The Phrase Structure Rules of Thai Sentences

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Abstract

The purposes of this research were to: 1) study the Thai sentence structure used in Thai text books of secondary schools and Thai academic texts;2) compare the result of Thai Ps-rules in Thai text book and academic texts. The research tools were Thai grammar textbooks in secondary 3 approved by the Thai Minister Education and theThai academic article published in "พินิจไทย" No. 3 Jan 2004, written by Amara Prasitrathasin. The research found that: 1) the sentences in Thai articles were written by different kinds of sentence structures and they were transformed to a simple sentence by deleting subject, object or relative pronoun;2) some structuresin the Thai article sometimes tried to use a simple sentence which was modified from a compound sentence; 3) the kind of sentence structure inthe Thai article is similar to English sentence structure. It can show that the English language had an influent on Thai academic writing.

Key words: Thai PS-rules, Thai Textbook, Thai academic article.

Introduction

Thai sentence structure in Thai Grammar textbooks is usually described as traditional grammar. Prasitrathasin, Hoomchamlong and Savetamalya (2003) reported that the Thai sentence was categorized into three kinds: simple sentence, compound sentence, and complex sentence.

1. The simple sentence is a small sentence, and it has only one meaning. It consists of subject and predicate.

(a)tɕhǎn-kin-khâow

    I   eat rice

= I eat rice.

2. The compound sentence is a sentence which is formed by two main clauses linked by a connector.

(b) tɕhǎn-kin-khâow- tɛ:- khao- kin-sóm

    I   eat rice   but he   eat orange

= I have some rice but he eats an orange.

3. Complex sentence is a sentence which is constructed by one main clause as well asminor clause.

(c) Sɯ̂u-thîː-naroːŋ-sài-sǔːy-mâk

  clothe that Narong wear beautiful so

 = The cloth which Narong wears is so beautiful.

The Thai sentence described by traditional grammar was taught in secondary school. It focuses on meaning to determine a part of speech and sentence.

However, the Thai sentence used in another text such as Thai academic text, it is written by long and complicated sentence; for example,

(d) ɹau -mak –khid -waː-khon   -thîː -ɔ:ksiaŋ -kham-ɹabɹu: -pen - labɹu: -pen-

we often think that people who pronounce word 'rabroo' becomes 'lablu' becomes

khon   -thîː -mi: -kɹa:nsɯksa:-noi-lɛ-pen   -khon -ladab -làːŋ

people who have   education less and become people level low

  = we think that the person who pronounced "lablu" instead "ɹabɹu:" is the person who a low educated person and he or she is a grass-root person.

From the mentioned sentence (d), the sentence used in Thai academic text has a different verb in a sentence and the writing of Thai language has no boundary mark so it is difficult to indicate end of sentence. Besides, to analyze the Thai sentence structure by traditional theory may not be an appropriated approach since to use meaning to determine a kind of sentence is so complicated.

Therefore, I was interested in studying the kinds of Thai sentence structure according to government and binding theory (GB).

GB Theory: Overview

GB starts describing from lexicon to syntactic component that it has two main parts: categorical component (c-selection and s-selection) and transformational component. Havingbeen already processed, it will either be modified to pronounce (Phonetic Form or PF) or modified to logical form or (LF) which is concerned with meaning. See GB model below.
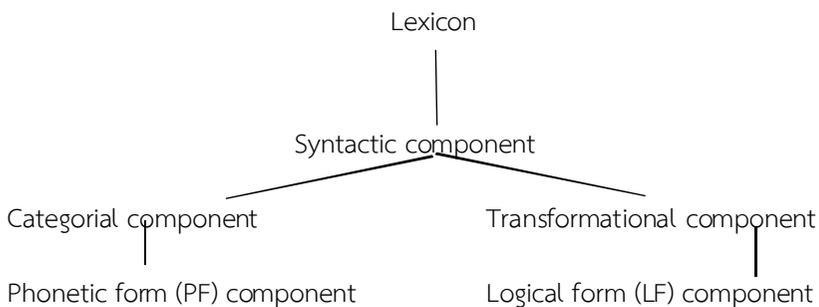
Lexicon

Syntactic component

Categorial component

Transformational component

Phonetic form (PF) component

Logical form (LF) component

Figure 1. GB Model.

Along with the minor system of principles including government and binding theory, theta theory, case theory and control theory are concerned.
Generative grammar strongly explains a derivation from deep structure to surface structure. Deep structure is a basic structure of a sentence formed by a merging operation. The second level is called surface structure which is modified by transformation rules. See the figure below.
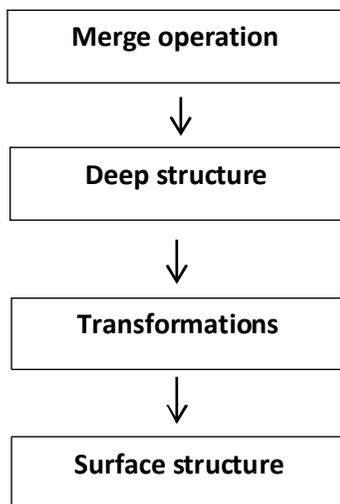
```
┌─────────────────────────┐
│     Merge operation     │
└─────────────────────────┘
             ↓
┌─────────────────────────┐
│     Deep structure      │
└─────────────────────────┘
             ↓
┌─────────────────────────┐
│     Transformations     │
└─────────────────────────┘
             ↓
┌─────────────────────────┐
│     Surface structure   │
└─────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 2. The derivation of a sentence. Source: Nopasri Jimyam, an introduction to English Linguistics P.144 BKK:Commission on Higher Education and Thailand Research Fund, 2009.

Literature Review

According to Thai 3: Linguistics for Thai Teachers; Sukhothai University, cited that basic Thai structure has threes phrase structure rules.

S--> NP VP

NP--> N (NM)

VP--> V (NP) (VM)

Note:

S = sentence   NP = noun phrase   VP = verb phrase

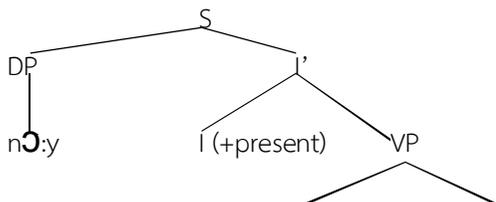NM = noun modifier   VM = verb modifier   I = inflection (tense, modal verb)

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                    S
          ╱                ╲
        DP                  I'
         │              ╱        ╲
       nɔ:y      I (+present)      VP
                              ╱        ╲
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        V                  NP
        |                  |
        |                  |
  rák     pɰaˆːn
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Figure 3. Tree diagram for Thai structure

According to the three basic phrase structure rules, it can be divided into seven sub-rules:

1. S --> NP VP

2. NP --> N

3. NP --> N NM

4. VP--> V

5. VP --> V NP

6. VP --> V VM

7. VP --> V NP NM

(Thai 3: Linguistics for Teachers: 1982) stated that Thai sentence structure has three main transformational rules; deletion, movement and insertion; for example,

(e) dek-dek -tchↃ̂:b -túkkata

children   like   doll

= children like a doll.

This sentence can be transformed into sentence (f)

(f) túkkata- dek-dek -tchↃ̂:b

doll   children   like

= a doll, children like.

It can explain that NP (túkkata) as an object that it can be moved to the beginning of sentence or it is known as "topicalization" (GB theory).

Next it discusses the types of Thai sentence structures in secondary school for Thai students which I investigated standard Thai grammar textbook in secondary 3. It cited that Thai sentence structures can be categorized into three main types.

1. Simple sentence means a sentence consists of noun phrase and verb phrase. Noun phrase is as a subject or object while verb phrase is a predicate of sentence. The Thai simple sentence was divided into two main kinds:

   1.1 simple sentence with single verb phrase

khǎo -tè -khâoî:

He   kick   chair.

= He kicked a chair.

kin -khanom   -si

eat snack   please

= please, eat snack

1.2 simple sentence with serial verbs

1.2.1 Taken place at the same time

napha:-nàŋ-à:n -nâŋsǔ:pim -nai-hɔ̂ŋsamud

Napha sits read a newspaper in   library.

= Napha sits to read a newspaper in the library.

1.2.2 taken place continually

saitɕa:i-wîŋ-pai-pɤ̀:d-pràtu:

Saijai   runs go open door.

= Saijai runs towards to open the door.

1.2.3 Resaltative verb

lom -phad -bâ:n -phaŋ

=   wind blow house destroy

Wind destroyed the house.

2. Complex sentence means a sentence is formed bya main clause and minor clause. The main clause is a sentence as a subject, complement or modifier and minor clause is a sentence as a noun phrase. This is as a subject, complement and modifier but a minor clause must rely on main clause. Thai complex sentence structure has three main patterns;

2.1 complex sentence with noun clause. It describes the minor clause having function as a noun phrase anda subject, an object or a complement. This kind of sentence often has "ที่(thî),ที่ว่า(thîwa:̂),ว่า(wa:̂),ให้(ha:î)" to indicate that it is subordinate clause. For example:

anoŋ -mâi-tɕhɔ̂:b-hâî -.kha:l   -ma: -wâ: -khunpɔ̂-kho:ŋ-tɤ̀:

Anong not like let someone come blames father   of   her

=Anong does not like someone who blames her father.

2.2 complex sentence structure with subordinate clause. It has a subordinate clause in order to modifythe subject. That is, "ที่(thîː),ซึ่ง(sɯ̂ŋ) orอัน(an)(who, whom or which) that" to connect between noun and subordinate clause or it is known as relative pronoun in English.

sɯ̂u -thîː-naroːŋ -sài -sǔaːy -mâk

   clothe that Narong wear beautiful so

= The cloth which Narong wears is so beautiful.

2.3 complex sentence with adverbial clause. It is a subordinate clause as an adverbial phrase. For example,

khunpôː-thamŋaːn-haːmrɯ̂ŋhaːmkhâm-pɯa-anaːkot-khòŋ-krɔ̀ːbkrua:

   father   work   hard   for   future   of   family

The father works hard for a future of family.

3. Compound sentence means a sentence has two main clauses with coordinator.

darun-tɕa-pai-tiâw-ǝmɛ̀ːrikǝ-ɔ̀ː-uroːp

   Daroon will go visit USA   or Europe

=Daroon willvisit American or Europe.

Objectives

1. To study the Thai sentence used in a Thai text book in secondary school and academic text.

   2. To compare the result of Thai PS-rules used in a Thai textbook and academic text.

Materials And Methods

1. Material: the instrument employed in this study had two main sources.

1.1) A Thai sentence structures were described by a Thai Grammar textbook in M.3 published by Aksornchareontad Press. It was approved by the Thai Minister of Education and it was used in the schools. This focuses on chapter 4 in the topic of language analyzing which describes the kind of Thai sentence structure.

1.2) The article which was published in "พินิจไทย" in the Nation, 236 no, published in 3 Jan 2004, written by Amara Prasitrathasin of CU institution because it is an academic formal style, written by a professional linguist.

2. Methodology

      2.1. Analyze all given sentences mentioned in material no.1 and define Ps-rule including tree diagram to prove Ps-rule again.

      2.2. All sentences in material no.2 were analyzed and defined Ps-rule including tree diagram to prove Ps-rule again. Remark: Only the sentence structures were studied.

      2.3) The sentence structure in both the Thai grammar textbook and the Thai article were investigated by GB theory

<div align="center">

Results
</div>

      It discussed about the result of structure appeared in Thai grammar text and Thai academic text. In Thai grammar text used for teaching in secondary school, It met that 1) simple sentence has two main types; one is simple sentence with single verb; another is simple sentence with serial verbs. It can be written Ps-rule:

      1.1 Simple sentence with single verb

          IP --> Spec I'

          I --> VP (NP)

      1.2 Simple sentence with serial verbs

          IP --> Spec I'

          I --> VP_1 VP_2 (NP)

Note :

IP = inflectional Projection or sentence   Spec = specifier   I = inflectional

VP = verb phrase   NP = noun phrase   Neg. P = negative phrase

VP_1, VP_2 = first verb phrase, second verb phrase   CP = complementizer projection

C' = complementizer   ( ) = optional Thai Ps-rule

Adv. P = Adverb Phrase   Conj. = Conjunction

NP_1, NP_2 = First noun phrase, second noun phrase

IP(1), IP(2),... = first inflectional projection, second inflectional projection (it is obliged Thai Ps-rule not optional rule)

2) Complex sentence refers to a sentence which has two clauses; one is main clause and another is minor clause as a modifier of subject, object, complement or noun modifiers. It was classified into three kinds of complex sentence according to definitions described inthe Thai textbook.

2.1) subordinate clause as a subject

tʰi-khunna:-phuu:d-mai-pen-kwu:mtɕiŋ

    that ant   speak not be   truth

=What aunt said is not true.

    From sentence above, it can give Ps-rule below:

      IP $\longrightarrow$ CP I'
      CP $\longrightarrow$ Spec C' IP
      IP $\longrightarrow$ Spec I'
      I' $\longrightarrow$ I VP
      I' $\longrightarrow$ I VP
      VP $\longrightarrow$ (Neg.P) VP NP

2.2). Subordinate clause as an object

khao-bɔk-suntha.ɹi: -wa:-pawi:na -tɕa –pai-ŋa:n-p.ɹuŋni:

  he   tell Suntahree that Paweena will go work tomorrow

   =He told Suntharee that Paweena will go working tomorrow.

   From sentence above, it can define Ps-rule below:

    IP $\longrightarrow$ Spec I'
    I' $\longrightarrow$ I VP CP
    VP $\longrightarrow$ V NP

      CP $\longrightarrow$ C' IP
      I' $\longrightarrow$ I VP
      VP $\longrightarrow$ V' (Adv.P)
      V' $\longrightarrow$ V

2.3) Subordinate clause as a noun modifier

    k^hon-t^{h}î -fai   -ʝi:nʝú:-pen-k^hon-t^{h}î -mi:-kwu:amʝu:

    people that attentively study   be   people who has knowledge

    = A person who pay attention to study is an educated person.

From sentence above, it can writethe Ps-rule below;

        IP(1) $\longrightarrow$ Spec I'

        Spec $\longrightarrow$ NP CP

        CP $\longrightarrow$ C' IP(2)

        IP $\longrightarrow$ Spec I'

        I' $\longrightarrow$ I VP

        I' $\longrightarrow$ I VP

        VP $\longrightarrow$ V' NP

        CP $\longrightarrow$ C' IP(3)

        IP $\longrightarrow$ I' VP

       3. Compound sentence means a sentence which has two main clauses with coordinator. It could be shown as analyzing the compound used in the Thai textbook, it can be as a written Ps-rule;

        IP $\longrightarrow$ Spec I'

        I' $\longrightarrow$ I VP (NP$_1$) Conj. NP$_2$

or

        IP(1) $\longrightarrow$ Spec I'

        I' $\longrightarrow$ I' VP (NP) Conj. IP(2)

        IP(2) $\longrightarrow$ (NP) I VP

        VP $\longrightarrow$ V (NP) (Adv.P)

Discussion

According to the study, it showed that complex sentences were found in Thai academic text. The complex sentence was constructed from combining different sentences into one sentence. This way can cause a message to be shorter and it is able to keep a meaning. Besides, simple sentence uses a prepositional phrase to modify noun and it uses prepositional phrase as a complement of a verb in order to reduce redundancy too.

It is important to note that the sentence structures in article were written by different kinds of sentences and it was modified from a complex sentence structure to a simple sentence structure by deleting subject, object or relative pronoun. For example:

เรามักคิดว่าคนที่ออกเสียงคำรับรู้เป็นลับรู้เป็นคนที่มีการ

�late-mak-khid-wa:-khon-thî:-ɔ:k-siaŋ-kham- labɭu:-pen- labɭu:-pen-khon-thî:-mi:-kɭa:n-

ศึกษาน้อยและเป็นคนระดับล่าง

sɯksa:-noi-lɛ-pen-khon-ladab-là:ŋ

= we think that the person who pronounced "lablu" instead "labɭu:" is the person who is a low educated person and he or she is a grass-root person.

As shown above, its deep structure is "เรามักคิดว่าคนที่ออกเสียงคำรับรู้เป็นลับรู้เป็นคนที่มีการศึกษาน้อย และ(คนที่ออกเสียงคำรับรู้เป็นลับรู้)เป็นคนระดับล่าง" (we think that the person who pronounced "lablu" instead "labɭu:" is the person who is a low educated person and (the person who pronounced "lablu" instead "labɭu) is a grass-root person))

This sentence has a subject is "เรามักคิดว่าคนที่ออกเสียงคำรับรู้เป็นลับรู้" and it has a predicate "เป็น คนที่มีการศึกษาน้อยและ(คนที่ออกเสียงคำรับรู้เป็นลับรู้) เป็นคนระดับล่าง" when this sentence was used in an article, noun phrase in the parenthesis was deleted. Then the deep structure was in a compound sentences. It was transformed to a simple sentence with subordinate clause.

Subject: เรามักคิดว่าคนที่ออกเสียงคำรับรู้เป็นลับรู้ (we think that the person who pronounced "lablu" instead "labɭu:")

Predicate : คนที่มีการศึกษาน้อยและเป็นคนระดับล่าง (is the person who is a low educated person and is a grass-root person)

DS:เรามักคิดว่าคนที่ออกเสียงคำรับรู้เป็นลับรู้เป็นคนที่มีการ

ɭau –mak-khid-wa:-khon-thî:-ɔ:k-siaŋ-kham- labɭu:-pen – lablu-pen-khon-thî:-mi:-kɭa:n-

ศึกษาน้อยและ(คนที่ออกเสียงคำรับรู้เป็นลับรู้)เป็นคนระดับล่าง

sɯksa:-noi-lɛ-pen-khon-ladab-là:ŋ

= we think that the person who pronounced "lablu" instead "ɹabɹu:" is the person who is a low educated person and is a grass-root person.
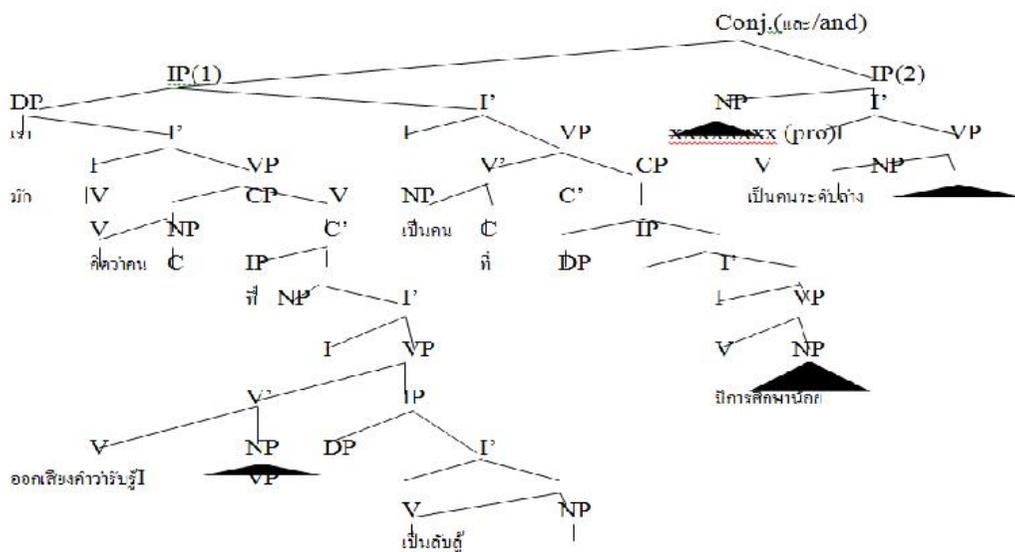

Figure 4. Sentence diagram.

Note : xxxxxx means เรามักคิดว่าคนที่ออกเสียงคำว่ารับรู้เป็นลับลู้(ɹau-mak-khid-wa:-khon-thî:-ɔ:k-siaŋ-kham- ɹabɹu:-pen- lablu:)

It is notice that this sentence has two main IPs with connector (และ/and) . It means that its deep structure is compound sentence structure. Then subject in IP(2) was deleted and then predicate in IP(2) shares subject in IP(1)when it was written on article.

SS: เรามักคิดว่าคนที่ออกเสียงคำรับรู้เป็นลับรู้เป็นคนที่มีการ

ɹau-mak-khid-wa:-khon-thî:-ɔ:k-siaŋ-kham- ɹabɹu:-pen- lablu:-pen-khon-thî:-mi:-kɹa:n- ศึกษาน้อยและเป็นคนระดับล่าง

sɯksa:-noi-lɛ-pen-khon-ladab-là:ŋ

   = we think that the person who pronounced "lablu" instead "ɹabɹu:" is the person who is a low educated person and he/she is a grass-root person.
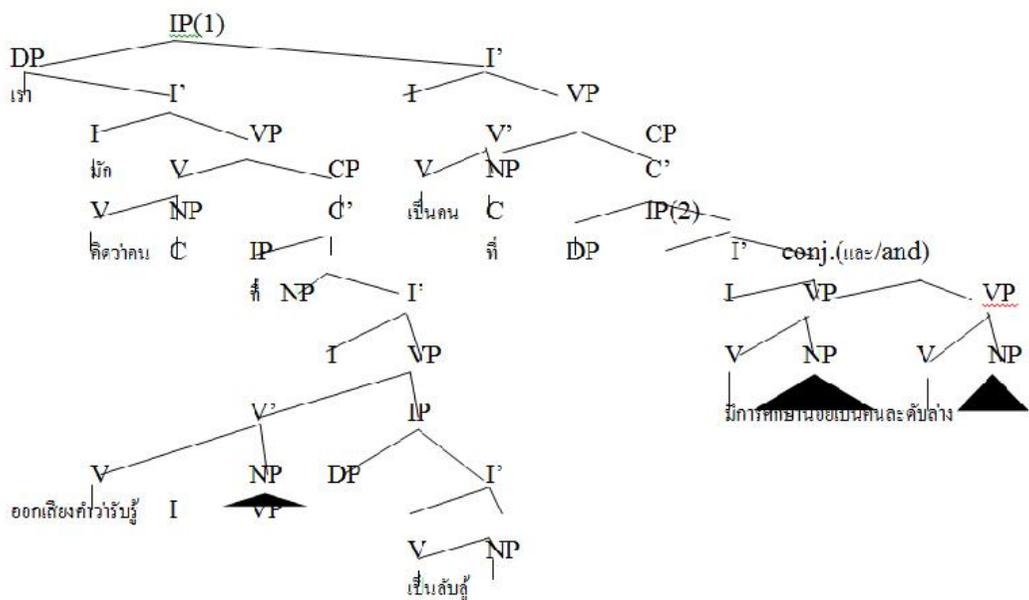

Figure 5. Sentence diagram.

Another example, "งานวิจัยแสดงให้เห็นว่าคนไทยไม่ว่าระดับใดส่วนใหญ่มักออกเสียงรเป็นลและออกเสียงควบกล้ำไม่ชัดเจน"

   งานวิจัยแสดงให้เห็นว่าคนไทยไม่ว่าระดับใดส่วนใหญ่มักออกเสียงร

   ŋa:n-witɕa:I -sadɛ:ŋ-haî –hen-wà:-khon-thai –mài-wà:-ɹadab-dai-suaya:I -mak -ɔk-

siaŋ-ɹ-

เป็นลและออกเสียงควบกล้ำไม่ชัดเจน

   pen-l-lɛ -ɔk-siaŋ -kwuabklâm-maî-ʃad-tɕe;n

= The research found that most Thai people in alleducational levels often pronounce /l/

instead of /r/ and they pronounce cluster consonant sound unclearly.

As shown in the sentence above, it is simple sentence with various subordinate clauses whichhad originated from "งานวิจัย(ส่วนใหญ่) แสดงให้เห็นว่าคนไทยไม่ว่าระดับใดส่วนใหญ่มักไม่ออกเสียงร เป็นลและ(คนไทยไม่ว่าระดับใดส่วนใหญ่) ออกเสียงควบกล้ำไม่ชัดเจน"

งานวิจัย(ส่วนใหญ่)แสดงให้เห็นว่าคนไทยไม่ว่าระดับใดมักออกเสียงร

ŋa:n-witɕa:i(suaya:l) -sadɛ:ŋ-haî-hen-wà:-khon-thai-mài-wà:-ɹadab-dai- mak -ɔk-siaŋ-ɹ-

เป็นลและออกเสียงควบกล้ำไม่ชัดเจน

pen-l -lɛ -ɔ:k -siaŋ -kwuabklâm-maî-ʃad-tɕe;n

= Most research found that most Thai people in all levels often pronounce /l/ instead of /r/ and they pronounce cluster consonant sound unclearly.

From its deep structure, this sentence is a compound sentence because of having (และ/and) in order to connect between IP(1) and IP(2). Figure 3, the subject in IP(1), has a subordinate clause and there is IP(3) under IP(1). In figure 4, when this sentence was written in article, the word "ส่วนใหญ่/most of" was moved to place in final the position of subject part to focus on meaning, and "ที่/that" was deleted. In the predicate part, "คนไทยไม่ว่าระดับใดส่วนใหญ่ /Thai people in all levels"is the subject of both predicates. Therefore, this sentence was modified from two main clauses.

1. งานวิจัย(ส่วนใหญ่)แสดงให้เห็นว่าคนไทยไม่ว่าระดับใดส่วนใหญ่มักไม่ออกเสียงรเป็นล (most research found that most Thai people in almost level often pronounce /l/ instead of /r/)

2. (คนไทยไม่ว่าระดับใดส่วนใหญ่) ออกเสียงควบกล้ำไม่ชัดเจน (Thai people in almost levels pronounce /l/ instead of /r/ and they pronounce cluster consonant sound unclearly.

DS :งานวิจัย(ส่วนใหญ่)แสดงให้เห็นว่าคนไทยไม่ว่า(อยู่ใน)ระดับใดมักออกเสียงร

ŋa:n-witɕa:i(suaya:l) -sadɛ:ŋ-haî-hen-wà:-khon-thai-mài-wà:(una:i)-ɹadab –dai -mak -ɔk–siaŋ-ɹ-

เป็นลและออกเสียงควบกล้ำไม่ชัดเจน

pen-l -lɛ -ɔk -siaŋ -kwuabklâm-maî-ʃad-tɕe;n

= Most research found that most Thai people in all levels often pronounce /l/ instead of /r/ and they pronounce cluster consonant sound unclearly.
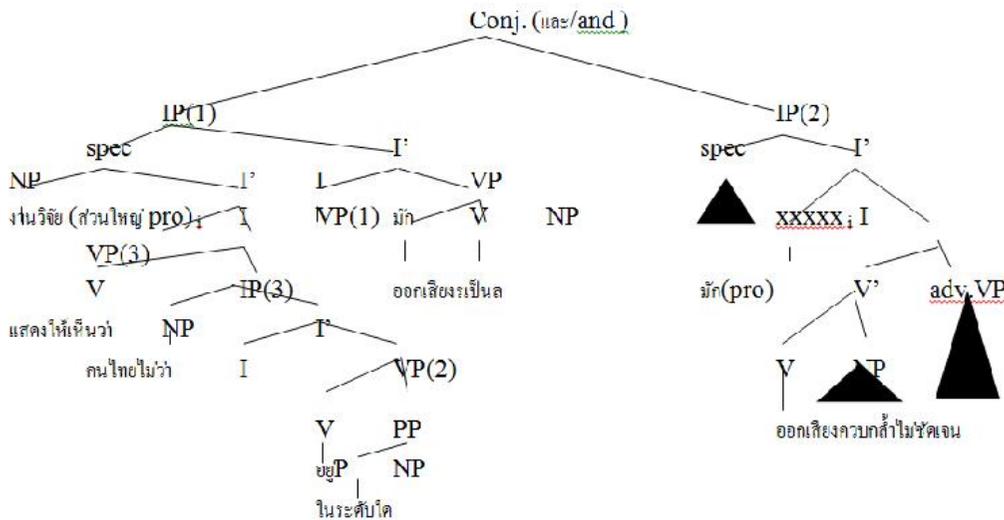
Figure 6. Sentence diagram. Note : xxxxx means งานวิจัยส่วนใหญ่แสดงให้เห็นว่าคนไทยไม่ว่าอยู่ในระดับใด

when this sentence was used in article, this had a derivation process below.

1. The word "ส่วนใหญ่/most" was moved to the place in front of "มัก/quite often"

2. The word "อยู่/be" and "ใน/in" were deleted in IP(3)

3. The phrase (งานวิจัยส่วนใหญ่แสดงให้เห็นว่า/most research found that most Thai people) in IP(2)
is deleted

4. The auxiliary verb "มัก/quite often" in IP(2) is also deleted.

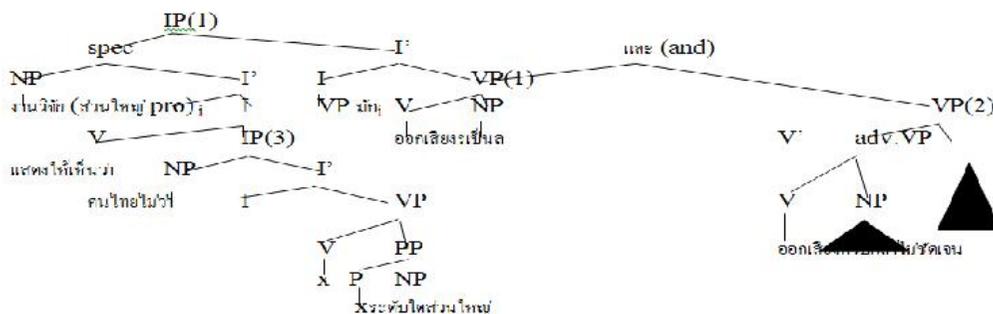5. VP under IP(1) is merged with VP under IP(2) and then it becomes simple sentence.

Figure 7. Sentence diagram.

In summary, the structure used in article tried to use simple sentence structure which was transformed from compound sentence. Notice that some phrases have a modifierwhich is a sentence. For example, "งานวิจัยแสดงให้เห็นว่าคนไทยไม่ว่าระดับใด" is a phrase as a subject.

[IP$_{(1)}$งานวิจัย(ส่วนใหญ่)แสดงให้เห็นว่า   [IP$_{(2)}$คนไทยไม่ว่า(อยู่ใน) ระดับใด]]

research(most)   found that   Thai people   is in all levels

As shown above, the sentence structure in Thai academic text likes English sentence structure so it indicates that English language has an influence on Thai academic writing.

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