

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

1. Observed and Observable Data

In any analysis such as this, problems always arise. Many such problems arose in working out the frames to be used to define compound words in Thai. Perhaps the most important of these problems concerns what Thai speakers say: do Thai speakers use a given sequence of items or not? Everyone will agree that people usually say

ไม่พบ

and that it is Thai. Everyone will agree, also, that no native speaker of Thai will say

ไม่พบ

and that it is not Thai. That is, some utterances occur and are Thai, while other utterances never occur and are not Thai. But given a sequence such as

เราไม่ใจ

differences of opinion are bound to arise: some saying that such a sequence is not used by native speakers of Thai, others saying that such a sequence is quite acceptable.

The question, therefore, should perhaps be stated a little differently: not "Do native speakers of Thai say this?", but "Can native speakers of Thai say this?" It doesn't make any difference whether anyone has actually said

เราไม่ใจ

or not. The utterance does not violate Thai grammar in any way. Thus, it is considered to be a potential utterance of Thai.

Furthermore, the fact that a certain utterance has not been actually heard may be accidental. It is impossible for any one person to hear all the utterances made by all the native speakers of Thai. Any one person can hear the speech of only a few native speakers, so he usually uses those speakers as his criterion.

The analysis and findings of this study do not violate the structure of Thai even though certain items may not have actually occurred.

2. Points of view

According to Miss Chantavibulya, the elements
 ภูญแจตุ are not compound in the utterance

ภูญแจตุ โบนัดมาก

while the same elements are compound in the utterance

ภูญแจตุ คอกนัดมาก

On the other hand, Mr. Warotamasikhhadit would say that neither are compound since their derivation does not require any special transformations.

Both would agree that the elements ลุกเสื่อ in the
 utterance

ลูกเสื่อคนนัดมาก

form a compound.

Thus, although these two linguists have approached the analysis of Thai from different points of view, there are certain areas in which they would agree. They would agree that the underlined elements of

ภูญแจตุ โบนัดมาก

are not compound, while those of
 ลุกเลือกคนนี้ดีมาก
 are compound. The difficulty lies in the large area between these two points in which there is no agreement.

The present study has suggested that there are at least three possibilities:

(a) a combination of elements may be merely a combination of two (or more) simple items;

(b) a combination of elements may be in fact a real compound (here called compound type B); or

(c) a combination of elements may at times be a type B compound, while at other times may not (here called compound type A).

Thus, the present study has tried to bring the area of disagreement into sharper focus.

3. Validation

The validity of any linguistic analysis must be determined ultimately by the native speakers of the language that has been analyzed. All of the utterances produced in an analysis must be acceptable to native speakers; no utterance produced in the analysis can be unacceptable.

The validity of the present study can be tested. One possibility is to set up a series of utterances based on the items and frames of this study. The native speakers would then be asked to judge whether or not the items are acceptable Thai. An item such as

คู่ไหนที่ถูกต้องมาก

should be acceptable to almost 100 per cent of the native speakers, while an item such as

คู่ไหนที่ถูกต้องมากที่สุด

should be unacceptable to almost 100 per cent of the native speakers responses such as these would validate this theory of compound words since the first utterance is produced in this grammar, while the second is not.

Responses in which approximately 50 per cent of the native speakers say an utterance is acceptable, while the others say that it is unacceptable, would indicate that the status of the items in those responses is still uncertain. Such responses would indicate that the present theory of compound words does not make adequate decisions in all cases.

Such testing is outside the scope of the present study. However, testing would be the logical next step in the analysis of compounds in Thai.

ศูนย์วิทยทรัพยากร
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย