

The Thai Compound Words Beginning with the /tua/ Morpheme

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Introduction

Word compounding is a major technique of word building in isolated languages such as Thai, Chinese, Vietnamese, etc. Especially in Thai, it is often mentioned by most linguists or in grammatical textbooks both written by Thais and foreigners that the head morphemes of the Thai compound words include /khon/ ‘person’, /phu^๑:/ ‘person’, /na^๒k/ ‘agent’ (the one who does), /mæ^๓:/ ‘mother, woman who does’, /cha^๔:/ ‘craftsman, artisan’, /ca^๕w/ ‘commander’, /cha:w/ ‘resident’, /ro:ŋ/ ‘hall’, /thi^๖:/ ‘place’, /khr^๗:/ ‘mechanism, engine, tool’, /na^๘am/ ‘water’, /kh^๙:/ ‘thing’, and /hu^{๑๐}/ ‘head’. However, since a lot of Thai compound words begin with /tua/ and more words beginning with /tua/ have been formed, the researcher has collected and studied the Thai compound words beginning with the /tua/ morpheme from various documents and dictionaries which have been used since the Sukhothai Period.

Methodology and Theoretical Frameworks

The researcher used data from documents already published. The concerned documents covered the Sukhothai Period until the present. The researcher has surveyed the preliminary documents and classified the found documents into 7 categories as follows:

1. Inscriptions
2. Essays
3. Annals
4. Laws, Royal Announcements
5. Memos, Royal Letters
6. Articles
7. Literary Prose, Stage Plays, Novels

The researcher then divided the relevant documents into 6 periods as well as categories of documents as follows:

1. Sukhothai Period: Documents are derived from inscriptions and essays.

2. Ayutthaya Period: Documents are derived from inscriptions, essays, annals, royal announcements and memos.

All documents of the Thonburi Period have been put together with the Ayutthaya Period, because there are, in the earlier said period, few numbers and different categories of the documents.

3. Rattanakosin Period is divided into 4 periods as follows:
 - 3.1 Reign of King Rama I-III: Documents are derived from annals, essays, memos, laws and literary prose.
 - 3.2 Reign of King Rama IV-V: Increased categories of documents are found including commented articles, royal writings and novels are found more.
 - 3.3 Reign of King Rama VI-VIII: Documents, which are very different from the previous periods, are about the stage plays.
 - 3.4 Present Period: Main documents are about the essays, articles and novels.

Documents in the same categories such as articles, essays, novels consist of a lot of numbers and different meanings. First, the researcher divided each document into groups, namely: names of author, contents, writing styles, language levels, and then make random a system of sampling groups from each group in order to get data from the concerned documents to cover all groups and categories.

The researcher collected data about the compound words being with /tua/ from the documents mentioned above, but also from dictionaries of different periods as follows:

1. Dictionary of the Siamese Language, Bradley, B. (1873)
2. Dictionary of Royal Institute (1950)
3. The Most Up-To-Date Thai Dictionary edited by Manit Manitjaroen (1961)
4. Dictionary of Royal Institute (1982)
5. Dictionary of Royal Institute (1999)
6. Dictionary of Matichon (2004)
7. Dictionary Online (Website: <http://www.thai-language.com/if/131250>)

After the researcher collected the data regarding the compound words /tua/ from documents as well as dictionaries as selected already, the researcher analyzed the data by using semantic concepts, namely: metaphor and analogy. Both the semantic concepts show that humans use the advantage from living things, in view of language, for intensifying meanings and

functions of words. The researcher thinks that both ways of thinking can explain the phenomenon of the increasing importance of the compound words /tua/ in the Thai language.

Some Thai Compound Words Beginning with the /tua/ Morpheme Used in the Sukhothai Period

In the Sukhothai Period, the /tua/ morpheme was placed before the names of animals such as /tua n๑๓a/ (body + meat) ‘land animals’ and /tua pla:/ (body + fish) ‘water animals’ (cited from King Ramkhamhaeng’s Stone Inscription 1).

Ishii, Akagi and Endo (1972) explained the meaning of the /tua/ morpheme used in the Sukhothai Period as ‘body, a number, self; used as a prefix to the name of animal’.

Other examples of the Thai compound words beginning with the /tua/ morpheme used in the Sukhothai Period include /tua-sa๑t/ (body + animal) ‘animal’ and /tua-ma→:/ (body + dog) ‘dog’.

The /tua/ morpheme that refers to animals in Thai is used in the same way as in the other Tai dialects. Kanitthanan (1976) revealed that the /thua⁴/ morpheme placed at the beginning of the compound words in the Saek language referred to animals such as:

- /thua⁴-raw⁶/ ‘louse’
- /thua⁴-maa²/ ‘dog’
- /thua⁴-mæw⁴/ ‘cat’
- /thua⁴-nuu²/ ‘mouse’
- /thua⁴-kaa⁶/ ‘crow’
- /thua⁴-kuy/ ‘shrimp’
- /thua⁴-lian⁴/ ‘eel’
- /thua⁴-paw⁶/ ‘crab’
- /thua⁴-truan⁴/ ‘earthworm’

Kanitthanan (1976) found the use of the /thua⁴/ morpheme referring to animals in the Saek language interesting because the /thua⁴/ morpheme is placed before all the names of animals. For example, if Saek people are asked what the animal is, their answers are always /thua⁴/ + name of an animal. However, when counting the number of animals, some of them will omit the /thua⁴/ morpheme before the names of animals, but mention the other /thua⁴/ morpheme, which is the classifier of animals, after the number, instead. For instance,

plaa²saam⁴thua⁴ (fish + three + classifier) ‘three fish’

kay⁶ haa⁶ thua⁴ (cock + three + classifier) ‘three cocks’
 paw² sip⁴ thua⁴ (crab + ten + classifier) ‘ten crabs’

The conclusion made from the examples above is that the /thua4/ morpheme in the Saek language is used either as a noun or a classifier. As in /thua⁴-mæw⁴ saam⁴ thua⁴/, the former /thua⁴/ is a noun, whereas the latter is a classifier. It may be inferred that the classifier /thua4/ is derived from the first syllable of the names of animals. Most Thai classifiers originated from this linguistic phenomenon. In fact, it is not unusual to place a classifier before a noun in Thai. However, this phenomenon is likely to disappear from the Thai language because changes in the word order are occurring in the Tai languages. The same phenomenon is evident in the Central Thai dialect and the other Thai dialects. Some examples are /hu→a-h→m/ ‘shallot’, /hu→a-kra-thiam/ ‘garlic’, /sa→:y-bua/ ‘lotus branches’, /sa→:y-si→n/ ‘holy cords’, ‘sa→:y-e-w/ ‘belt’, /se↘n-kho→n/ ‘bodily hair’, /se↘n-pho→m/ ‘hair’, and /se↘n-mi→:/ ‘grass noodle’. The classifiers /hu→a/, /sa→:y/, and /se↘n/ have completely become part of the compound words.

Among all the Thai dialects, the word order in the White Tai and Black Tai dialects remain unchanged, so it is like that of the Ancient Thai dialect. That is, numbers and classifiers are usually placed before nouns. For example, the White Tai and Black Tai people say /sip¹ to: ma:⁴/ (ten + classifier + dogs) ‘ten dogs’, whereas the Central Thai people say /ma→: si→p tua/ (dogs + ten + classifier) ‘ten dogs’.

The Increasing Use of the /tua/ Morpheme as the First Part of a Compound Word

The data collected has revealed that, in the reign of King Rama I, the /tua/ morpheme was placed before another noun to form a compound noun. This type of compound noun was mostly found in the Three Seals Law such as:

/tua-tha↘:t/	‘slave’
/tua-phu↘:-ku↘:/	‘money borrower’
/tua-phra↘y/	‘servant class’
/tua-co:n/	‘thief’
/tua-phu↘: ch↘:/	‘cheater’
/tua-co↘:t/	‘plaintiff’
/tua-le↘:k/	‘slaves with tattooed number’
/tua-khwa:m/	‘people with lawsuits’

/tua-phi^๑-ru^{๑๑}t/ ‘suspect’

Since the reign of King Rama V, more compound words preceded by the /tua/ morpheme that refer to ‘person’ have been coined such as:

/tua-la-kho:n/ ‘character’
 /tua-^{๑๑}le^๑:k/ ‘leading actor/actress’
 /tua-sa^๑m-khan/ ‘important person’
 /tua-ta-lo^๑k/ ‘comedian’
 /tua-di:/ ‘bad person’

Moreover, since the reign of King Rama IV, the /tua/ morpheme before nouns has referred to other things, not animals nor human beings such as:

/tua-ya^๑:n/ ‘example’
 /tua-^{๑๑}a^๑k s^๑→:n/ ‘character’
 /tua-le^๑:k/ ‘number’
 /tua-sa-ko^๑t/ ‘spelling’
 /tua- m^๑an/ ‘city center’

At present, more compound words beginning with /tua/ have been formed to name new terms in the society. Some of them represent new technology or concepts such as /tua-plē:n-pen-di-^{๑๑}ci-t^๑n/ ‘digitizer’, /tua-chi^๑-le^๑nay-^{๑๑}in-th^๑:ne^๑t/ ‘universal resource locator or URL’, /tua-t^๑pla^๑k-fay/ ‘plug inverter’, /tua-ke^๑p-le^๑-du^๑:t- khwa:m- ch^๑:n/ ‘dryer’, /tua-chi^๑-wa^๑t/ ‘indicator’, /tua-da^๑t-cha-ni:/ ‘index’, /tua -re^๑/ ‘accelerator’, and /tua- mē^๑:/ ‘the real one’.

Assumptions on the Increasing Use of the /tua/ Morpheme in Compound Nouns

The researcher found the reasons why Thai people prefer to use the /tua/ morpheme to form new words to be as follows: meanings, metaphors and analogy.

In the first period, the /tua/ morpheme in the Thai compound words referred to animals and, in later periods, it referred to ‘person’, it can be concluded that the language users applied the metaphorical process, using the common semantic feature [+animate] for both animals and human beings.

/sa^๑t/ ‘animals’ → /khon/ ‘human beings’
 [+animate] [+animate]

Later, the /tua/ morpheme was used to refer to non-living things such as /tua- s[⊙]→:n/ ‘characters’ and /tua- le[⊙]:k/ ‘numbers’ because, like the animals, such things have heads and tails. More mathematical compound words have been formed this way such as /tua- ha[→]:n/ ‘multiplier’, /tua- khu:n/ ‘divider’, and /tua- pra- k[⊙]:p/ ‘composition’. Similarly, the word /tua- m[⊙]an/ ‘city center’ is considered as the main or central part like the trunk of a living thing, and the /tua/ morpheme in /tua- ya[⊙]:n/ ‘examples’ has a concrete meaning that refers to ‘a single thing’.

The /tua/ morpheme is found in technical terms such as /tua tham- la- la: y/ ‘dissolver’, /tua- kla: n/ ‘medium’, /tua- nam- fay- fa[⊙]:/ ‘conductor’, and /tua- ple: n- sa[→] n- ya: n/ ‘adapter’. It is likely that the metaphorical and analogical processes have been applied because, like living things, the machines can do specific things. More compound words that begin with the /tua/ morpheme have been formed to satisfy the arrival of new technology, especially in computer science and communication.

The metaphorical and analogical processes are also applied by the Royal Institute in coining linguistic terms beginning with the /tua/ morpheme such as:

/tua- khi [→] an/	‘script’
/tua- khi [→] an- pra- di [⊙] t/	‘artificial script’
/tua- chu [⊙] ay- kri- ya: /	‘auxiliary’
/tua- ch [⊙] am/	‘connector’
/tua- the: n/	‘representation’
/tua- the: n- thi [⊙] :/	‘substitute’
/tua- ne [⊙] n- s [★] →: m- khwa: m/	‘intensifier’
/tua- bo [⊙] n- khun- na- la [⊙] k- sa- na [⊙] /	‘qualifier’
/tua- bo [⊙] n- chi [⊙] :- ka: ro [⊙] k/	‘case marker’
/tua- bo [⊙] t/	‘text’
/tua- be [⊙] :p/	‘model’

According to Ungerer and Schmid (1996), the initial stage of using metaphors in a language is limited before the metaphors become more widely used. For example, the /hu[→] a/ ‘head’ morpheme has been more frequently used in some new concepts such as /hu[→] a- ti: an/ ‘head of a bed’, /hu[→] a- ban- day/ ‘top of a stairway’, /hu[→] a- la[⊙] y/ ‘shoulder’, hu[→] a- cay/ ‘heart’, and /hu[→] a- tha- no[→] n/ ‘the first part of a road’. After having been regularly used or

conventionalized in daily lives, the new meaning of the /hu→a/ morpheme has become lexicalized and recorded in the standard dictionaries. Therefore, it is not metaphorically used anymore and has become a dead metaphor.

Semantic Changes of the Thai Compound Words Beginning with the /tua/ Morpheme

Semantic changes have occurred with the Thai compound words beginning with the /tua/ morpheme such as /tua-phu๑:/ ‘male animal’, /tua-mia/ ‘female animal’. The /tua/ morpheme that refers to animals has been used since the Sukhothai Period. However, in the reign of King Rama V, it was used in a different context and had a new meaning. For example,

1) ดอกกุหลาบเป็นตัวผู้ตัวเมียอยู่ในตัว ตัวผู้ คือ มีเมื่อดอยู่ที่ปลายเกสร

/d๑k-ku-la๑p pen tua-phu๑: tua-mia yu๑: nay tua tua-phu๑:
kh๑:

rose to be male animal female animal live in body male animal is
mi: me๑t yu๑: thi๑: pla:y ke:-s๑→:n/
have seed live at end the inside of flower
‘Rose as a flower comprising stamen and pistil at the inside of flower.’

2) รวมใจความว่า อย่างอเมริกันใช้ไฟฟ้าตัวผู้ตัวเมียหนุนให้มากระทบกันเป็นประกาย
(พระราชนิพนธ์ในรัชกาลที่ 5 เรื่อง “ไกลบ้าน”)

/ruam cay-khwa:m wa๑: ya๑:η a-me:-ri-kan cha๑y fay-fa๑: tua-phu๑:
tua-mia

Total content that as American use electric male animal female animal
nu→n ha๑y ma: kra-tho๑p kan pen pra-ka:y/
bear give come touch together is sparks

(King Rama V's Memoirs)

In the first example, the phrase /tua-phu๑: tua-mia/ has a broadened meaning, that is, in addition to animals, it was used with plants. In the second example, the same phrase refers to electric magnets, which was a new form of technology in that period, and reflects the fact that people tend to apply old words to describe new things in societies.

Other examples of the semantic changes in the Thai compound words beginning with the /tua/ morpheme are as follows:

/tua-pla^๑:w/ (body + blank) is defined as ‘unarmed’ in the B.E. 2504 dictionary defines, but as ‘alone or without any belongings or carrying nothing’ in the B.E. 2542 dictionary.

/tua-m^๑an/ (body + city) is defined as ‘city surrounded by the wall’ in the B.E. 2504 dictionary, but as ‘city center, often surrounded by rivers or walls’ in the B.E. 2525 and 2542 dictionaries compiled by the Royal Institute and as ‘community in the city center’ in the B.E. 2547 Matichon dictionary.

/tua-ke^๑η/ (body + good) is defined as ‘skilled person such as skilled soldiers’ in the A.D. 1873 dictionary of the Siamese language, but as ‘frequently worn clothes’ in the B.E. 2547 Matichon dictionary.

/tua-ko:η/ (body + bending) is defined as ‘hunchback, cheater or deceiver’ in the A.D. 1873 dictionary of the Siamese language, but as ‘bad characters or antagonists in plays, dramas or movies’ in the B.E. 2547 Matichon dictionary.

Therefore, the Thai compound words have been semantically changed from endocentric or direct meanings to exocentric or conventionalized meanings by means of the metaphorical process.

Conclusion

It was found that more Thai compound words beginning with the /tua/ morpheme have been formed. Although the /tua/ morpheme which refers to animals has always been the first part of the compound since the Sukhothai Period, when some specific meanings need to be emphasized, it is presently placed before the names of animals instead of using the names alone.

The reason why the /tua/ morpheme is widely used for forming Thai compound nouns is that the meaning of /tua/ is metaphorically oriented. The users of the Thai language have increasingly used the process analogy to create new compounds. As clearly seen from the data collected from the dictionaries of different periods, the number of compound words beginning with the /tua/ morpheme is increasing. The researcher also found that the dictionaries compiled by private sectors reveal the existence of new technical terms and spoken words in our society. Therefore, it is likely that if continuously used, those new compounds will be collected by the Royal Institute someday. Also, the words that exist in the dictionaries of the old periods may later become archaic words or disappear from current use. The researcher thinks that a study of

any aspect of Thai compound nouns will certainly bring benefits about word coinage and lexicography.

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