

การสำรวจวิเคราะห์ทางวากยสัมพันธ์ในการเติมข้อความใน  
บทความให้สมบูรณ์ (Paragraph Completion) ในข้อสอบ  
ภาษาอังกฤษสำหรับนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 6

The Syntactic Analytic Survey of Paragraph  
Completion in English test for 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

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Pennapa klaisingto

บทคัดย่อ

นักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 6 ในประเทศไทยทุกคนต้องเข้ารับการสอบ  
ภาษาอังกฤษ (9 วิชาสามัญ) เพื่อนำผลคะแนนสอบไปใช้ในการยื่นเข้าศึกษาต่อใน  
ระดับมหาวิทยาลัย โดยมีการวัดทักษะการเขียนภาษาอังกฤษ ซึ่งเน้นด้านการใช้  
ไวยากรณ์และความหมาย ผู้วิจัยจึงได้นำข้อสอบภาษาอังกฤษ ตอน Paragraph  
Completion (การเติมข้อความในบทความให้สมบูรณ์) ตั้งแต่ปีการศึกษา 2555 –  
2564 ปีละ 15 ข้อ รวมเป็น 150 ข้อ มาวิเคราะห์เพื่อดูความถี่ในการพิจารณา  
คำตอบของข้อสอบแต่ละข้อนั้น ต้องพิจารณาที่โครงสร้างประโยคหรือความหมาย  
ของประโยค โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อระบุว่าประโยคที่ไม่สมบูรณ์แต่ละประโยคที่  
ปรากฏใน Paragraph Completion ในข้อสอบ 9 วิชาสามัญ ภาษาอังกฤษ จะต้อง  
พิจารณาด้านใด ระหว่างโครงสร้างประโยคและความหมายของประโยค จาก  
การศึกษาพบว่าความถี่ของโครงสร้างประโยค ในข้อสอบ 4 ปีการศึกษาแรก (พ.ศ.  
2555-2558) มีจำนวนมากกว่าด้านความหมายของประโยค แต่ใน 6 ปีการศึกษา

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ต่อมา (พ.ศ. 2559-2564) ความถี่ของโครงสร้างประโยคและความหมายของประโยคแตกต่างกันไม่มาก อย่างไรก็ตาม การใช้ไวยากรณ์เป็นประเด็นสำคัญที่สุดที่นักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 6 ต้องพิจารณา นักเรียนต้องมีความรู้ทั้งด้านโครงสร้างประโยคและความหมายของประโยคที่เป็นตัวเลือก เพื่อที่จะสามารถเลือกตอบคำตอบที่ถูกต้องที่สุดเพื่อเติมประโยคในบทความให้สมบูรณ์

**คำสำคัญ:** ข้อสอบภาษาอังกฤษ (9 วิชาสามัญ), การเติมข้อความในบทความให้สมบูรณ์ วากยสัมพันธ์ , โครงสร้าง, ความหมายของประโยค

### Abstract

12<sup>th</sup> grade students in Thailand must attend the English test to apply for the University. Paragraph completion or cloze test part is found in writing part in English test, which focuses on grammar usage and its meaning. 150 questions from paragraph completion or cloze test in English test for 12<sup>th</sup> grade students from Academic year 2012-2021 were analyzed to see the frequency of sentence structure and sentence meaning found in cloze test part. This study aims to identify each uncompleted sentence found in paragraph completion in English test. The study found that the frequency of sentence structure in the first four years of English test is much higher than sentence meaning. In contrast, the frequency of sentence structure and sentence meaning in the last 6 years (Academic year 2016-2021) are not different as the previous years. Grammar usage is the most important issue the students need to concern. To conclude, they need to have explicit knowledge in both sentence structure and the meaning of the alternative to determine the most appropriate choice to fulfill the given sentence in cloze test.

**Keywords:** English test / paragraph completion / cloze test / syntactic / sentence structure / sentence meaning

## Statement of the Problem

Goodman (2012) stated that Thailand began modernizing its school system in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially in the field of higher education, by incorporating elements of the Western educational model. Currently, the Thai school system is the result of reforms introduced by the National Education Act of 1999 which focus on teaching to emphasize analytical thinking instead of memorization. Student-centered learning was introduced extensively.

Students are evaluated at the end of grades 9 and 12 through the National Institute for Educational Testing (O-NET). However, to attend the university, 12<sup>th</sup> grade students must apply for the common subjects test and GAT/PAT test to attend Thai University Central Admission System (TCAS) which were used to recruit students in the academic year 2018 onward.

NIETS (2018) stated that TCAS was set to replace the current central university admission system (CUAS). The new system aims to prevent students from applying for various institution and reserving places, which they previously failed to take up. TCAS is divided into 5 rounds. The first round is based on the student portfolio. The second is an assignment that requires applicants to submit the results of the Ordinary National Education Test (O-NET), the General Aptitude Test (GAT), the Professional Aptitude Test (PAT), the common subject test and other exams that the university deems appropriate. The third round consists of a direct admission system shared by partner institutions, the fourth round consists of a point-based joint admission system, and the fifth round consists of a direct admission system for institutions that still have vacant seats.

National Institute of Education Testing Service; NIETS (2009) stated that GAT stands for “General Aptitude Test” which divided into 2 main parts: The first part is analytical reading, analytical writing,

analytical thinking and problem solving and the second part is English for communication. PAT stands for “Professional Aptitude Test”. However, the common subjects test is divided into 9 subjects, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Social science, Thai, Science, Mathematics2 and English.

NIETS (2012) stated that Thai students who study in Science and Mathematics program and intend to apply for faculty in Science and Mathematics fields must apply for 7 common subjects; Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Social science, Thai, and English. In addition, the students in Language Art program, or Language and Mathematics program and intend to apply for faculty of Arts must apply for Social science, Thai, Science, Mathematics 2 and English.

Talengsri (2019) stated that Thailand aware of the importance and necessity of English, so English was assigned to be one of the subjects in basic education curriculum. In addition, the students were educated to pay attention for English learning since being preschool students up to lifelong education. The students should have listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. They should have ability to communicate with foreigners and access explicit knowledge in the classroom and our community easily.

The focus of this research is on common subject, English test. English test was divided into 3 main parts. The first one is listening-speaking part which focus on situation dialogues that concerned about conversation. Secondly, graph/chart/diagram/table and different types of text were categorized in reading part. The last one is writing part, composed of paragraph completion and paragraph organization.

However, paragraph completion or cloze test part is the most important part considered in this study. The researcher intends to study about grammar usage found in English test in common subject for 12<sup>th</sup> grade students and determines which parts of speech was

found mostly. Not only having knowledge about parts of speech in grammar part, but also meaning of each choice are required to determine the best appropriate choice to fill in the blank in cloze test part. Syntactic was used to analyze all of the questions in paragraph completion part. Grammar usage was primarily concerned to determine the correct answer in cloze test part. The researcher divided the analysis of paragraph completion or cloze test into 2 main parts which are sentence meaning and sentence structure. The researcher aims to study about grammar knowledge which the 12<sup>th</sup> grade students need to learn so that they can do this English test efficiently.

Understand structurally coded syntactic standard relationships between sentence components, especially between predicates and noun phrases, by grammatical relationships such as subject, direct object and indirect object (Kibrik, 2001). Literary relationships can be characterized by their meaning, their formal means of expression, and their syntactic function. To conclude, this research aims to focus on 2 main expression, which are the meaning of each sentence appeared in paragraph completion and their syntactic function presented in the blank.

### **Objective**

Identifying each uncompleted sentence found in paragraph completion in English test.

### **Limits of the study**

150 questions of cloze test part in English test from Academic year 2012-2021.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The researcher has collected 150 questions from paragraph completion in English test from Academic year 2012-2021.

The technique used in this research is identifying and classifying the sentence structure and sentence meaning. Categorized the data into sentence structure which can be divided into 10 groups; noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, pronoun, clause, phrase and word order and sentence meaning. Then, calculated the frequency of sentence structure and sentence meaning and converted the frequency into percentage form. Syntactic are primarily used for determining parts of speech of each sentence.

## Methodology

### 1. Research design

Purposive sampling was the method used in this research.

### 2. Source of Data

English test, common subjects for 12<sup>th</sup> grade students; Paragraph completion or closed test part found in English test, common subjects

### 3. Data Collection

All of the questions collected from triam-ent.com (2020) were organized in the table form and analyzed by using syntactic concepts and categorized them into sentence structure and sentence meaning.

### 4. Data Analysis

The data, 150 questions in cloze test part, were analyzed by 4 main steps as follows;

4.1 Investigate the questions if they categorized in sentence structure or sentence meaning.

4.2 Determine the data by following the sentence which comprised of 2 sub steps;

1.Sentence structure; explored which types of parts of speech – noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction and pronoun. Then, determine if they categorized in clause and phrase.

2.Sentence meaning; if they categorized in meaning part, determine which choice will be the most appropriate answer by considering their meanings.

4.3 Categorize the data into sentence structure which can be divided into 9 groups; noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, pronoun, clause and phrase and sentence meaning. Then, calculated the frequency of sentence structure and sentence meaning and converted the frequency into percentage form.

4.4 All results above were concluded and discussed to see an overall view about the frequency of sentence structure and sentence meaning found in cloze test part in English test.

The examples of data analysis are shown as follow:

1. After consider all of the 15 blanks in 3 paragraphs in cloze test part each year, the researcher must determine which one is in the sentence structure or sentence meaning.
2. To illustrate the question in sentence structure part, this sentence was given to study how to determine whether it is sentence structure or not.
  - I. Everyone these days should know how to use a computer. Normally, basic computer courses \_\_\_\_\_ most continuing education programs. (English test: 2012)
 

1) offer	4) are offering
2) offered at	5) are offered by
3) are offered	
  3. All of the given choices in this question are verb.

4. Every choice has “offer” as verb. So, the researcher considered the question mentioned above into sentence structure part because the students must decide which verb form are the most appropriate answer. The knowledge in parts of speech-verb was used to select the best suitable choice.

However, there are some questions that cannot be categorized into sentence structure part, because the students need to use their knowledge about the meaning of each choice to decide which choice will fulfill the given sentence.

5. To illustrate the question in sentence meaning part, this sentence was given to study how to determine whether it is sentence meaning or not.

- II. Her response was that she didn't want a \_\_\_\_\_ and just wanted to remain friends. (English test: 2019)
- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1) competition | 4) complement |
| 2) consolation | 5) commitment |
| 3) consequence |               |

6. Every choice is noun. So, the students need to focus on their meaning. Having knowledge in meaning of these vocabularies are required to determine the suitable answer.

7. Calculate the frequency and percentage of each topic.

## Conclusion

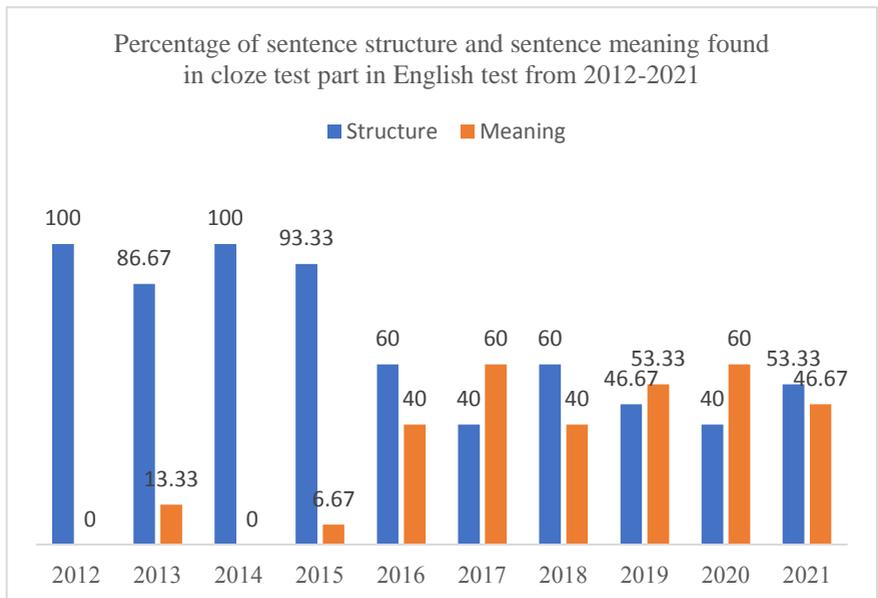
15 questions from cloze test part found in English test were collected and analyzed by categorizing all of the 150 questions from 2012-2021 into sentence structure part and sentence meaning part. Syntactics concepts were used to analyze the data. The aim of this

study is to identify each uncompleted sentence found in paragraph completion in English test. The findings were divided into 3 main parts; the frequency and percentage of sentence structure and sentence meaning found in cloze test part in English test subject, Sentence structure, Example of English test analysis (sentence structure and sentence meaning).

### 1. The frequency and percentage of sentence structure and sentence meaning found in cloze test part in English test subject

The frequency of sentence structure and sentence meaning in cloze test part in English test from 2012-2021. There are 15 questions in cloze test part each year.

The percentage of the frequency as bar graph is shown as follows:



**Figure 1** Percentage of sentence structure and sentence meaning found in cloze test part in English test from 2012-2021

According to the data mentioned above, the frequency of sentence structure was found 15 items as 100 % in 2012 and 2014. In 2015, the frequency of structure was 14 items out of 15 items, equal to 93.33 %, while the rest was in sentence meaning as 6.67%. In addition, the frequency of sentence structure was 13 items, which equal to 86.67 % in 2013.

In 2016 and 2018, the frequency of structure was 9 items out of 15 items, equal to 60 %, while the other 6 items were in sentence meaning as 40 %.

In 2017 and 2020, the frequency of structure was 6 items out of 15 items, equal to 40 %, while the other 9 items were in sentence meaning as 60 %.

In 2019, the frequency of structure was 7 items out of 15 items, equal to 46.67 %, while the other 8 items were in sentence meaning as 53.33 %. In 2021, the frequency of structure was 8 items out of 15 items, equal to 53.33 %, while the other 6 items were in sentence meaning as 46.67 %.

The number of sentence structure in total were 102 items as 68 % while the number of sentence meaning were 48 items as 32 %.

To sum up, the result shows that the frequency of sentence structure in the first four years of English test is much higher than sentence meaning. Having knowledge in grammar usage is the most important issue to determine the correct answer in paragraph completion or cloze test part in the first four year. On the contrary, sentence meaning was found very few in English test in the first four year of the common subjects test which in academic year 2012-2015.

The students must have explicit knowledge about grammar usage, especially in parts of speech and their test frames.

They have to determine which choice will be the most appropriate one by considering the test frame of each part of speech

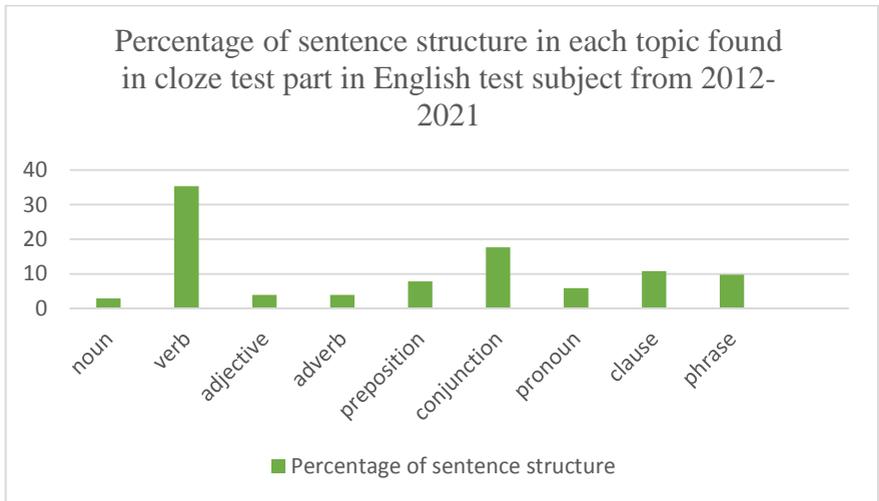
In contrast, the frequency of sentence structure and sentence meaning in the last 6 years (Academic year 2016-2021) are not different as the previous years. The students need to have explicit knowledge in both sentence structure and sentence meaning. The number of sentence structure in total were 102 items as 68 % while the number of sentence meaning were 48 items as 32 %.

In the next part, the researcher will describe the results found in sentence structure part.

## **2. Sentence structure**

In English test from 2012-2021, there were 102 items from 150 items which were in sentence structure. The topics were categorized into parts of speech; noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction and pronoun. In addition, clause and phrase were used to represent the sentence structure which excluded in parts of speech, but they still were categorized in sentence structure part.

The following bar graph were displayed to emphasize the difference of the number of items found in each topic.



**Figure 2** The frequency of the topic found in sentence structure

According to picture 2, there were 9 topics in sentence structure. Verb was the most common topic found in sentence structure from cloze test part which are 36 items, equal to 35.29 %. Followed by conjunction-17.65 %, clause-10.78 %, phrase-9.80, preposition-7.84 % and pronoun-5.88 %. Adjective and adverb were found in the same amounts which are 4 items, equal to 3.92 %. Then, it was noun that found only 2.94 %.

The students must learn about parts of speech. To determine the correct answer, the students need to know about the position of each part of speech in the sentence. Verb is the most important parts of speech found in the English test. Conjunction is in the second place, followed by clause, phrase, preposition and pronoun. Adjective and adverb were found in the same amounts. The least one is noun. The students need to concern about both sentence structure and sentence meaning to choose the most suitable alternative.

The researcher categorized the result into 3 groups, which are word, clause and phrase. Word consist of 7 issues in parts of speech, which are noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction and pronoun. When the frequency of word, clause and phrase were considered, word is in the first position which were found the most. Followed by clause and phrase.

However, if the parts of speech were focused, verb is found the most. Followed by conjunction, which were used to join the sentence, phrase or clause to make each them cohered in the paragraph completion or cloze test part in English test.

The results show that verb is the most important parts of speech found in the English test. Conjunction is in the second place, followed by clause, phrase, preposition and pronoun. Adjective and adverb were found in the same amounts. The least one is noun.

### 3. Example of English test analysis

#### 3.1 Sentence structure

These are the examples of the topics found in sentence structure part in cloze test.

#### Noun

A good relationship is about \_\_\_\_\_ and a mutual spirit to root for the others. (English test: 2014)

- |                                       |                                     |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1) friends, honest, compatibility     | 4) friendly, honest, compatible     |
| 2) friendly, honestly, compatibly     | 5) friendliness, honest, compatibly |
| 3) friendship, honesty, compatibility |                                     |

Parallel structure was used to determined which parts of speech will be placed before conjunction “and”. When we considered “A mutual spirit” = det+adj.+n., so noun must be placed before conjunction “and”. To conclude, the third choice is the correct answer because friendship, honesty and compatibility are noun.

### Verb

Everyone these days should know how to use a computer. Normally, basic computer courses \_\_\_\_\_ most continuing education programs. (English test: 2012)

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1) offer       | 4) are offering   |
| 2) offered at  | 5) are offered by |
| 3) are offered |                   |

Passive voice was used to decide which choices were the correct answer. “Basic computer courses” as thing acted on comes first, and “most continuing education programs” as an actor is added at the end, introduced with the preposition “by”. So, the last choice is the correct answer.

### Adjective

\_\_\_\_\_ principles run in line with the ideals of universal freedoms such as the right to free speech. (English test: 2015)

- |                    |               |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1) democratization | 4) democratic |
| 2) democratizing   | 5) democrat   |
| 3) democratized    |               |

Adjective was placed in front of noun to modify a noun; that is, it provides more detail about a noun. After blank, there is the word “principles” as noun. So, “democratic” as adjective must be placed before noun. To sum up, “democratic” as the fourth choice is the correct answer.

### Adverb

This isn’t to say that my parents haven’t pushed me to get good grades, but I felt \_\_\_\_\_ to succeed in school comes from my own aspirations. (English test: 2015)

- |                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) the most of pressure | 4) almost pressure      |
| 2) the pressure most    | 5) pressure of the most |
| 3) most of the pressure |                         |

“Most of the” is followed by plural noun or uncountable noun. To choose the most appropriate answer, the students need to

know about the rule mentioned before. In conclude, the third choice is the most appropriate answer.

### Preposition

Since then...totally \_\_\_\_\_ my surprise, I met this wonderful girl-Jennifer. (English test: 2018)

- |         |         |
|---------|---------|
| 1) at   | 4) with |
| 2) in   | 5) to   |
| 3) upon |         |

To decide which one will be the best answer to fill in the blank, the students must have explicit knowledge about preposition and their meaning. Preposition-to must be placed before “my surprise” as in “to someone’s surprise”. Briefly, “to” as the last choice is the accurate answer.

### Conjunction

Singapore’s average annual rainfall is more than double that of notoriously soggy Britain, \_\_\_\_\_ the casual observer might be surprised to learn that the place has a shortage of drinking water. (English test: 2012)

- |        |        |
|--------|--------|
| 1) or  | 4) but |
| 2) so  | 5) and |
| 3) for |        |

To decide which one will be the best answer to fill in the blank, the students must have explicit knowledge about conjunction and their meaning. “So” as conjunction was used as a coordinate conjunction to introduce clauses of result or decision. In brief, “so” as the second option is the most appropriate answer to connect these 2 sentences.

### Pronoun

Problems that teenagers are faced with today are multifarious but interrelated in many cases. One problem invites \_\_\_\_\_, then leads to more problems. (English test: 2012)

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1) another   | 4) others     |
| 2) other     | 5) the others |
| 3) the other |               |

The words another and other mean the same thing, except that another is used with a singular noun and other is used with uncountable and plural noun. Verb in the sentence after the given sentence is “leads to”, which are singular verb. So, the object pronoun used to fill in the blank in the previous sentence must be ‘another’ which used with singular noun.

### Clause

I don't know \_\_\_\_\_ . (English test: 2017)

- |                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1) what to do anymore   | 4) anymore what I do |
| 2) what do I do anymore | 5) what more to do   |
| 3) what more can I do   |                      |

Noun clause is a dependent clause that acts as a noun placed as the object of the sentence. In consolidation, “what to do anymore” is the accurate answer.

### Phrase

But there are \_\_\_\_\_ – SUVs, hybrids and ever luxury vehicles. (English test: 2015)

- |                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) a share of a car service | 4) servicing a shared car |
| 2) a car-sharing service    | 5) sharing a car service  |
| 3) a car for sharing        |                           |

Noun phrase is a small group of words which contains a noun along with modifying words for that noun. “a car-sharing service” is a noun phrase composed of car-sharing as compound adjective and service as a noun of this noun phrase. All things considered; the second option is the most precise answer.

### 3.2 Sentence meaning

Sentence meaning were found 47 items out of 150 items of cloze test part from English test in 2012-2021, which accounts as 31.33 %. However, to determine which choice is the best

appropriate answer, the students must have explicit knowledge about meaning of each choice.

These are the examples of the sentences in cloze test part that we need to focus on their meaning.

I met this girl about a year and a half ago. Initially I wasn't attracted to her, but about 8-9 months ago we started \_\_\_\_\_ together. (English test: 2019)

- |                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1) making off  | 4) coming around |
| 2) holding on  | 5) looking ahead |
| 3) hanging out |                  |

“hang out” means to spend a lot of time in a place or with someone.

Her response was that she didn't want a \_\_\_\_\_ and just wanted to remain friends. (English test: 2019)

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1) competition | 4) complement |
| 2) consolation | 5) commitment |
| 3) consequence |               |

“commitment” means a promise or firm decision to do something, or the fact of promising something. So, the last option is the most proper answer.

When the trees are covered with red and gold leaves, \_\_\_\_\_ . (English test: 2017)

- 1) people finish sweeping their yards and driveways
- 2) there are number of places to visit to observe the colors of the season
- 3) the winds strongly and incessantly blow away fallen leaves
- 4) there are plenty of fruits to feed the family members and friends
- 5) who else ate able to sit under the trees in Spring

To determine which choices will be the correct answer, we need to look for sentence that would be fulfill the given sentence. From the first four choices, the students must choose the most suitable choice to fill in the sentence. The last choice can be cut off, because grammar usage in this choice is incorrect. In conclusion, the second option is the most appropriate answer to fill in the blank.

According to the results of the study mentioned above, the English test subject in common subject for 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in Academic year 2012-2021 focused on sentence structure part than sentence meaning part as shown in the second bar graph: Percentage of sentence structure and sentence meaning found in cloze test part in English test from 2012-2021.

The tendency of English test was analyzed so that 12<sup>th</sup> grade students can understand the importance issue in grammar usage, especially in parts of speech in sentence structure. However, the students must have explicit knowledge both in sentence structure and sentence meaning to determine the choice that can fulfill the sentence into complete sentence.

## Discussion

The study shows why Thai students need to learn English as their second language related to a subsidiary of Educational Testing Service which stated that English is the Language of International Communication. Moreover, Thailand recognizes the importance and necessity of English and has established English as one of the subjects of the basic education curriculum. In addition, students must have listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. (Office of the National Education Commission, 2009)

English is important for Thai students, especially for 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who need to use English test to apply for studying in Bachelor degree at the university. Since the English test was divided into three main parts, which are listening-speaking part, reading part and writing part, this research focuses on writing part. Grammar usage is the most important issue the students need to be concern so that they can do the paragraph completion or cloze test part in English test. However, they need to know about the meaning of the

alternative to determine the most appropriate choice to fulfill the given sentence in cloze test.

## Suggestions

### 1. Suggestion for application

Syntactic analysis was used to identify the tendency of English test in common subject test for 12<sup>th</sup> grade students each year from Academic year 2012-2021. The 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will understand which issues they need to focus.

However, the students must have explicit knowledge both in sentence structure and sentence meaning. They need to learn about how to use each part of speech, clause and phrase. Especially for conjunction, which was found as the second place after verb. The students need to understand how to join the sentence, clause and phrase with conjunction to make the paragraph cohered, as in the paragraph completion or closed test part in English test for 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

### 2. Suggestion for future research

Other part in the English test should be analyzed, so 12<sup>th</sup> grade students can apparently understand about the English test.

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