

SOME ASPECTS OF THAI SYNTAX

by

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requirements for the degree

MASTERS OF ARTS

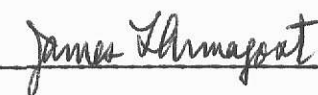
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Introduction

There are two main purposes for this paper. First, I have tried to write a basic transformational/generative grammar of Thai, which is a relatively new field of study. Secondly, this paper is intended to be used as a reference for Thai syntax for my students who major in English. Supposedly they will be able to see the structural differences between English and Thai sentences analyzed transformationally, and this will help them both in studying these two languages and in their teaching careers.

The paper provides some aspects of Thai syntax starting from tense/aspect, negatives, and questions, and gradually moving to more complex structures including relative clauses. I also discuss certain common sentences whose correct analysis is not entirely clear.

Section I : Tense/Aspect

There are at least two reasons for taking tense/aspect as the place to begin. First, this section provides kernel structures of sentences for those who have no acquaintance with the language, and second it forms some foundation for what follows in the later sections.

Consider the following data:

1.1 / khaw du: ti:wi: /

he watch T.V.

" a) He watches T.V. "

" b) He watched T.V. "

1.2 / khaw kamlan du: ti:wi: /

he prog. watch T.V.

" He is watching T.V. "

1.3 / khaw ca du: ti:wi: /

he fut. watch T.V.

" He will watch T.V. "

1.4 / khaw ca kamlan du: ti:wi: /

he fut. prog. watch T.V.

" He will be watching T.V. "

Sentence 1.1 : Comparing it with the other sentences, no tense/aspect marker can be seen in the surface structure. Without any adverbs of time in the sentence, it is ambiguous. The sentence can be interpreted as present or past tense as in the translation (a) and (b). To disambiguate this sentence, an adverb is needed.

1.5 / khaw du: ti:wi: thukwan /

he watch T.V. everyday

" He watches T.V. everyday. "

1.6 / khaw du: ti:wi: m4:a\wa:n /

he watch T.V. yesterday

" He watched T.V. yesterday. "

Sentence 1.2 : / kamlan / is the aspect marker of progressive. There are three possible progressive aspects: progressive at present, in the future and past. The present and past are identified by adverbs and the future is indicated by an additional tense marker / ca / right in front of / kamlan /, plus optional adverbs.

1.7 / khaw kamlan du: ti:wi: di:ani: /
 he prog. watch T.V. right now

" He is watching T.V. right now. "

1.8 / khaw kamlan du: ti:wi: m̄:a\wa:n yen /
 he prog. watch T.V. yesterday evening

" He was watching T.V. yesterday evening. "

1.9 / khaw ca kamlan du: ti:wi: phun\ni: /
 he fut. prog. watch T.V. tomorrow

" He will be watching T.V. tomorrow. "

Sentence 1.3 : / ca / is the tense marker for future. As already mentioned, / ca / itself with some kind of verbs such as / set / " complete, finish " indicates that the actions will be completed in the future.

1.10 / khaw ca du: ti:wi: set to:nba:y /
 he fut. watch T.V. finish in the afternoon

" He will finish watching T.V. in the afternoon. "

At this point, one thing that can be concluded is that either adverbs or tense/aspect markers are used to indicate time of action. For sentences that depend only on adverbs to signify tenses, there will be two possible analyses of the structure. The first one is that there is no tense/aspect marker at all in the deep structure. The other one is that there is a tense/aspect marker in the deep structure and whatever it is, it is deleted by a transformation so that it does not show up in the surface structure.

The first analysis is probably simpler, so phrase structure rules

to cover all the data that has been already given will be:

- 1.11 a) S ----> NP VP (Adv.)
 b) VP ----> (Tns.) V (NP)
 c) Tns. --> (ca) (kamlan)

Rules developing NP will be given below in section IV. Rule (c) depends on the usual convention that in such situations at least one element must be chosen. As long as we group / ca / and / kamlan / as elements for a higher unit, this is the only way to avoid awkward rules such as :

Tns. ----> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{ca} \text{ (kamlan)} \\ \text{kamlan} \end{array} \right\}.$

One thing that should be worked out now is adverbs. The correct analysis of adverbs is a difficult and complicated topic. For the purpose of this paper, only what is relevant is going to be dealt with.

- 1.12 / khaw pai ba:n\ mɛ̃:a\wa:n /
 he go house yesterday
 " He went home yesterday. "

- 1.13 / mɛ̃:a\wa:n khaw pai ba:n\
 yesterday he go house
 " Yesterday, he went home. "

- 1.14 * / ba:n\ khaw pai mɛ̃:a\wa:n /
 house he go yesterday
 " Home he went yesterday. "

/ ba:n\ / " home " and / mɛ̃:a\wa:n / " yesterday " are adverbs of sentence 1.12 . / mɛ̃:a\wa:n / is preposed in sentence 1.13 which is still grammatical, but if / ba:n\ / " home " is preposed in 1.14, it is ungrammatical in Thai.

Structurally there are two kinds of adverbs, namely adverbs dominated by S which can be preposed and adverbs dominated by VP which can not be preposed. This fact answers why 1.13 is grammatical but 1.14 is not.

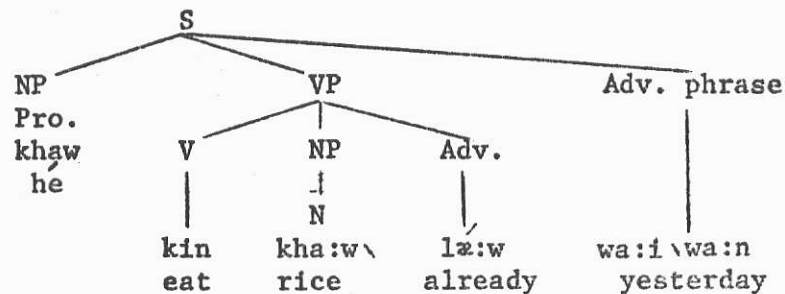
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Adverbs can be classified as adverbs of time, place, reason, manner, etc. The kind of adverbs that can be preposed may vary from language to language. For example, in Thai just adverbs of reason and time can be preposed.

The adverb / lɛ:w /, translated as "already" by Warotamasikkhadit (1972), very often occurs with semantic past time. / lɛ:w / has the position under VP only. Example:

- 1.15 / khaw kin kha:w\ lɛ:w mɛ:a\wa:n /
 he eat rice already yesterday
 " He ate rice yesterday. "

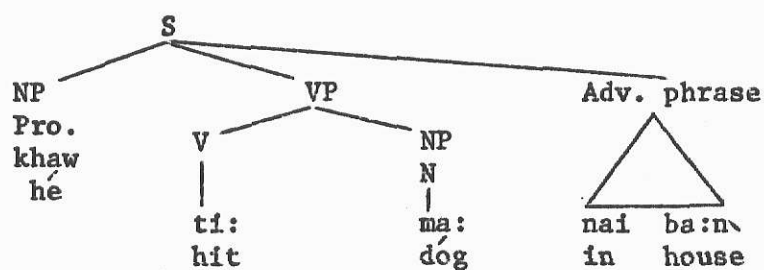


The claim that / lɛ:w / can not be dominated by S is based on the fact that it never occurs in the front of a sentence. In other words, adverbs dominated by VP can not be moved up to be dominated by S.

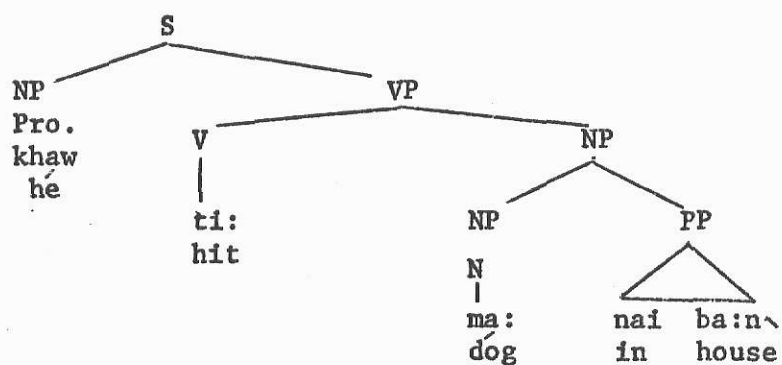
But can sentence adverbs occur dominated by VP? Consider the following sentences and deep structures.

- 1.16 / khaw ti: ma: nai ba:n\ /
 he hit dog in house
 " a) He hit the dog in the house. "
 " b) He hit the dog in the house. "

a)



b)



When the adverb phrase / nai ba:n\ / is dominated by VP as in (b), it can not be preposed. Rather it functions as, and presumably derives from, a relative clause : $\left[\begin{array}{c} / \text{ ma: } (\text{ thi:} \backslash) \text{ yu: } \text{ nai } \text{ ba:n} \backslash / \\ \text{NP} \qquad \text{dog} \qquad \text{which} \qquad \text{be} \qquad \text{in} \qquad \text{house} \qquad \text{NP} \end{array} \right]$

" the dog that is in the house " .

Section II : Modals and Position of Modals in Sentences

Thai has the following modal verbs :

- 2.1 a) / sa:ma:t\ / " can; be able to "
 b) / ?a:t / " may " (possibility)
 c) / khon / " might " (weaker possibility)
 d) / khu:an / " should "
 e) / tɔ:ŋ\ / " must "

More than one consecutive modal is allowed,² for example:

- 2.2 a) / khon sa:ma:t\ / " might be able to "
 b) / tɔ:ŋ\ sa:ma:t\ / " must be able to "
 c) / ?a:t tɔ:ŋ\ / " may have to "

In sentences without the tense markers / ca / and / kamlan /, modals precede other verbs. For example:

- 2.3 / khaw ?a:t ta:y phun'ni: /
 he may die tomorrow
 " He may die tomorrow. "

- 2.4 / khaw ?a:t tɔ:ŋ\ ta:y phun'ni: /
 he may must die tomorrow
 " He may have to die tomorrow. "

Modals can either precede or follow the future marker, with a characteristic difference in meaning. Modals following / ca / are within its scope semantically:

- 2.5 a) / khaw ca sa:ma:t\ dɔ:n /
 he fut. can walk
 " He will be able to walk. "
 b) / khaw ca tɔ:ŋ\ kamlan dɔ:n /
 he fut. must prog. walk
 " He will have to be walking. "

Modals preceding tense markers include them in their scope:

2.6 a) / khaw sa:ma:t\ ca də:n /
 he can fut. walk

" He is able to walk. " (future)

b) / khaw ?a:t kamlaŋ də:n /
 he may prog. walk

" He may be walking. "

c) / khaw khu:an ca kamlaŋ də:n /
 he should fut. prog. walk

" He should be walking. " (future)

(He has an obligation to walk.)

Since tense markers precede verbs and so do modals, I will include them within the same node " Aux ". To modify the rules to generate all the sentences so far, they will be as follows:

2.7 1) S ----> NP (Aux.) VP (Adv.)

2) Aux. ----> (M)(Fut.)(M)(Prog.)

Notice that rule 2.7.2 is not a very good rule in the sense that it is clumsy, but this is the way it is when modals are treated as a separate kind of word from verbs. Later on there will be another proposal to avoid this clumsiness.

Section III : The Positions of the Negative Marker in Sentences

The negative marker in a sentence without modals comes directly in front of the verb if the sentence has no tense markers; otherwise it is before the progressive aspect marker / *kamlaŋ* / but after the future tense marker / *ca* /

3.1 / *khaw mai\ kin kha:w*
 he neg. eat rice

" He did(does) not eat rice. "

3.2 / *khaw mai\ kamlaŋ kin kha:w*
 he neg. prog. eat rice

" He is not eating rice. "

3.3 / *khaw ca mai\ kin kha:w*
 he fut. neg. eat rice

" He will not eat rice. "

3.4 / *khaw ca mai\ kamlaŋ kin kha:w*
 he fut. neg. prog. eat rice

" He will not be eating rice. "

In a sentence with modals, the negative marker can either precede or follow the modals, with differences in meaning. To see the contrast the data will be given in pairs A and B, with varieties of tenses/aspects.

3.5A / *khaw mai\ sa:ma:t\ nɔ:n* /
 he neg. can sleep

" He is not able to sleep. "

B / *khaw sa:ma:t\ mai\ nɔ:n* /
 he can neg. sleep

" He is able to not sleep. "

3.6 A₁ / *khaw ca mai\ khu:an nɔ:n* /
 he fut. neg. should sleep

" He will not have an obligation to sleep. "

A₂ / *khaw mai\ khu:an ca nɔ:n* /
 he neg. should fut. sleep

" He does not have an obligation to sleep (in the future). "

B. / khaw khu:an ca mai\ nɔ:n /
 he should fut. neg. sleep

" He has an obligation not to sleep (in the future). "

3.7 A. / khaw mai\ tɔ:n\ kamlaŋ nɔ:n /
 he neg. must prog. sleep

" He does not have an obligation to be sleeping. "

B. / khaw tɔ:n\ mai\ kamlaŋ nɔ:n /
 he must neg. prog. sleep

" He must not be sleeping. "

3.8 A₁ / khaw ca mai\ ?a:t kamlaŋ nɔ:n /
 he fut. neg. may prog. sleep

" It will not be possible for him to be sleeping. "

A₂ / khaw mai\ ?a:t ca kamlaŋ nɔ:n /
 he neg. may fut. prog. sleep

" It is not possible for him to be sleeping (in the future). "

B. / khaw ?a:t ca mai\ kamlaŋ nɔ:n /
 he may fut. neg. prog. sleep

" It is possible for him to not be sleeping (in the future). "

Modified phrase structure rules to include negative sentences will
 be as follows:

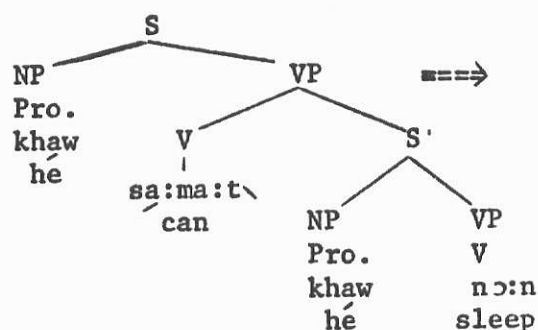
- 3.9
- 1) S ----> NP (Aux.) VP (Adv.)
 - 2) Aux. ----> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} (M) (Fut.) (Neg.) (M) \\ (Neg.) (M) (Fut.) \end{array} \right\} (Prog.)$

Rule 3.9.2 is clumsy and highly suspicious. There is hopefully a
 more enlightening analysis of the data presented so far.

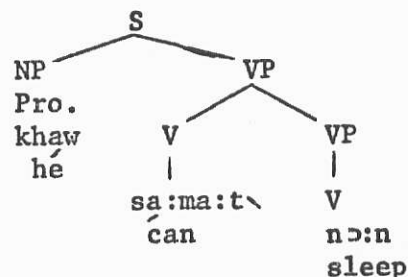
Unlike the modal auxiliaries of English, it is possible to claim that
 in Thai modals are true verbs syntactically in all respects. If this is
 true, sentences with modals will be derived from deep structures with
 embedded clauses. Take, for example, / khaw sa:ma:t\ nɔ:n /

"He can sleep." This will have deep structure 3.10(a), and after Equi-NP Deletion rule applies we will get the surface structure 3.10(b).

3.10 a)

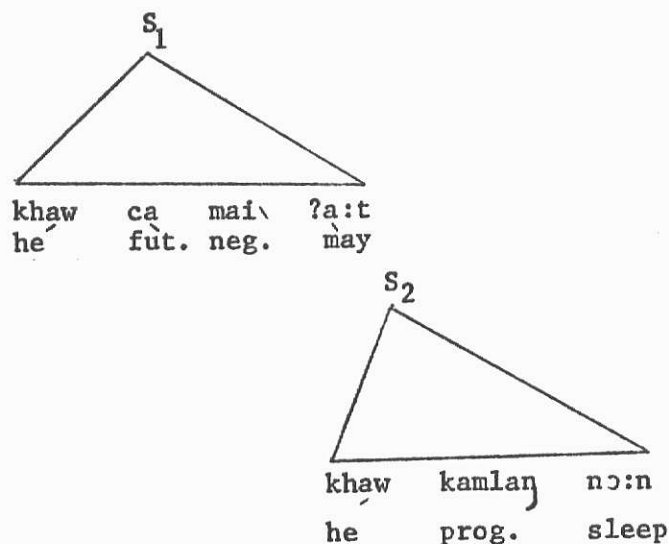


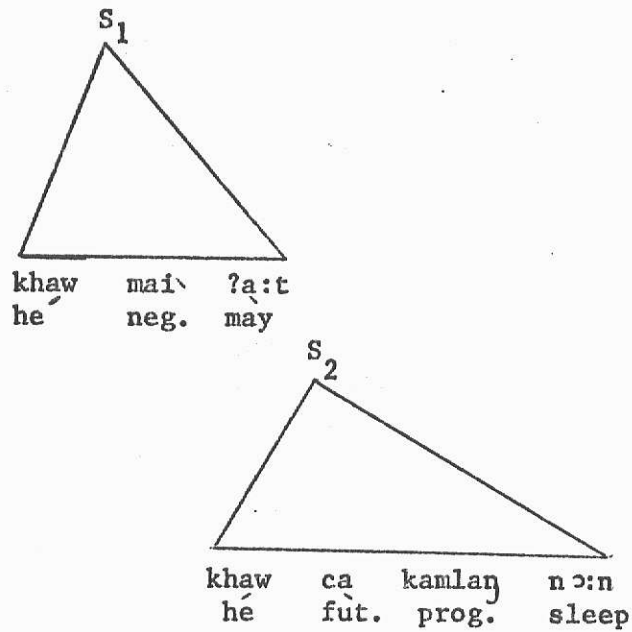
b)



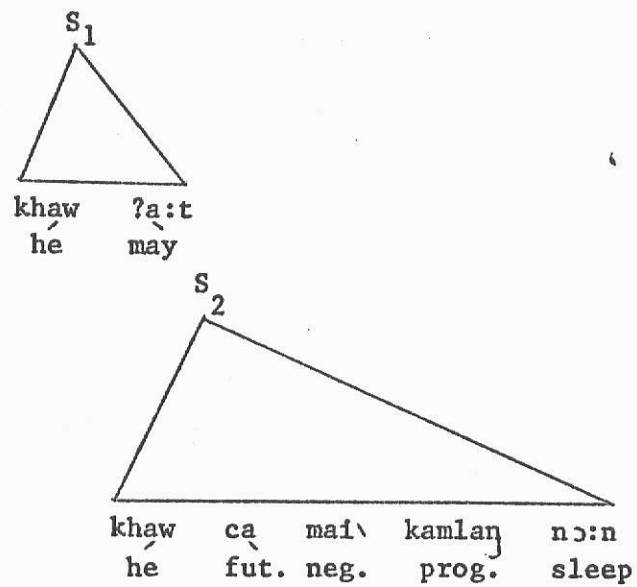
Then sentences that have various combinations of modals, negation and tense markers like those in A₁, A₂ and B will also have embedded clauses in the deep structures. We can look at the deep structures of data 3.8 as an example:

3.11

Deep structure A₁

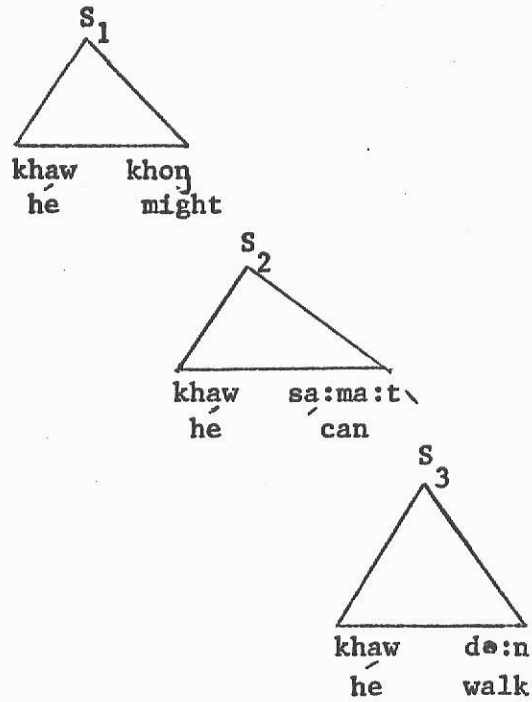
Deep structure A₂

Deep structure B



Using the same analysis, sentences that have more than one modal, such as / khaw khon sa:ma:t\ dɔ:n / " He might be able to walk. " he might can walk will have the following deep structure:

3.12



The later analysis greatly reduces the clumsiness of the phrase structure rules. If modals in Thai are really true verbs, then phrase structure rules 3.9 above which account for the whole data but rather awkwardly can be forgotten.

Section IV : Questions

Two different kinds of questions will be discussed in this paper. The first type structurally looks like an affirmative or negative sentence with one or more words indicating question at the end. I avoid calling these words "question particals", for the following analysis will suggest that they are words left from fuller sentences undergoing deletion.

4.1 a) / khaw ?a:n nanst: rɿ: /
he read book or

" Does he read books? "

b) / khaw mai\ ?a:n nanst: rɿ: /
he neg. read book or

" Does he not read books? "

4.2 / khaw ?a:n nanst: rɿ:mai\ /
he read book or neg.

" Does he read books? "

4.3 / khaw ?a:n nanst: rɿ:plaw /
he read book or neg.

" Does he read books or not? "

4.4 / khaw ca\ mai\ ?a:n nanst: rɿ:plaw /
he fut. neg. read book or neg.

" Will he not read books or not? "

4.5 a) / khaw kamlan ?a:n nanst: chai\rɿ:mai\ (chai\mai³) /
he prog. read book yes or no

" Is it true that he is reading a book? "

b) / khaw mai\ kamlan ?a:n nanst: chai\rɿ:mai\ (chai\mai³) /
he neg. prog. read book yes or no

" Is it true that he is not reading a book? "

First let's look at the differences between the words which mean "neg." : / plaw / and / mai\ /. Semantically they mean the same

but syntactically they are different. In general, it is clear that / mai\ / functions as an adverb within sentences to negate verbs, verb phrases, sentences, and so forth. / plaw / is more like an interjection, used alone or sentence initially to negate a whole sentence or some part of it. For example:

4.6 / khaw chɔ:p\ lék rɛ: /
 he like Lek or
 " Does he like Lek? "

Possible answer:

1. / plaw; khaw mai\ chɔ:p\ lék /
 neg. he neg. like Lek
 " No, he does not like Lek. "

2. / plaw; khaw chɔ:p\ yai /
 neg. he like Yai
 " No; he likes Yai. "

Here / plaw / could serve as a one-word answer. But in the fuller answer 1, / mai\ / negates all or part of the proposition " he likes Lek " of the question.

Just glancing through the data, it looks like an addition of some lexical item(s) to either negative or affirmative sentences makes questions. But not every additional item can go with every kind of sentence, and this requires the statement of certain restrictions. For example:

4.7 * / khaw mai\ ?a:n nanst: rɛ:mai\ /
 he neg. read book or neg.

Looking further, however, we see additional data that may be relevant here:

In the dictionary / rɛ: / is a conjunction that means " or ". This implies that data 4.1-4.4 may be conjoined sentences of which some

parts are left out in surface structure. If this is the case, sentence 4.1 can be seen as shortened versions of:

4.8 a) / khaw ?a:n nanst: rɛ: khaw mai\ ?a:n nanst: /
 he read book or he neg. read book

" He reads books or he does not read books. "

b) / khaw mai\ ?a:n nanst: rɛ: khaw ?a:n nanst: /
 he neg. read book or he read book

" He does not read books or he reads books. "

Based on this analysis, apparently Thai has no true yes-no questions. Instead it makes use of reduced conjoined clauses, counting on context to make clear when it is that speakers are supplying information or asking for it.

In sentence 4.2, / rɛ:mai\ / is the part that is left from the conjunction and negative clause. Semantically " or " can never conjoin two indentical clauses, so the clause before / rɛ:mai\ / has to be affirmative. Sentence 4.2 can be expanded as:

4.9 / khaw ?a:n nanst: rɛ: khaw mai\ ?a:n nanst: /
 he read book or he neg. read book

" He reads books or he does not read books."

In short, / rɛ:mai\ / is just / rɛ: / followed by a reduced form of the clause following / rɛ: / in the structure underlying sentence 4.1(a)

/ rɛ:plaw / can not be the part that is left from * / khaw ?a:n nanst: rɛ: khaw plaw ?a:n nanst: / because this source is ungrammatical. Rather we want / khaw ?a:n nanst: rɛ: plaw; khaw mai\ ?a:n nanst: /, and the function of / plaw / here is the same as what was mentioned above. Presumably then in 4.3 and 4.4 we again have a form resulting from optional deletion of the second clause in the underlying structure.

As for / $\text{chai} \backslash \text{r}\ddot{\text{f}}:\text{mai} \backslash$ /, this part of sentence is obviously a separate phrase from the preceding clause. It also is interjectional in effect, and means something like " Is what is mentioned before right or wrong? " Evidently no matter whether the initial sentence is negative or affirmative, it can be followed by / $\text{chai} \backslash \text{r}\ddot{\text{f}}:\text{mai} \backslash$ /.

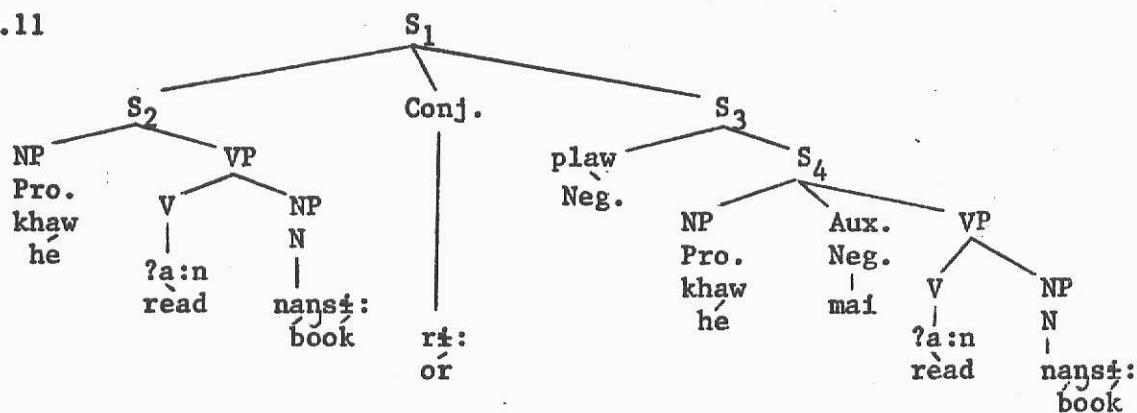
Questions in Thai show no inversion as in English, but do undergo optional deletion of the sort posited by Langacker (1969) for English.

The rule for Thai is:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 4.10 & X & \left[\begin{array}{c} A \\ s \end{array} \right] & \text{r}\ddot{\text{f}}:(\text{plaw}) & \left[\begin{array}{c} B - (\text{neg.}) - C \\ s \end{array} \right] \\
 & & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 \\
 & & & & & & & & \implies \text{opt.} \\
 & & 1 & 2 & 3 & \left(\begin{array}{l} \text{a. 4} \\ \text{b. 6} \end{array} \right) & \text{c} & \text{c} & \text{c}
 \end{array}$$

For rule 4.10 I assume a rule of semantic interpretation to rule out sentences with deep structures of this type having two identical clauses separated by / $\text{r}\ddot{\text{f}}:$ / which inherently contrasts or opposes two different entities. Furthermore the rule can apply to two different trees, one with / plaw / and the other one without / plaw /. The rule leaves the first of two clauses intact, either leaving / plaw / or substituting / $\text{mai} \backslash$ / in that position, and deletes the entire second clause. For example:

4.11



	1	2	3	4	5	6
I	1	2	3	¢	¢	¢
II	1	2	¢ + 5	¢	¢	¢
III	1	2	¢	¢	¢	¢

The transformation allows three possible answers:

I. When case (a) is the choice of the transformation.

/ khaw ?a:n nansɿ: rɿ: play /
 he read book or neg.

" He reads books or no; he does not read books. "

(Does he read books or no? = Does he read books?)

II. When case (b) is the choice of the transformation.

/ khaw ?a:n nansɿ: rɿ: mai \ /
 he read book or neg.

" Does he read books or not? "

(Does he read books?)

III. When both (a) and (b) are optionally not chosen in the transformation.

/ khaw ?a:n nansɿ: rɿ: /
 he read book or

" Does he read books? "

Another type of question is comparable to what we call in English "question word questions". To understand the structure of these questions, some data are provided in column A with possible answers in column B.

4.12

Column A

1. / khaw ti: ?alai /
he hit what
" What did he hit? "
2. / khai ti: ma: /
who hit dog
" Who hit the dog? "
3. / khaw ti: ma: thammai /
he hit dog why
" Why did he hit the dog? "
4. / khaw ti: ma: yanlai /
he hit dog how
" How did he hit the dog? "
5. / khaw ti: ma: khɔ:ŋkhai /
he hit dog poss. who
" Whose dog did he hit? "

Column B

1. / khaw ti: ma: /
he hit dog
" He hit a dog. "
2. / dek ti: ma: /
child hit dog
" A child hit the dog. "
3. / khaw ti: ma: phrɔ̌ mən son /
he hit dog because it wild
" He hit the dog because it was wild. "

4. / khaw ti: ma: du:ay\ maí /
 he hit dog with rod
 " He hit the dog with a rod. "

5. / khaw ti: ma: khɔ:ŋ khaw /
 he hit dog poss. he
 " He hit his own dog. "

Apparently question words just simply take the place of the questioned elements without any structural changes. I will take advantage of the fact that every question word ends with the diphthong / -ai / by using this symbol as the question word marker in the underlying representation.

It is necessary to look at the structure of noun phrases in order to understand the position of / -ai / in the deep structure. Three types of NP will be analyzed here.

- 4.13 a) / ma: /
 dog
 " 1. a dog, the dog "
 2. dogs, the dogs
- b) / ma: lai tua /
 dog several C
 " several dogs "
- c) / ma: sɔ:ŋ tua /
 dog two C
 " two dogs "

When nouns occur without any quantifiers, as in 4.13(a), they are ambiguous as to number. Context often serves to sort out the intended meaning:

4.14 / khaw mɔ:ŋ du:an-?a:-thit /
 he look sun
 " He looked at the sun. "

Presumably the speaker intends " the sun " since there is only one sun in the solar system.

4.15 / khaw chɔ:p\ mɔ:ŋ phu:\yɪŋ /
 he like look girl

" He likes looking at girls. "

Presumably " girls " is intended, but perhaps " girl ".

If nouns occur with quantifiers of any type, as in as in 4.13(b) and 4.13(c), then certain classifiers for those nouns are needed. (The restrictions on which classifier(s) may be possible with various types of nouns will not be dealt with here, as this is irrelevant to the purposes of this thesis.

The node NP may thus be expanded as in 4.16.

4.16 NP ---> N (Quant.) C
 Quant. = quantifier including / ba:ŋ\ / " some ",
 / nɛŋ / " one " , etc.
 C = classifier

Along with rule 4.16 I assume one or more readjustment rules, which will spell out " C " phonologically according to the features of the head noun. For example:

4.17 a) [+ C] ---> tu:a / $\left[\begin{array}{l} + \text{animate} \\ - \text{human} \\ \vdots \\ \text{etc.} \end{array} \right]$ (Quant.) _____
 b) [+ C] ---> sɪŋ / $\left[\begin{array}{l} - \text{animate} \\ - \text{human} \\ \vdots \\ \text{etc.} \end{array} \right]$ (Quant.) _____

However, rule 4.16 appears wrong when " Quant. " is not selected, since then we find N alone and not NC. A good rule such as 4.18 can account

for the data very well but I avoid such a rule because further data dealing with NP will support a rule like 4.16.

4.18 NP $\rightarrow$ N (Quant. C)

For now, the data can be accounted by the following obligatory transformation.

4.19 Classifier Deletion:

X	-	N	-	C	-	Y
1		2		3		4
					$\Rightarrow$	oblig.
1		2		c		4

For questions I allow / - ai / as an optional element after the constituent " Quant. ". So the NP rule will be modified as:

4.20 NP $\rightarrow$ N (Quant.)(- ai) C

4.21 Question words will have the following deep structures:

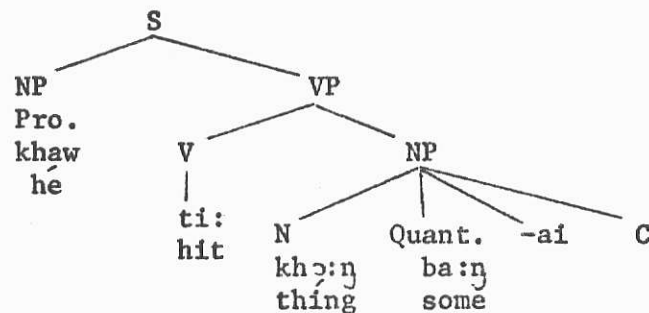
Column A	Column B
1. what (WH-some-thing)	1. / ?a-lai / (khɔːŋ - baːŋ - ai C) thing some
2. who (WH-some-one)	2. / khai / (khon - baːŋ - ai C) human some being
3. why (WH-some-reason)	3. / thammai / (heːtphon - baːŋ - ai C) reason some
4. how (WH-some-way)	4. / ,yaːŋlai / (withiː - baːŋ - ai C) way some
5. whose (WH-some-one's)	5. / khɔːŋkhai / (khɔːŋkhon - baːŋ - ai C) poss. human some being

- | | |
|--|---|
| 6. when
(WH-some-time) | 6. / mɛ:a\lai /
(we:la: - ba:n̩ - ai C)
time some |
| 7. at what time
(WH-some-specific time) | 7. / we:la:daɪ /
(chaphɔ̌ - we:la: - ba:n̩ - ai C)
specific time some |
| 8. which
(WH-some-specific thing) | 8. / sinnai /
(chaphɔ̌ - khɔ̌n̩ - ba:n̩ - ai C)
specific thing some |
| 9. where
(WH-some-place) | 9. / thi:\nai /
(sathə:nthi:\ - ba:n̩ - ai C)
place some |

Suppose we know that / khaw ti: khɔ̌n̩ ba:n̩ sin / " He hit
he hit thing some C

something. ", and we want to ask what he hit. The deep structure will be:

4.22



How we are going to get the right question word here is the task of morphological or readjustment " spelling " rules. In this case, of course, it is / ʔalai / " what ". Every question word derived by readjustment rules was already given in 4.21 in column B.

Some proposals about questions:

Consider the question:

- 4.23 / khaw ti: ma: thammaɪ /
he hit dog why

" Why did he hit the dog ? " , from the underlying:

- 4.28 / khaw ri:t\ sɿ:a\ sɔ:n tu:a thi:\ khaw chɔ:p\ /
 he iron shirt two C pro. he like
 " He ironed the two shirts that he likes. "

Notice that the classifier of the noun without quantifier followed by a relative clause is optional. Therefore rule 4.19 needs a condition saying if " Y " contains a sentence, the rule is optional.

4.29 Classifier Deletion (revised):

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 & & X & - & N & - & C & - & Y \\
 & & 1 & & 2 & & 3 & & 4 \\
 & & 1 & & 2 & & \phi & & 4 & \implies \\
 \text{Cond.:} & 1. & Y & \neq & \left[\begin{array}{c} W \\ S \end{array} \right] & - & Z, & \text{the rule is obligatory.} \\
 & 2. & Y & = & \left[\begin{array}{c} W \\ S \end{array} \right] & - & Z, & \text{the rule is optional.}
 \end{array}$$

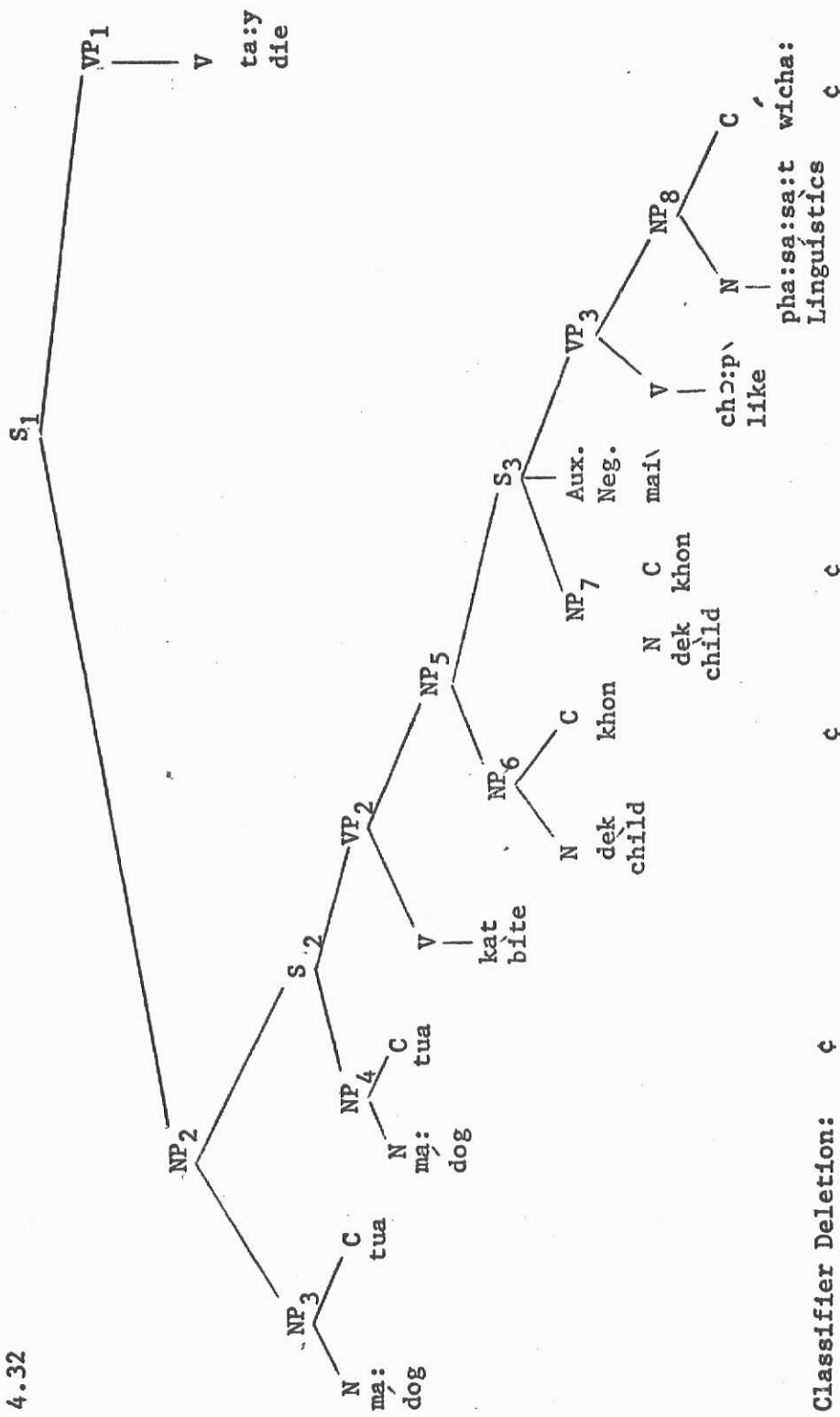
Since NP can be modified by a sentence, another rule for NP is 4.30.

4.30 $NP \longrightarrow NP \ S$

As in English, a relative clause transformation is needed for NP followed by a clause. The relative clause transformation is:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 4.31 & & X & - & NP & \left[\begin{array}{c} -Y & - & NP & - & Z \\ S & & & & S \end{array} \right] & - & X \\
 & & 1 & & 2 & & 3 & & 4 & & 5 & & 6 \\
 & & 1 & & 2 & \left[\begin{array}{c} 4 \\ + \text{ pro.} \end{array} \right] & 3 & & \phi & & 5 & & 6 & \implies \text{oblig.} \\
 \text{Cond. :} & 1. & 2=4 \\
 & 2. & \text{I assume noun phrases with and without classifier are identical.}
 \end{array}$$

4.32



Relative Clause -

Formation : $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ma:} \\ + \text{pro.} \end{array} \right]$

Readjustment Rule:

ma:	tua	thi:\	kat dek	mai\	chɔ:p\pha:sa:sa:t	ta:y
dog	C	pro.	bite child	neg.	like Linguistics	die

 $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{dek} \\ + \text{pro.} \end{array} \right]$

" The dog that bit the child that did not like Linguistics died. "

The classifier of NP₃ in 4.32 is not deleted by "Classifier Deletion" because the rule is optional when N is followed by a clause. If we do want it to apply to NP₃ on the last cycle before "Relative Clause Transformation" applied, this is also possible.

Now we can go back to question words that appear at the front of sentences and that are followed by / thi:\ /. Certainly the questions in A and B are related.

4.33 A. / khaw pai thi:\nai /
he go where

B. / thi:\nai thi:\ khaw pai /
where pro. he go

" Where did he go? "

4.34 A. / khaw chɔ:p\ khai /
he like who

B. / khai thi:\ khaw chɔ:p\ /
he pro. he like

" Who did he like? "

4.35 A. / khaw kin ya:nlai /
he eat how

B. / ya:nlai thi:\ khaw kin /
how pro. he eat

" How did he eat? "

4.36 A. / khaw chɔ:p\ sinnai /
he like which one

B. / sinnai thi:\ khaw chɔ:p\ /
which one pro. he like

" Which one did he like? "

4.37 A. / khaw ti: ma: khɔ:ŋkhai /
 he hit dog whose

B. / ma: khɔ:ŋkhai thi:\ khaw ti: /
 dog whose pro. he hit

" Whose dog did he hit? "

4.38 A. / khaw ti: ?alai /
 he hit what

B. / ?alai thi:\ khaw ti: /
 what prog. he hit

" What did he hit? "

It is not obvious how to derive B from A, but one possibility would be to derive B from the same source as the following sentences, by a rule optionally deleting parenthesized material.

4.39 / thi:\nai (khɛ: sathə:nthi:\) thi:\ khaw pai /
 where be place pro. he go

" Where was the place that he went? "; or perhaps:

" Where was it that he went? "

4.40 / khai (khɛ: khon) thi:\ khaw chɔ:p\ /
 who be person pro. he like

" Who is the person that he likes? ", or perhaps:

" Who is it that he likes? "

4. 41 / ya:ŋlai (khɛ: ?a:ka:n) thi:\ khaw kin /
 how be manner pro. he eat

" What is the manner that he eats? ", or perhaps:

" How is it that he eats ? "

4.42 / siŋnai (khɛ: siŋ) thi:\ khaw chɔ:p\ /
 which one be thing pro. he like

" Which one is the thing that he likes ? ", or perhaps:

" Which one is it that he likes? "

4.43 / ma: khɔ:ŋ khai (khɛ: ma:) thi:\ khaw ti: /
dog poss. who be dog pro. he hit

" Whose dog was the dog that he hit? ",or perhaps:

" Whose dog was it that he hit? "

4.44 / ʔalaɪ (khɛː sin) thɪː\ khaw tɪː /
 what be thing pro. he hit

" What was the thing that he hit? ",or perhaps:

" What was it that he hit? "

The transformation optionally deleting the material in the parentheses will be:

4.45 BE-NP Deletion:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{X-af} \\ \text{NP} \end{array} \right] & - & \text{kh4:} & \text{NP} & - & \text{thi:\backslash} & - & \text{Y} \\ 1 & & & 2 & & 3 & & 4 \\ & & & & & & \Rightarrow & \text{opt.} \\ 1 & & & c & & 3 & & 4 \end{array}$$

To summarize, there are two processes accounting for the position of question words at the front of sentences when they are not supposed to be there:

a) by adverb preposing, as in: / thammai khaw ti: ma: /
 why he hit dog

from / khaw ti: ma: thammai / " Why did he hit a dog? "
 hé hit dog why

b) by selection of NP be NP S in the phrase structure rules, with

Relative Clause Formation followed by BE-NP Deletion, as in: / ?alai
what

thi:\ khaw ti: / from / ?alai khɛ: sin thi:\ khaw ti: /
pro. he hit what be thing pro. he hit

" What was the thing that he hit? "

Section V : Some Further Complex Sentence Structures

The reason that certain structures will be discussed here comes from the fact that they are highly used in the language and yet, to my knowledge, have not been successfully analyzed elsewhere.

It is quite often true that certain data can be solved using different methods, or in other words, can be interpreted several ways. Which analysis is right depends on empirical evidence. Of course what is put forth tentatively in this paper can not be guaranteed in any way as the best analysis, but at least I believe that what I say is reasonable and consistent with other facts about Thai.

There are complex sentences in Thai whose second verb is what I call a " Directional Verb " ⁴

5.1 / khaw nan\ loŋ /
he sit get down

" He sat down. "

5.2 / khaw ca\ wiŋ\ pai /
he fut. run go

" He will run away. "

5.3 / khaw kamlan\ də:n ma: /
he prog. walk come

" He is walking towards the speaker. "

5.4 / khaw yɨ:n\ khɨn\ /
he stand get up

" He stood up. " (active)

These directional verbs can themselves occur as the only verbs in sentences such as:

5.5 / khaw kamlan\ loŋ\ kraɗai /
he prog. get down stairs

" He is coming down the stairs. "

5.11 / khaw chu: mɛ: khɪn\/
 he raise hand get up

" He held his hand up. "

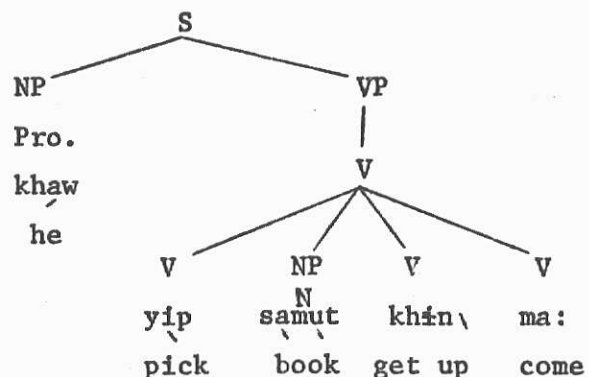
" He raised his hand up. "

5.12 / khaw lu:an nən ʔɔ:k ma: /
 he search- money get out come
 around

" He got the money out. "

The deep structure of example 5.10 would have to be:

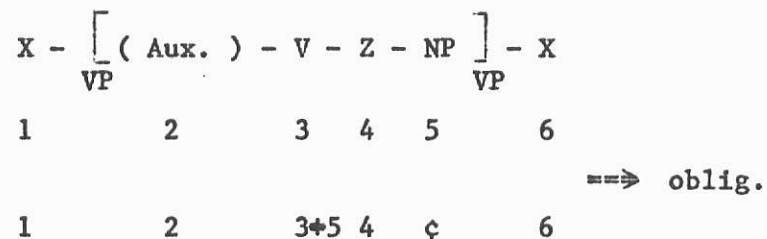
5.13



" He picked a book up. "

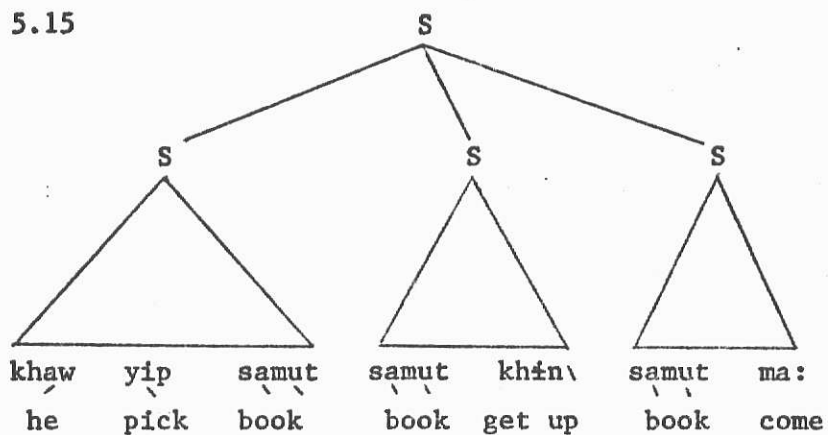
But 5.13 can not possibly be a deep structure. It is rather the result of some obligatory transformation saying that if an NP is present within VP, it must move to a position following the boxed V in structure 5.9.

5.14 Object Movement:



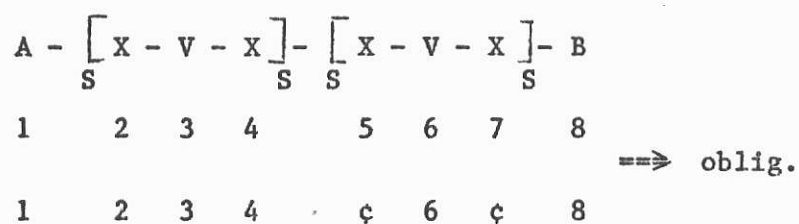
The other possibility is the claim that in deep structure we have conjoined sentences. For example, 5.10 might have the following tree.

5.15



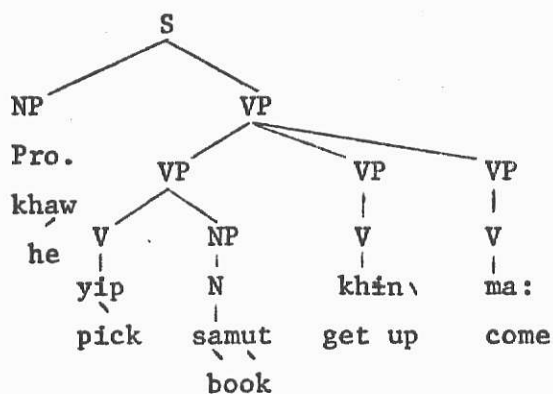
To get the surface form, there has to be an obligatory transformation to delete the identical elements in the later sentences. I will suggest something roughly like:

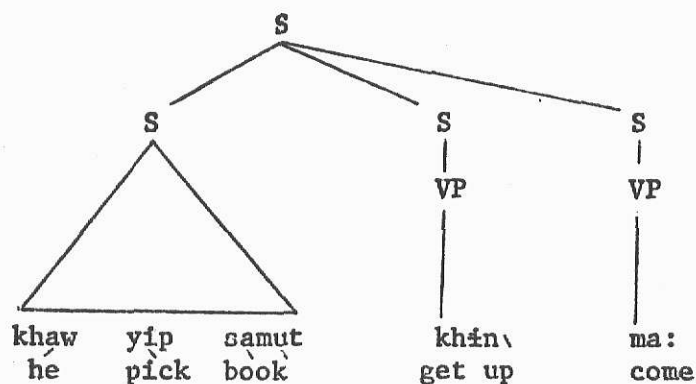
5.16 Sentence Reduction:



After transformation 5.16 has applied to the tree 5.15, the structure will look like 5.17.

5.17

OR



Negative versions of sentences of this type might cause a little confusion, because there appear to be two different negative forms. According to the rule of negative in the previous section, negation never comes after true verbs, but negation may show up before the directional verb.

5.18 a) Aff: / khaw nan\ lon /
 he sit get down

" He sat down. "

b) Neg: / khaw mai\ nan\ lon /
 he neg. sit get down

" He did not sit down. "

c) ? / khaw nan\ mai\ lon /
 he sit neg. get down

" He could not sit down. " (Suggesting that he had stiff legs.)

5.19 a) Aff: / khaw yɛ:n khin\ /
 he stand get up

" He stood up. "

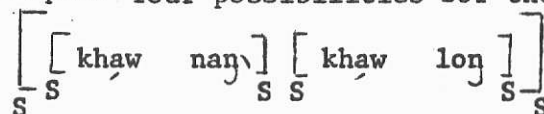
b) Neg: / khaw mai\ yɛ:n khin\ /
 he neg. stand get up

" He did not stand up. "

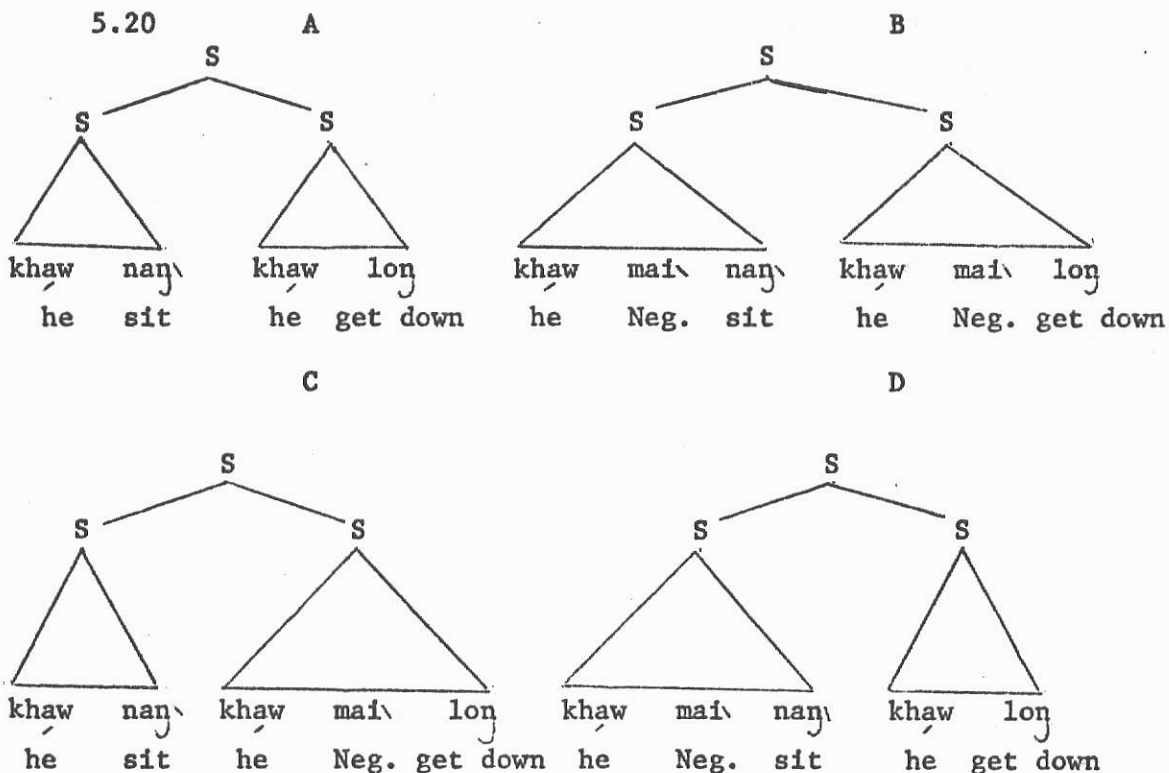
c) ? / khaw yɛ:n mai\ khin\ /
 he stand neg. get up

" He could not stand up. " (Suggesting that he had a cramp in his legs.)

If we want to follow the first analysis, we have to say that 5.18C and 5.19C are idioms listed idiosyncratically in the dictionary. But if we follow the second analysis we might expect four possibilities for the location of "Neg." in the structure



"He sat down.". They are:



A says "He sat down."

B says "He did not sit down."

C says "He sat but he did not get down."

(Perhaps he got stiff legs.)

D says "He did not sit but he got down."

(Perhaps he got down by tripping over something.)

After applying "Sentence Reduction", structures A, B, C become 5.20A, 5.20B, 5.20C respectively.

For D, " Sentence Reduction " may give the same resultant as with B.

Thus we may claim that / khaw mai nan lon / is two ways ambiguous,
he Neg. sit get down

with structure B or structure D as source.

The later analysis can also be used to account for similar sentences, but where the following verb is not directional.

5.21 a) / khaw d ə:n len\ /
he walk play

" He strolled around. "

b) / khaw te tɔ:y dek /
he kick punch child

" He kicked and punched a child. "

The crucial difference between 5.21 and the data above is that we have to allow the optional / 1st / " and " in the deep structures for 5.21. In other words the deep structures can be generated by $S \rightarrow (\text{ and }) S^n$. Then if " and " is not chosen in the deep structure, rule 5.16 can handle the data. But if " and " is chosen in the deep structure the transformation can not apply, and we end up with:

5.22 a) / khaw dən læ len \ /
 he walk and play
 " He walked and played. "

b) / khaw te dek lə tɔ:y dek /
he kick child and punch child
" He kicked a child and punched a child. "

Since 5.22b can optionally undergo Conjunction Reduction, just as the English paraphrase, resulting in :

c) / khaw te lə tɔ:y dek /
he kick and punch child
" He kicked and punched a child. "

In either case, the data in 5. 22 has a " sequential " AND interpretation, while the sentences of 5.21 are interpreted as having simultaneous actions.

Consider now the following data:

5.23 / khaw chɔ:p\ wai\ na:m /
he like swim

" He liked to swim. "

" He liked swimming. "

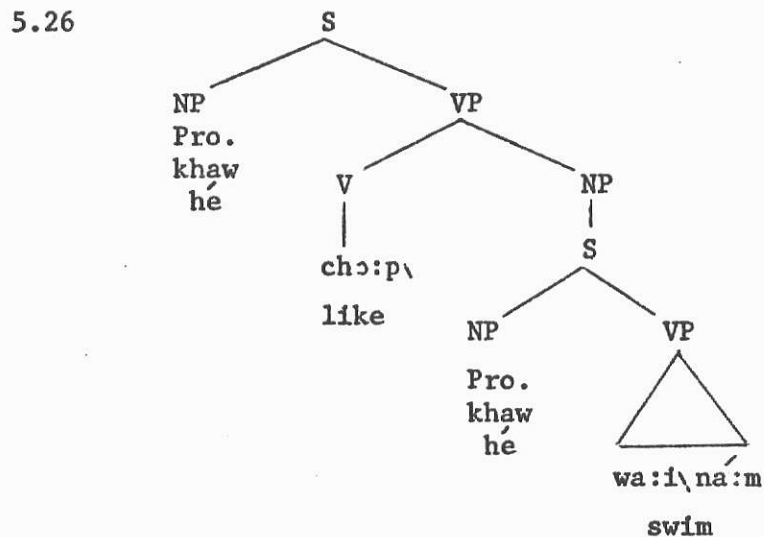
5.24 / khaw ya:k nɔ:n /
he want sleep

" He wanted to sleep. "

5.25 / khaw yut thamna:n /
he stop work

" He stopped working. "

The following deep structure will clearly explain the differences between 5.23-5.25 and the data above.

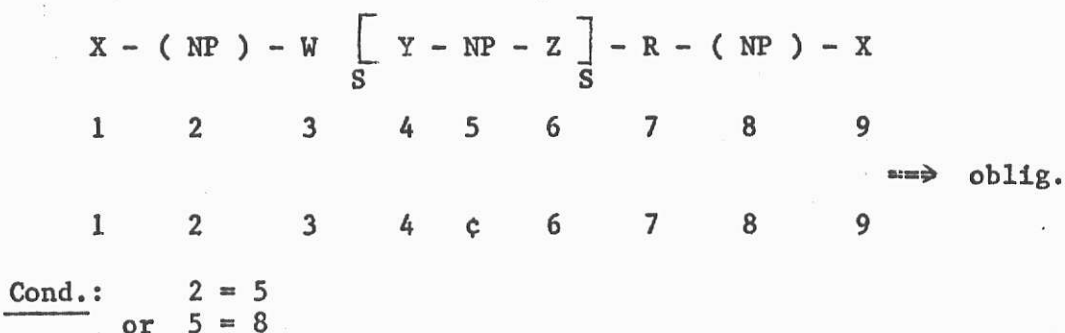


" He liked to swim. "

" He liked swimming. "

A transformation very similar to or identical with Equi-NP Deletion in English is needed to delete the subject of the embedded clause.

5.27 Equi-NP Deletion:



Notice that the transformation does not say anything about the verb phrase. This means that various modals and tense markers are allowed between the verbs of the main and embedded sentences. Sentences such as / khaw
he

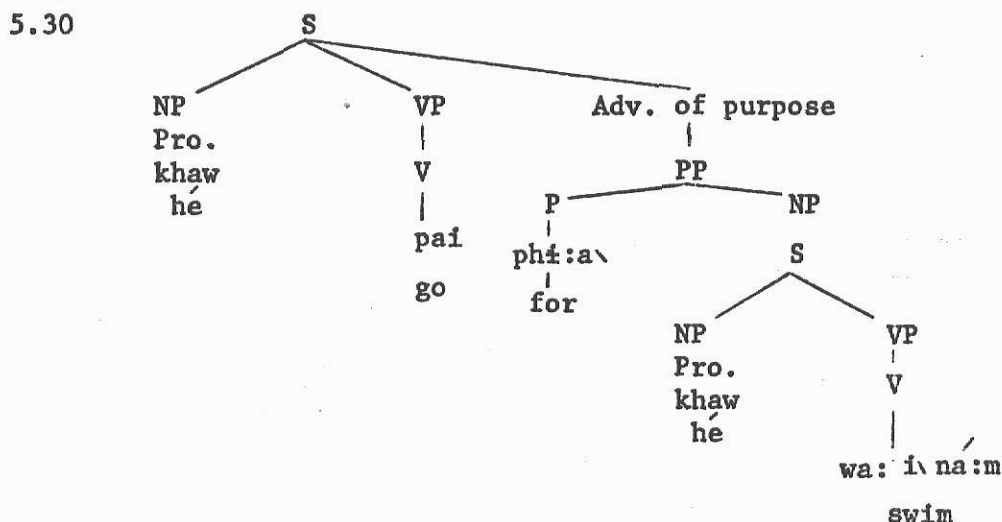
ya:k ca wa:i\ na:m / " He wanted to swim. (in the future) " are grammati-
want fut. swim
cal.

Yet sentences such as * / khaw yak kamlan wa:i\ na:m / " He
he want prog. swim
wanted to be swimming. " are ungrammatical. This, I assume, will be prevented by strict subcategorization rules restricting choice of embedded auxiliary elements.

Consider the following similar surface structures, which I think have different deep structures from the data above.

- 5.28 / khaw pai wa:i\ na:m /
he go swim
" He went to swim. "
- 5.29 / khaw ca ma: kin ?a:ha:n thi:\ ni:\ /
he fut.come eat food here
" He will come to eat the food here. "

Suggested structures for 5.28 and 5.29 will be an embedded clause dominated by adverb of purpose. Let's take the deep structure of sentence 5.28, for example:



Transformation 5.27 can be used for deriving the surface structure. But 5.30, I believe, is not the only structure underlying 5.28. When the question / khaw pai nai / "Where did he go?" is asked, one possible answer is 5.28. Obviously /wa:i\ ná:m / in / khaw pai wa:i\ ná:m / "He swim he go swim went to swim." , which answers "Where did he go?" can not be the left-over element dominated by "Adv. of purpose" like 5.30 but rather "Adverb of direction". (cf. / khaw pai ba:n\ / "He went home." ; / khaw he pai nai mɿ:an\ / "He went downtown.") So another deep structure for 5.28 is:

Appendix

Consonants:

	bilabial	labio-dental	alveolar	palatal	velar	glottal
Stops:	p b ph		t d th		k kh	ʔ
Affricates:				c ch		
Fricatives:		f	s			h
Nasals:	m		n		ŋ	
Lateral:			l			
Flapped			r			
Glides:	w			y	(w)	

Vowels:

	Front		Central		Back	
High	i	i:	ɨ	ɨ:	u	u:
Mid	e	e:	ə	ə:	o	o:
					ɔ	ɔ:
Low	æ	æ:			a	a:
Diphthongs:	ia	i:a				
	ɨa	ɨ:a				
	ua	u:a				

Tones:

	Tone mark	Example	Gloss
1. Mid level	unmarked	/ kha: /	" grass "
2. Low falling	ˋ	/ kha:ˋ /	" a kind of plant "
3. Mid falling	ˊˋ	/ kha:ˊˋ /	" kill "
4. High rising	ˊ	/ kha:ˊ /	" trade "
5. Low rising	ˊˊ	/ kha:ˊˊ /	" leg "

Notes

1. I am not sure if this is the precise meaning or not. That is, I am not sure that there is a one-to-one equivalence between / set / and " already ".

2. There are some restrictions on the combinations of modals which will not be included here.

3. Normally / mai\ / has mid falling tone. The expected tone's changing into high rising tone is just a matter of phonetic variation. The variant environment is unpredictable but frequently found in casual speech. There are quite a few examples of this, such as: / chan / --> / chan / " I " (for woman); / phom / --> / phom / " I " (for man); / khaw / --- / khaw / " he, she ".

It may be quite reasonable to say that / rɛ: / in / chai\ rɛ: mai\ / is dropped out for the same reason. In other words, / chai\ mai / is the informal form for / chai\ rɛ: mai\ /

4. Directional verbs are always $\left[+ V, + \text{---} \right]$, that is, intransitive.

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SOME ASPECTS OF THAI SYNTAX

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

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requirements for the degree

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1977

Abstract

This paper is a look at some aspects of Thai syntax from a transformational point of view. I begin with basic sentence structure, including tense/aspect, negatives, and questions. I also discuss relative clauses and other complex sentence structures, including certain structural ambiguities. Where there are various possible interpretations of the data, I try to provide reasonable evidence for my analysis.

It is my hope that the present paper may serve as a starting point for later studies in contrastive Thai-English syntax, especially as this may relate to the teaching of English to native Thai speakers.