷ that proposes seven possible positions of an adverb (cited in Hoye, 1997: 148)⁸:

I (initial) (23) Possibly they may have been sent to London.

iM (initial-medial) (24) They possibly may have been sent to London.

M (medial) (25) They may possibly have been sent to London.

⁶ When two or more adverbs adjacently coexist within an adverbial slot, the sequence is manner-place-time or place-manner-time (Master 1996). Nevertheless, it is quite uncommon that all adverbs are juxtaposed within the same cluster: a more natural placement is that each or some of them are located in different adverbial positions (Ibid, 1996). The adverbial juxtaposition is beyond the scope of this paper and will not be explored further here.

⁷ This is one of the models that examines modal adverbial positions in particular. As other types of adverbs can also take these positions, the model is hence adopted here. Other frameworks explore adverbial positions from different angles. For instance, the terms like adjuncts, subjuncts, disjuncts and conjuncts are used to refer to adverbs with regard to their proximity and modification relative to the unit they modify (cf. Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990; Zandvoort and Ek, 1975).

⁸ Related discussions can be found in Nickel and Nehls (1981).

- mM (medial-medial) (26) They may have possibly been sent to London.
- eM (end-medial) (27) They may have been possibly sent to London.
- iE (initial-end) (28) They may have been sent possibly to London.
- E (end) (29) They may have been sent to London possibly.

This framework variably relates possible positions of an adverb to its transmobility within the verbal constituents and the syntactic structure of the clause. For instance, when a modal, an auxiliary, and a main verb coexist in the verb cluster that is followed by a verb complement, there are seven possible positions for an adverb, as shown above. On the other hand, when only a main verb constitutes the verb cluster that is followed by a verb complement, there are four possible positions, namely initial, end-medial, initial-end, and end. To fully capture this model, it is worth mentioning that a verb complement may be so extended that other possible positions of an adverb can be indicated, as in the following examples.

(30) John works hard to successfully climb up his career ladder.

(31) John works hard to climb up his career ladder successfully.

To summarise these, there are two significant issues to consider in discussing possible positions of adverbs: the extent of adverbs to be used in a sentence and the possible positions resulting from such an extent of use. When only one adverb is involved, the pattern largely follows the CGEL model presented above. On the other hand, two or more adverbs, should they be used, may be embedded in different structural constituents,

2. A pre-posed¹³ morpho-lexemic¹⁴ e.g. ทาง- /thaang(0)/ โดยด้วย- /dooj(0)/ /duuaj(2)/ (by, in, base+a single lexeme with) อย่าง- /jaang(1)/¹⁵ (with) ทาง-อากาศ /thaang(0)-?aa(0)-kaad(1) / (by air)
3. A pre-posed morpho-lexemic e.g. อย่าง-เป็น-ทางการ /jaang(1)-pen(0)-thaang(0)kaan(0) /¹⁶ (formally) base +multiple lexemes อย่าง-เป็น-เอกฉันท์ /jaang(1)-pen(0)-ek(1)ka(1)chan(4)/ (with concensus) อย่าง-เป็น-ธรรม /jaang(1)-pen(0)-tham(0)/ (fairly)
4. A pre-posed morpho-lexemic e.g. อย่าง-ประหลาดประชัน /jaang(1)-pra(1)chot(3)pra(1)chan(0) /¹⁷ (sarcastically) base + reduplications อย่าง-สาหัสสาครรจ์ /jaang(1)-saa(4)hat(1)saa(4)kan(0) / (severely) อย่าง-จริงจัง /jaang(1)-cing(0)cang(0)/ (seriously) อย่าง-ลับ ๆ /jaang(1)-lap(3)lap(3)/ (secretly)

¹³ The distinction here is made between prefix/suffix and pre-posed/post-posed lexemes as adverbs in Thai are not derived by bound derivational prefixes or suffixes but are formed, in contrast to those in English, by lexemic derivations, thereby creating more flexible derivational processes.

¹⁴ The term 'morpho-lexemic' is used to refer to lexemes that function as morphemes.

¹⁵ /jaang/ is morpho-lexemically added for the sake of further derivational processes with very few (e.g. by) or no equivalents in English.

¹⁶ Dashes represent the separability of post-posed lexemes with no relevance to its English counterparts.

¹⁷ All reduplications involve either a repetition of a base lexeme, with or without a change in the shape of the base, or a construction of the base lexeme with an element which, while it may not resemble the base morpho-phonemically, is found only in association with it (Noss 1964: 66).

5. Reduplications¹⁸
(mostly idiomatic expressions)
- e.g. บ้า ๆ มด ๆ /baa(2)baa(2)b@@(0)
b@@(0) / (crazily)
อาย ๆ /?aaj(0)?aaj(0) / (shyly)
ผิด ๆ ถูก ๆ /phid(1)phid(1)thuuk(1)
thuuk(1) / (incorrectly,
unscrupulously)
สวย ๆ งาม ๆ /suuaj(4)suuaj(4)
ngaam(0)ngaam(0) / (beautifully)
งู ๆ ปลา ๆ /nguu(0)nguu(0)plaa(0)
plaa(0) / (little, a little)
6. Idiomatic adverbs
- e.g. เหนียวแน่นเอาดื้อ ๆ /?aw(0)pen(0)
?aw(0)taaj(0)/
(deeply, madly, crazily)
วันยังค่ำ /wan(0)jang(0)kham(2)/
(always)
7. Post-posed lexemic reduplications¹⁹
- e.g. -เหลือเกิน /-lvva(4)kqqn(0)/
(very, very much)
-เอามาก /-?aw(0)maak(2)/
(very, very much)
-จึ้ง/จึ้งเลย/จึ้งจริง /-cang(0)/
cang(0)lqqj(0)/cing(0)/
8. Circumposed lexemic additions²⁰
- e.g. ใน-ทาง-การทหาร-แล้ว /naj(0)-
thaang(0)-kaan(0)tha (1)
haan(4)-lxxw(3)/ (militarily)

¹⁸ Those in the fifth, sixth, and seventh categories are treated as a single word; hence, they are not typographically shown with dashes.

¹⁹ This class of adverbs mostly co-occurs with lexemic adverbs in the other sets for intensifications or emphases.

²⁰ Circumposed lexemic elements are attached to other adverbs for sentential mobility.

These are by no means exhaustive sets of adverbs in Thai. In a way, it could be said that there are numerous ways to derive adverbs using entries of the other parts of speech, implying that the Thai language might not have an exclusive set of adverbs. This basically holds true only with the exception of simple lexemic adverbs (e.g., adjectives functioning as adverbs) which presumably constitute a close class; however, the adjectival class is a very large class by itself.

From the above examples, adverbs in Thai appear more likely as extended lexemic configures. In other words, they are seen as separable units in which a single morpho-lexemic base may theoretically bear any other lexemes.

In fact, separability is a distinctive characteristic of adverbs in Thai. Since they are lexemically derived, their elements can be freely disintegrated and function as lexemes (i.e., they can be delexemicalised). As a result, their forms resemble those of PPs or PrepNPs in English. For instance, the adverb ‘อย่าง-เป็น-ธรรม’ /jaang(1)-pen(0)-tham(0)/ (fairly) is more lexemically proximate, when translated into its English equivalents, to ‘with fairness’ or ‘in a fair manner’ than to ‘fairly’.

Functions ²¹

The function of adverbs is to modify a verb, adjective or adverb by expressing modality, location, temporality, emphasis, and manner (Pankhuenkhat, 1978). Specifically, most simple lexemic adverbs function to express location and temporality whereas compound and derivational adverbs serve mainly to express modality, emphasis, and manner (Ibid, 1978).

Like their English counterparts, adverbs in Thai may express a single or larger syntactic unit. Nevertheless, the derivational outcomes of adverbs suggest that most of adverbs in Thai function to express the whole clause rather than a certain constituent. Because of their *unextended* forms, only simple

²¹ Due to the fact that there has been very little literature that analyses the functions of adverbs in the Thai language, this paper may not comprehensively present the findings on their structural functions.

lexemic adverbs and post-posed lexemic reduplications—the hypothetically close class—can be juxtaposed with, and, therefore, have close structural and semantic associations with the unit they modify. To test this hypothesis, the adverb ‘มาก’ /maak(2)/ (very much) is transmobilised in the following sentences:

(33) ผม-ชื่นชม-คุณ-มาก²²

/phom(4)-chvvn(2)chom(0)-khun(0)-maak(2)/

I admire you *very much*.

(34) *²³ผม-มาก-ชื่นชม-คุณ

*/phom(4)-maak(2)-chvvn(2)chom(0)-khun(0)/

I *very much* admire you.

The result is that the second sentence is ungrammatical in Thai while grammatical in English. Thus, there is still a limitation to the hypothesis that simple lexemic adverbs can be mobilised adjacently to the modified unit.

Adverbs formed by other lexemic derivations—the larger group of adverbs—are highly extended, and, as a result, signify unclear relations with the modified constituents. It is then more likely that they are interpreted as semantically modifying a larger unit. In most cases, similar to simple lexemic adverbs, they may not at all be juxtaposed with the specific unit to be modified. This is illustrated by the following pair of grammatical and ungrammatical sentences respectively:

(35) เขา-สามารถ-เอาชนะ-ฝ่ายตรงข้าม-ทาง-การทหาร

/khaw(4)-saa(4)maat(2)?aw(0)cha(1)na(3)-

faaj(1)trong(0)kham(2)-thaang(0)-kaan(0) tha(1)haan(4)/

²² To functionally solve the inconsistency in the boundary of modification of adverbs in Thai, Hoyer's (1997) argument on the relationships between the adverbial positions and semantic effects will be followed. According to him, the I-position (sentence-initial) can be associated with topicalisation or thematisation of the clause following an adverb; the M-position (sentence-medial) with the centralisation of an adverb's emphatic outcome to the unit modified; the E-position (sentence-final) with the strengthening or weakening effect of the clause preceding an adverb. The English equivalents of sentences in Thai, however, will treat adverbs as adjuncts or subjuncts depending on their juxtapositions with the unit modified, unless otherwise stated.

²³ Asterisks represent anomalous sentences.

He could win the opponent *militarily*.

(36) *เขาสามารถเอาชนะ-ทางการทหาร-ฝ่ายตรงข้าม

*/khaw(4)-saa(4)maat(2)?aw(0)cha(1)na(3)-thaang(0)-
kaan(0)tha(1)haan(4)-faaj(1)trong(0)kham(2)/

He could *militarily* win the opponent.

To explain this in the –junct family terms, adverbs in Thai largely perform disjunctive and conjunctive functions with a much lower degree of adjunctive and VP-subjunctive quality. Because of their limitation in sentential mobility (see below), adverbs in Thai may have relatively low degree of adjunctive features. For subjuncts, the examples above show that they may occur in the environment of an NP (i.e., modifying adjective) or another adverb, but not in that of a VP. In conclusion, adverbs in Thai, be they in extended or unextended form, are limited in their transmobility to the modified unit.

Positions ²⁴

Adverbs in Thai do not show as much ‘syntactic mobility’ (Hoye 1978) as those in English. Pankhuenkhat (1978) has classified Thai adverbs into four categories: manner, location, temporality, and adjunctive adverbs. He suggested that the last three categories could occur freely in any positions with fairly little

²⁴ Similar to adverbs in English, Pankhuenkhat (1978) has noted that more than one adverb may co-occur in an adverbial slot; however, the difference between the two languages is that, in Thai, there is theoretically no fixed order of juxtaposition for adverbs.

a. (มี)คนเยอะ-ที่บ้าน-ตอนนี้-โดยปกติ
/(mii(0))-khon(0)jx(3)-thii(2)baan(2)-t@@@n(0)nii(3)-dooj(0)pok(1)ka(1)ti(1)/
There are many people at home at this time normally.

b. (มี)คนเยอะ-ที่บ้าน-โดยปกติ-ตอนนี้
/(mii(0))-khon(0)jx(3)-thi(2)-baan(2)-dooj(0)pok(1)ka(1)ti(1)-t@@@n(0)nii(3)/
There are many people at home normally at this time.

c. (มี)คนเยอะ-โดยปกติ-ที่บ้าน-ตอนนี้
/(mii(0))-khon(0)jx(3)-dooj(0)pok(1)ka(1)ti(1)-thi(2)baan(2)-t@@@n(0)nii(3)/
There are many people normally at home at this time.

Despite no restriction on their order, the placement of an excessive sequence of adverbs within the same slot frequently results in ambiguity or confusion. In practice, the disintegration or distribution of them may be required.

d. โดยปกติ-(มี)คนเยอะ-ที่บ้าน-ตอนนี้
/dooj(0)-pok(1)ka(1)ti(1)-(mii(0))khon(0)jx(3)-thi(2)baan(2)-t@@@n(0)nii(0)/
Normally, there are many people at home at this time.

or no change in the general meaning of the sentence. But in another study of adverbs in Thai, Ritthaporn (1969) tested the placements of adverbs and implied that the most frequent position of adverbs was the sentence-final position.

In Thai, adverbs can therefore be placed either sentence-initially or sentence-finally, but, as discussed above, not sentence-medially. However, the following examples reveal that placing adverbs sentence-initially creates, though not unintelligible, an anomalous sentence:

(37) เขาอ่านหนังสืออย่างจริงจัง

/khaw(4)-?aan(1)nang(4)svv(4)-jaang(1)-cing(0)cang(0)/

He is reading *seriously*.

(38) *อย่างจริงจัง-เขาอ่านหนังสือ

*/jaang(1)-cing(0)cang(0)-khaw(4)-?aan(1)nang(4)svv(4)/

Seriously he is reading²⁵.

The exception to the above hypothesis may prevail when there are modifications in the adverb (e.g., circumposing lexemic adverbs) or the clause so the adverb can correctly and grammatically function in the sentence-initial position:

(39) เธอแต่งตัวช้าๆ

/thqq(0)-txxng(1)tuua(0)-chaa(3)-cang(0)lqqj(0)/

You dress *very slowly*.

The sentence cannot be converted into the following sentence since the mobility of the adverb position causes ungrammaticality.

(40) *ช้าๆ-เธอแต่งตัว

*/chaa(3)-cang(0)lqqj(0)-thqq(0)-txxng(1)tuua(0)/

Very slowly you dress.

²⁵ In English, this sentence is grammatical depending on, in spoken language, its phonological pattern, and, in written language, its punctuation.

But the sentence becomes grammatical with the post-posed lexemic addition(s) (shown in bolds) to the adverbial constituents.

(41) ช้า-จึงเลย-นะ-ขอ-แต่งตัว(นะ)

/chaa(3)-cang(0)lqqj(0)-na(3)-thqq(0)-txxng(1)tuua(0)(na(1))/²⁶

Very slowly you dress.

To extend the applicability of lexemic addition(s) to the adverb for sentential mobility, examples of the sentence containing an adverb derived from the second lexemic process, its ungrammatical counterpart with the fronted adverb, as well as its grammatical version with the circumposed lexemic addition(s) (shown in bolds) to the adverb are presented below:

(42) เขา-สามารถเอาชนะ-ฝ่ายตรงข้าม-ทาง-การทหาร

/khaw(4)-saa(4)maat(2)?aw(0)cha(1)na(3)-faaj(1)trong(0)kham(2)-thaang(0)-kaan(0)tha(1)haan(4)/

He could win the opponent *militarily*.

(43) *ทาง-การทหาร-เขา-สามารถเอาชนะ-ฝ่ายตรงข้าม

*/thaang(0)-kaan(0)tha(1)haan(4)-khaw(4)-saa(4)maat(2)?aw(0)cha(1)na(3)-faaj(1)trong(0)kham(2)/

Militarily, he could win the opponent.

(44) ใน-ทาง-การทหาร-แล้ว-เขา-สามารถเอาชนะ-ฝ่ายตรงข้าม

/naj(0)-thaang(0)-kaan(0)tha(1)haan(4)-lxxw(3)-khaw(4)-saa(4)maat(2)?aw(0)cha(1)na(3)-faaj(1)trong(0)kham(2)/

Militarily, he could win the opponent.

In addition to the above, another exception to the proposition that manner adverbs mostly take the final position is the occurrence of 'modal adverbs.' These adverbs include certainly, possibly, probably, and the likes. They may take the initial position without producing ungrammatical or anomalous sentences, as in the following examples:

²⁶ The particle /na(1)/ is added for emphatetical effects or, in some cases such as in spoken Thai, added with no semantic or pragmatic significance.

(45) น่ากลัว-เขา-จะกลับ-ไปแล้ว

/naa(2)kluua(0)²⁷ -khaw(4)-ca(1)klap(1)-paj(0)lxxw(3)/

Probably, he might have left already. (Adapted from Pankhuenkhat 1978: p. 23)

(46) ตามปกติ-ผม-ตื่นนอน-สายมาก

/taam(0)pok(1)ka(1)ti(1)-phom(4)-tvvn(1)n@@n(0)-saa(4)maak(2)/

Usually I get up very late. (Pankhuenkhat 1978: p. 23)

A Contrastive Analysis of Adverbs in English and Thai and Hypothetical Language Learners' Problems

This section discusses the similarities and differences of adverbs in English and Thai with regard to their forms, functions, and positions, as well as the problems facing language learners.

Forms

English adverbs are both morphologically and lexemically derived. By morphological derivations, adverbs can be created by adding the prefix *a-* or the suffixes *-wise*, *-wards*, and *-ly*. They can also be lexemically formed as in the case of compounds although these adverbs constitute a much smaller group. In contrast, most adverbs in Thai are lexemically created, with the exception of mono-lexemic adverbs that are equivalent to mono-morphemic (i.e. simple) adverbs in English.

Nonetheless, this is not to suggest that morphological processes do not exist in Thai. In fact, Thai employs morphological derivations to a considerable extent. Yet, there are a number of differences between the two languages in this respect. In English, the process involves both *inflectional and derivational* morphemes, and is applicable to any word class (i.e. nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs). On the other hand, morphologically speaking, Thai

²⁷ /naa(2)kluua(0)/ is a collocation for /baang(0)tii(0)/. The two terms can be interchangeably used depending on the formality or the context of the situation.

much more frequently employs inflectional derivations, and the process applies to quite merely the noun class, as shown in the following examples²⁸.

ยักษ์	ยักษ์	ยักษ์
/jak(3)/	/jak(3)sii(4)/	/jak(3)saa(4)/
a giant	a female giant	a male giant
กระเฒ่า	กระเฒ่า	กระเฒ่า
/kra(1)paw(4)/	/kra(1)pai(4)/	/kra(1)paw(4)/
a collector	a female collector	a male collector
ราช	ราชินี	ราชา
/raat(2)	/raa(0)chi(3)nii(0)/	/raa(0)chaa(0)/
a royal	a queen	a king
ภาคี	ทวิภาคี	พหุภาคี
/phaa(0)khii(0)/	/ta(1)wi(3)-	/pa(3)hu(1)-
ally	paa(0)kii(0)/	paa(0)kii(0)/
	bi-allies	multi-allies

The lexemic derivation of adverbs in Thai, therefore, produces the outcomes that are structurally loose. An adverb, while being treated as a single unit in the sentence, can be disintegrated. For example, ใน-ทันเอง-เดียวกัน/naj(0)-tham(0)n@@ng(0)-diiaw(0)kan(0)/ (similarly or in the same way) can be delexemicalised as represented by the dashes. In other words, the integrated lexemes are more realised as separable units within the same lexemic boundary than as a closely-tied single unit. By comparison, derivational adverbs in English are treated as a single unit and constitute the adverb class.

The derivational differences of adverbs in English and Thai are problematic to Thai learners of English in a number of respects. First, being unfamiliar with *fixed* derivations (i.e. the addition of -ly, -wise, -wards, a- to different word classes),

²⁸ The inflectional prefixes and suffixes are shown in italics.

learners may find problems in mastering a full realisation of derivational processes. This may become more serious if the learners are encountering the *root-based* derivation of adverbs. The root-based derivation means creating an adverb from an adjectival stem or root, or from a semantic cognate.

For adjectival roots, the adverb of 'economic' is formed by adding -ally instead of only -ly; the adverb of 'primary' is derived by the change of -y into -ily, whereas the adverbial forms of many adjectival stems are created by only adding -ly such as lastly, normally, frequently, socially. With respect to semantic cognates, the verb 'interest' can be transformed into both 'interestedly' and 'interestingly'; 'doubt' is changed into 'doubtfully' while negativised as 'undoubtedly', not 'undoubtfully'; 'willing' is changed into 'willingly' while negativised as 'unwillingly.' In part, these involve the participle-based derivations of adverbs (Ehrlich and Murphy, 1976)²⁹. The semantics of adverbs related to their forms are the area that is not covered in the present grammar (cf. Kaplan, 1995; Master, 1996). As a result, learners' errors are commonly found in this aspect.

Second, as adverbs in Thai are treated as loosely constructed units and appear more like adverbial PPs or PrepNPs than adverbs, Thai learners are likely to apply locutions in the place of adverbs. In other words, they may often substitute an adverbial PP or PrepNP where its equivalent form of adverb is possible. Although such a replacement does not necessarily generate grammatical errors, it may result in a marked version of the adverb under consideration (Greenbaum, 1969) and consequently reduce the stylistic quality of the text or utterance in which it appears.

Functions

The incompatibility in this area seems to be related to the function of adverbs to express a single syntactic constituent. In English, adverbs as being single units can be quite freely juxtaposed (either pre-posed or post-posed) to or dissociated from

²⁹ 'Interest' and 'doubt' can both function as both noun and verb, but 'will' can only function as noun.

the unit modified, creating or reducing the explicitness of modification. Thus, they may modify both a single and an extended unit in the clause or, in other words, have any of the adjunctive, subjunctive, disjunctive, or conjunctive features.

On the other hand, due to their lexemically extended characteristics, adverbs in Thai express only a larger syntactic structure. This is to the exception of mono-lexemic adverbs, post-posed lexemic reduplications, and circumposed lexemic additions that may be juxtaposed with, and hence explicitly modify, a noun, adjective or adverb³⁰. To put this in another way, their adjunctive and subjunctive functions are confined to some environments (see above), whereas they can serve more freely as disjuncts and conjuncts.

The hypothetical difficulty of learners in this regard is the lack of realisation and confidence to freely position adverbs to focus the modification on different syntactic units. This is due to the variations of the two languages in terms of the functions of adverbs which partially result from their derivational processes and lexical forms, and inherent limitations on their placement. Additionally, because of post-modifications in Thai, learners are more likely to employ it when English permits both pre- and post-modifications. To a considerable extent, this deteriorates their *variability* of syntactic patterns and emphases achievable through changes in adverbial placements around the context of the modified units.

Positions

The possible positions of adverbs in English variably depend on the syntactic structure of the sentence, and adverbs may be theoretically moved freely within the structure without producing ungrammatical or anomalous sentences. In other words, they can take any of the initial, medial, or final positions due to their morphological forms that are treated as a single unit. In comparison, because of the extended lexemic outcomes of

³⁰ Such a functional juxtaposition does not, nevertheless, exist for a verb (see above).

adverbs, the Thai language enjoys only sentence-initial and sentence-final mobility, with the medial position rarely applicable, if any.

In Thai, although some adverbs may be placed at either sentence-initial or sentence-final positions, the equal occurrence of both positions is quite restricted to some adverbs (e.g. modal), and this may require modifications in their lexemic constituents. Otherwise, the movement of adverbs will result in ungrammaticality. Generally, adverbs are placed at the final position.

Given the above differences, Thai learners of English may have difficulty with English adverbs in initial and medial positions as these are not frequently employed in Thai. The most problematic area is hypothetically medial positions as they vary from the structure of the sentence. As mentioned earlier, adverbs in English may move within the cluster of modal, AUX and main verb, as well as in infinitive or prepositional complements. Furthermore, they may move within the environment of the modified units. These highly varied positions of English adverbs may confuse Thai learners about the position at which they could and should place them.

Suggestions on the Teaching of Adverbs in English

From the discussions above, it becomes apparent that Thai learners of English, particularly those at an advanced level, need to be equipped with the knowledge of English adverbs in three dimensions: forms, functions, and positions. To begin with, as the Thai language does not have fixed forms of adverbial transformations, learners should then be taught about adverbial variants of a nominal, verbal, or adjectival cognate and how it evolves morphologically. Moreover, as shown previously, morphological adverbs may involve adjectival stems or roots, or semantic cognates. Such idiosyncrasies in transformations should also be pinpointed.

After learners have adequately acquired an understanding of adverbial transformations in English, the next issue to which

their attention should be drawn is the functions of adverbs. As this paper may suggest, the teaching of adverbs which traditionally emphasises their use to further express an NP, VP, PP, or the whole clause is inadequate; that is, learners will be taught to only understand the functions of adverbs at a superficial level. The dimension that is of overriding significance is the semantic interrelationships between an adverbial position in relation to a VP, PP, or clause. The discussion above shows that the semantics of an adverb and its proximity to the modified unit have an impact on its modificational boundary. Furthermore, the semantics of adverbs is closely related to their connotations, the degree of use or expression, the positions, and the structural and semantic property of the clause modified by them. These *higher-order* relationships should then become the main focus of the teaching of adverbs in English.

In addition, all possible positions, especially the medial ones which are hypothetically the most problematic area, should be elucidated. This, however, does not mean that learners should or must place adverbs in all possible positions, as this may result in overproductions, but that they should realise that these are the positions at which they may possibly choose to place adverbs so that meanings may gradually evolve in sentences. In essence, using adverbs—from the aspects of forms, functions, and positions—involves the choice to be made pertaining to adverbs and their forms, degree of modification, and positions relative to the modified unit.

With all the above in their linguistic and communicative repertoire, learners should then be encouraged to analyse and apply stylistic, semantic, and syntactic variability of the use of adverbs in various types of written and spoken discourse so that they realise the degree of *enoughness* and *appropriateness* in different circumstances. According to Swales (1990), genre was found to influence the production of surface features. Besides, Connor (1990, 1996, cited in Shaw and Liu, 1998) found that the choice of grammatical features was governed by topic and task. Therefore, there is usually a preferred pattern or style in different text types, and the realisation of and the ability to apply this in language use will be of great benefit to learners.

Conclusions

“What you say is found not in the noun but in what you add to qualify the noun....The noun, the verb, and the main clause serve merely as the base on which meaning will rise....The modifier is the essential part of any sentence” (Erskine 1946, cited in Graves 1984: 111).

Perhaps due to the belief that “adverbials are the most peripheral element in clause structure, ..., are usually syntactically if not semantically optional” (Hoye 1997: 142), adverbs are a syntactic aspect in the English grammar which has been least explored. They often are covered in terms of their surface morphological derivations, coexistence with the modal, and sentential positions (e.g. Hoye 1997; Master 1996). More problematically, learners’ full mastery of adverbs in English might have never been aspired as they are “the most difficult word class to grasp” (Master, 1996: 270). The findings in this study reveal that difficulties for Thai learners of English (or at a broader scope, for learners whose first language is lexemic one) are hypothetically found in all aspects--forms, functions, and positions.

Emphases on the areas mentioned above are necessary, particularly for advanced learners of English. In language-test taking, for example, learners are frequently required to demonstrate “the range of vocabulary they can use and the precision with which meanings and attitudes can be expressed” (IELTS Annual Review 2001-2002: 8), and the ability to use adverbs can be seen as one of the effective means to show their linguistic competence in this respect.

Accordingly, rethinks about the present curriculum on the teaching and learning of adverbs should be made on a number of issues. First, the deep structure of adverbs, in Chomskyan sense, as opposed to their surface forms; their functions in modifying different parts of speech; their syntactic mobility, need to be explicated. Second, relationships among the three aspects are equally important, and learners should be impregnated with an understanding of such relationships.

The above issues could altogether lead to a larger issue of the teaching practices which mainly focus on morphological,

semantic, or syntactic features of a second language as if they were separable from one another. This paper indicates, from an analysis of adverbs in English, that the detachment of morphology or syntax from its semantics will deprive students of fully understanding and using a second language, and further research on the convergence of the three areas is highly needed.

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