

Chapter 1

Introduction



1.1. Rationale

This thesis examines expressions of emanation fictive motion events in Thai within the theoretical framework of cognitive linguistics. "Emanation" is one subtype of "fictive motion" which has been investigated by Talmy (1989, 1990, 1996). Fictive motion is spatial motion that does not objectively take place but is subjectively construed. In other words, it is an abstract, subjective motion on the part of the conceptualizer (which occurs in the conceptualizer's mental space), as opposed to a concrete, objective motion on the part of the conceived entity (which occurs in the physical space).

In this study, an "emanation fictive motion event" (henceforth, "emanation event") is defined as an imagined event involving motion of an intangible entity (e.g. light, shadow, sound, smell, gaze, and any other abstract conceptual essence of motion or directedness) away from some source entity. In an emanation event, an intangible entity emerges from a source entity and steadily moves on relative to a reference entity. (1) exemplifies emanation event expressions (henceforth, "emanation expressions") in Thai.

- (1) a. ไฟส่องแสง สาด เข้า มา ใน สนาม
 fay sǒwng sǎeng sàat khâw maa nay sanăam
 lamp shine light splash enter come in field
 หญ้า
 yâa
 grass
 The lamp sent light flashing into the field.
- b. ปลา ที่เน่า ส่ง กลิ่นเหม็น
 plaa thii nâw sǒng kflin mǎn
 fish RELATIVE PRONOUN rotten send smell bad-smelling
 ออก มา
 wǎak maa
 exit come

The rotten fish gave off a bad smell.

- c. เสียง เสียดลอด ออก มา
 sǎaŋ lét lǎot wǎok maa
 sound sneak exit come

The sound sneaked out.

- d. สาย ตา ทุก คู่ พุ่ง ตรง มา ยัง
 sǎay taa thúk khúu phúnŋ troŋ maa yaŋ
 line eye every pair dart go straight come toward

เรา

raw

PRONOUN

Everyone's line of vision beamed straight at us.

- e. เล็ง ปืน เข้า ใส่ ข้าศึก
 leŋ pǔnn khâ v sày khâa sǔk
 aim gun enter put in enemy

(S/he) aimed the gun at the enemy.

In (1a), the lamp is described as sending light into the field; in (1b), the bad smell as being given off from the rotten fish; in (1c), the sound as escaping out of somewhere; in (1d), the gaze as beaming at the observers; and, in (1e), something abstract as proceeding from the gun to the enemy. Consider light radiation, as in (1a); indeed we can see the light, but we cannot directly detect any photons or their motion. Thus, an emanation event is not explicitly seen (or physically perceived), but it is implicitly sensed via the tangible objects associated with it (or conventionally construed).

Fictive motion expressions have attracted the attention of a number of linguists in recent years. Talmy (1983) first discussed expressions of fictive motion, though he called it "virtual motion" at the time. Talmy (1983: 236) claimed that the road described in (2) is conceptualized as having a leading edge that is in virtual motion or as being scanned along its length by the observer's focus of attention.

- (2) a. This road runs past the factory.

- b. This road extends through the tunnel.
- c. This road goes from Burney to Redding.

Since then, fictive motion expressions have been studied by linguists who place importance on human conceptualization (e.g. Kunihiro 1985; Langacker 1986, 1987, 1988, 1991a, 1998b, 1999; Talmy 1989, 1990, 1996; Matsumoto 1996a, 1996b, 1996c, 1997a, 1997b, 1998a; Fauconnier 1997; Takahashi 1998, in press). Talmy (1996) was the first to give an in-depth study on fictive motion expressions based on English data. Langacker (1986, 1987, 1988, 1991a, 1998b, 1999) also analyzed phenomena related to fictive motion, which he called "abstract motion," "subjective motion," "virtual motion," and "virtual change." Talmy's "fictive motion" and Langacker's "virtual motion" refer to fictive or virtual motion in space, while Langacker's "abstract motion" and "subjective motion" encompass non-spatial motion such as motion in the temporal domain, as illustrated in (3).

- (3) a. He is going to finish soon.
- b. This milk is about to go sour.
- c. The concert went from midnight to 4AM.

Furthermore, Langacker's "virtual change" has a much broader sense. It refers to a change invoked to contrast the profiled configuration with a canonical entity. Any departure from a virtual canonical entity such as a norm, ideal or expectation is regarded as virtual change, as illustrated in (4). In Langacker's view, virtual motion (fictive motion) is just a special case of virtual change.

- (4) a. The trees got shorter at higher altitudes.
- b. Something is rough/ crooked/ sloping/ limp/ dirty (in comparison with an imagined counterpart that is smooth/ straight/ level/ stiff/ clean).

This study focuses on emanation which is one subtype of fictive/virtual spatial motion. Expressions of motion or change in more abstract domains (abstract or subjective motion and virtual change), as in (2) and (3), are outside the scope of this study.

Emanation expressions I investigate in the present study form one major subcategory of fictive motion expressions. Emanation expressions abound in everyday language, and I found I could gather the emanation type of Thai fictive motion expressions more easily than the other types. For this reason, I decided to investigate the emanation type as a case study of Thai fictive motion expressions. To my knowledge, so far no study has dealt with the full range of emanation expressions in one language other than English (cf. Talmy 1996). This study aims to explicate the meanings and syntactic structures of the full range of emanation expressions in Thai. With the assumption that linguistic structures are associated with conceptual structures in the mind, I will investigate how Thai speakers conceptualize and structure emanation events and how emanation events are linguistically encoded in the Thai language. I will relate various syntactic patterns of Thai emanation expressions to Thai speakers' conventional conceptualizations, that is, imposed schematic images with regard to emanation events.

I argue that linguistic representations for emanation events are motivated by the speakers' conventional conceptualizations including "schematization" (viz. a process that involves the systematic selection of certain aspects of a referent scene to represent the whole, while disregarding the remaining aspects (Talmy 1983: 225)); and "conceptual blending" (viz. the cognitive process of mapping of mental spaces (Fauconnier 1997: 149)) with respect to emanation events. I also argue that such conventional conceptualizations are language-particular even though they are subject to certain conditions related to human cognition which is assumed to be universal (cf. Croft 1998a).

1.2. Objectives

The objectives of this study are as follows.

- a. to classify emanation events in the Thai language using cognitive models, namely propositional, image-schematic, metaphoric and metonymic

models.

- b. to examine syntactic patterns of emanation event subtypes in the Thai language.

1.3. Hypotheses

The hypotheses of this study are summarized below.

- a. Types of emanation events are language-specific.
- b. Syntactic patterns of emanation event subtypes differ, reflecting different underlying cognitive models.

1.4. Data

Data used in this study are Thai emanation expressions that appear in the following published literary books: กฤษณา อโศกสิน (2525a, 2525b, 2534), ชาติ กอบจิตติ (2541), ปรีชา อิงคาภิรมย์ ไฮริเอะ และ นก ศฤงคารินทร์ (ผู้แปล) (2538), พงาพันธ์ (ผู้แปล) (2542), พิลิฐ ภูศรี (2542), ไพฑูรย์ รัญญา (2541), ว.วินิจฉัยกุล (2535a, 2535b), วิชาณา ชลศึกษ์ เคนแมน (บรรณาธิการ) (2538), สมาคมนักเขียนแห่งประเทศไทย (2541), ศิลดา โคมฉาย (2536).

1.5. Procedure

This study was conducted according to the following steps.

Stage 1: Review previous studies of fictive motion and relevant theoretical frameworks.

I mainly refer to the following works: Langacker (1987, 1991a, 1991b, 1998a, 1998b, 1999), Fauconnier (1985, 1997), Lakoff (1987), Talmy (1988, 1996), and Croft (1991, 1993, 1998a, 1998b).

Stage 2: Gather data from Thai discourses.

I collect examples of Thai emanation expressions from randomly selected Thai printed texts (see Section 1.4 above).

Stage 3: Analyze the data, and then identify and classify all subtypes of Thai emanation events.

With the aforementioned data, I attempt to identify all subtypes of emanation events in Thai, taking account of Thai speakers' conceptualizations of emanation events.

Stage 4: Examine the syntactic patterns of emanation subtypes.

I attempt to identify basic predicate patterns for each subtype. I examine their verbal forms, argument structures, and whole constructions.

Stage 5: Discuss the findings.

I examine the correlation between semantic and syntactic aspects of emanation expressions, e.g., what syntactic constructions represent what relationships among emanation event participants, what verbal forms specify what paths and manners of emanation, etc. I, then, summarize all the findings in a conclusion.