

Thailand's "Straight-Talking" Monk: A Discourse Analysis of the Hortatory Speech of Phra Phayom Kalayano

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1. Introduction

Few figures on the contemporary Thai religious scene stand out more prominently than Phra Phayom Kalayano (พระพรหม กาลยานุ). Possessing only a fourth grade education, this monk has risen to become a highly popular public speaker, attracting the attention of both the upper class and the urban/rural poor. He is unique among Thai Buddhist clergy in that he was among the first monks to preach in Thai (rather than the sacred language of Pali). His discourses are so inviting and entertaining, that tapes of his sermons frequently outsell those of famous rock stars.

The purpose of this paper is to examine Phra Phayom's oratorical style. How does he package his message? What sort of linguistic devices have been employed in engineering his public speaking successes? What can be learned from his sermons about his audience's thought processes? A twelve year old novice at a temple in Trang Province once told me, "Some monks preach well, but Phra Phayom preaches better." Why is this?

The research for this paper was conducted in Thailand between 1992 and 1993. This paper represents a condensation and refinement of my MA thesis at Payap University, Chiang Mai. I am greatly indebted to Dr. Fran Woods and Dr. Amnuay Tapingkae of Payap University, and Dr. Nirund Jivasantikarn of Yonok College for their support and assistance in this project. I am also indebted to Phra Phayom himself for taking time out of his incredibly busy schedule to speak with a *farang* (foreigner) like me.

All five of the Phra Phayom sermons studied here represent transcriptions of "live" sermons recorded on tape cassettes. These were purchased from Phra Phayom's temple, as well as from various record stores throughout the Kingdom. These tapes were transcribed into standard Thai script by native speakers. The transcripts were then checked by other Thai speakers (including myself) to ensure accurate texts--especially important where non-standard speech was concerned. Translations into English were then made with the assistance of Rujirat Chaisang of Yonok College. During the analysis phase of the project, charts were made of

sentence topic, paragraph type, thematic progression, rhetorical questions, and a number of other phenomenon.

2. Surface Features

A communicative act, such as a sermon, cannot be understood merely in terms of the words employed. Rather, it is in the complex interaction of language, thought, and culture that communication takes places. The words are often only a dim reflection of what is really going on. For this reason, the paper will first examine the surface structure of Phra Phayom's orations, then proceed to some deeper matters of text organization and hortatory intent.

The sermons studied here all have certain surface features in common, and can be divided into several basic segments: Salutation, Stage, Body, and Conclusion/Terminus (figure 1).

SALUTATION	STAGE			BODY Megasections (1...n)	CONCLUSION	TERMINUS
	TOPIC ANNOUNCEMENT	GLOBAL CONFLICT SITUATION	APPEAL TO BUDDHISM			
Formulaic sentence(s) Obligatory blessing Optional audience specific phrase of address	Formulaic sentence or flow-in from salutation	Rhetorical questions often present	Buddha said.... Definition of Pali terms	Boundaries marked by Aw! Stories, commands (explicit and implicit), jokes, personal anecdotes, etc. Divisible into sections, subsections, paragraphs	Marked by Aw la! Explicit and implicit commands Reference to or summary of main theme(s)	Marked by Aw la! Formulaic Obligatory blessing Optional audience-specific reference Explicit and implicit commands

Figure 1. Surface structure of a typical Phra Phayom sermon.

2.1 Salutation

Phra Phayom's salutations are formulaic in structure and often contain blessings addressed directly to the audience:¹

(1) "Wealth" (§ 1)²

<i>k^hɔ̌</i>	<i>k^hwaam</i>	<i>càʔrəən</i>	<i>naj</i>	<i>t^ham</i>	<i>coŋ</i>	<i>mii</i>
request	nom.	progress	in	dhamma	please	have
<i>tæ̀</i>	<i>t^haan</i>	<i>ʔàʔt^hʔkaan</i>	<i>k^háʔnáacaan</i>	<i>læʔ</i>	<i>náksək̚sǎa</i>	<i>t^hʔi</i>
to	you	rector	faculty	and	students	that
<i>k^hwaam</i>	<i>soŋcaj</i>	<i>naj</i>	<i>t^ham</i>	<i>t^húk</i>	<i>t^haan</i>	
nom.	interest	in	dhamma	every	you	

May progress in the dhamma be to you--rector, faculty, and students--all of you who are interested in the dhamma.

(2) "Greed" (§ 1)

<i>k^hɔ̌</i>	<i>k^hwaam</i>	<i>càʔrəən</i>	<i>naj</i>	<i>t^ham</i>	<i>coŋ</i>	
request	nom.	progress	in	dhamma	please	
<i>mii</i>	<i>tæ̀</i>	<i>t^húk</i>	<i>k^hon</i>	<i>t^hʔi</i>	<i>soŋcaj</i>	<i>naj</i>
have	to	every	person	that	interested	in
<i>maa</i>	<i>tráp</i>	<i>faŋ</i>	<i>t^ham</i>	<i>naj</i>	<i>wan</i>	<i>nú</i>
come	hear	listen	dhamma	in	day	this

May progress in the dhamma be to every person who is interested in coming to listen and hearken to the dhamma today.

These formulaic salutations are the type of statements that one would expect to hear from virtually any monk or other highly respected person. Phra Phayom's repetition of near synonyms such as *tráp faŋ* 'hear,' 'listen' is typical of Thai blessing formulae, as is the rather rapid rate of speech.⁴

¹ A great deal of the material in this section is excerpted directly from my Payap thesis.

² Paragraph numbers in this paper refer to the English translations of the sermons as they appear in the appendix of my Payap thesis.

³ Nominalizer

⁴ These features are even more pronounced in the terminus.

Sociologically, the salutation immediately establishes or at least reinforces the fact that the speaker is a religious figure, one who has enough authority and, by implication in the Thai world view, sufficient merit to be in a position to bless others.

2.2 Stage

Each of the sermons analyzed contain a distinct segment between the salutation and sermon body which serves to effectively "set the stage" for the rest of the sermon. The stage contains an optional topic announcement plus an obligatory global conflict situation and an obligatory appeal to Buddhist theology.

2.2.1 Topic Announcement

Topic announcements, when present, are very forthright, following a "Today I will talk about . . ." formula.

(3) "Wealth" (§ 1)

wan nīi kṣṇ cà dāj klàaw t^hṣṣ rṇaṇ sáp
day this part. will able to speak about story possession

sṓmbàt kàp mǎ?núť sṓmbàt
wealth and human wealth

Today (I) will talk about the topic of material wealth and wealth of personhood.

(4) "Stick with It" (§ 1)

naj kaan t^hṣi cà p^hūt naj wan nīi k^hṣ rṇaṇ
in part. that will speak in day this is story of

k^hamwáa wí?cǐ?kitchàa naj chíiwít
word that wicikitcha in life

In (my) speech to you today (I) will talk about the term *wicikitcha* in life.

When such explicit topic announcements are not present, Phra Phayom slowly moves from the salutation into the global conflict situation.

(5) "Greed" (¶ 1)

<i>k^hṣṣ</i>	<i>k^hwaam</i>	<i>càʔrəən</i>		<i>naj</i>	<i>t^ham</i>	<i>coŋ</i>	<i>mii</i>
request	nom.	progress		in	dhamma	please	have
<i>t^húk</i>	<i>k^hon</i>	<i>t^hṣṣ</i>	<i>sōncaj</i>	<i>naj</i>	<i>kaan</i>	<i>t^hṣṣ</i>	<i>maa</i>
everyperson	that	interested		in	nom.	that	come
<i>t^ham</i>	<i>naj</i>	<i>wan</i>	<i>nūi</i>	<i>lāk</i>	<i>t^ham</i>	<i>t^hṣṣ</i>	<i>trəp</i>
dhamma	in	day	this	principle	dhamma	that	hear
<i>k^hṣṣ</i>	<i>wáa</i>	<i>pen</i>	<i>pràʔjòot</i>	<i>kúakun</i>	<i>tòɔ</i>	<i>kaan</i>	<i>fəŋ</i>
think that		is	benefit	offering	for	nom.	listen
<i>damnəən</i>	<i>chiiwít</i>	<i>naj</i>	<i>kaan</i>	<i>t^hamháj</i>	<i>chiiwít</i>	<i>jàaŋ</i>	
conduct	life	in	nom.	cause	life	sort	
<i>sòtchūn</i>	<i>rūu</i>	<i>səuptòɔ</i>	<i>wáj</i>	<i>jàaŋ</i>	<i>sòtchūn</i>		
fresh	or	follow	purp.	sort	fresh		

May progress in the dhamma be to every person who is interested in coming to listen and hearken to the dhamma today--dhamma principles that (they) think to be of benefit to the conduct of life, an offering for the conduct of life--a life that is fresh, a life that draws out freshness.

(Phra Phayom then continues to talk about freshness in life, as well as the things that can interfere with freshness and thus make life miserable.)

2.2.2 Global Conflict Situation

The sermons examined in this study next contain a global conflict situation--global in the sense that it is operative for the entire discourse.⁶ Over the course of one or more paragraphs, Phra Phayom states plainly that there is some sort of problem which poses a dilemma for people. Global conflict situations examined in these sermons include the following:

⁶Other conflict situations which belong at the paragraph or section level are mentioned frequently throughout the duration of a typical Phra Phayom sermon.

<u>Sermon Title</u>	<u>Summary of Conflict Situation</u>
"Greed"	Our lives are not always as fresh and lively as we would like them to be.
"Wealth"	Is material wealth or wealth of personhood more important?
"Politics"	Our "common lot" is adversely affected through pollution, political corruption, and other social problems.
"Stick with It"	We often have trouble keeping everything together--grabbing this and losing that while being generally indecisive.

It is interesting to note that the actual wording or theme of the global conflict situation need not appear through the body of the sermon. In "Greed," for example, the themes of freshness and liveliness are not mentioned again until the final sentences of the discourse. Still, a survey of native Thai speakers who had listened to the sermon found that liveliness and freshness, along with the more frequently mentioned greed, constitute the themes of the oration.

The global conflict situation thus serves to justify the entirety of the sermon to come. The listeners are made aware of a problem which demands their attention. Without such a conflict situation the speaker would have no legitimate reason to speak; the listeners no compelling reason to listen.

With the global conflict situation, Phra Phayom introduces one of his most used speaking devices: the rhetorical question. From the very outset of the sermons attempts are made to gain a rapport with the audience, make them feel a part of the preaching process. Rhetorical questions may either be addressed directly to the audience (something done most frequently in the body of the sermon) or reflect questions, thoughts, etc. that Phra Phayom thinks might or should be going through the listeners' minds.

(6) "Greed" (§ 6)

<i>man</i>	<i>kɔɔ</i>	<i>mii</i>	<i>wāa</i>	<i>ʔàʔraj</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>tʰambhāj</i>	<i>kʰon</i>	<i>nīa</i>	<i>māj</i>
they	part.	have	say	what	come	cause	people	this	not
<i>mii</i>	<i>chiiwīt</i>	<i>chiiwaa</i>		<i>ʔàʔraj</i>	<i>pen</i>	<i>muun</i>	<i>rāak</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>kāt</i>
have	life	lively		what	is	primary	root	come	bite
<i>kin</i>	<i>rāak</i>	<i>kʰɔɔŋ</i>	<i>chiiwīt</i>	<i>chiiwaa</i>					
eat	root	of	life	lively					

Someone asks, "What comes and causes these people not to have lively life? What is the source, the root that comes and bites and eats the root of lively life?"

(7) "Wealth" (§ 2)

<i>kɔɔ</i>	<i>pen</i>	<i>kʰɔɔŋ</i>	<i>tʰī</i>	<i>ciŋ</i>	<i>lææw</i>	<i>kʰon</i>	<i>chɔɔp</i>	<i>tāŋ</i>
part.	is	of	that	truly	already	people	like	make
<i>hūakʰɔɔ</i>	<i>kan</i>		<i>wāa</i>	<i>mii</i>	<i>sáp</i>	<i>kàp</i>	<i>mii</i>	
topic	together		say	have	possession	with	have	
<i>kʰunnáʔtʰamʔan</i>	<i>nāj</i>	<i>dii</i>	<i>kwàa</i>	<i>kan</i>				
merit	unit	which	good	than	together			

It is true that people like to say, "There is wealth and then there is merit; which one is better?"

2.2.3 Appeal to Buddhism

After a problem has been made explicit through the global conflict situation, Phra Phayom directs his listeners to the solutions outlined in Buddhist theology. This is a very vital part of the presentation, as it provides what Ivan Lowe (1986:199) terms a "point of departure" for the rest of the text--the outworking of the Buddhist solution.

(8) "Greed" (§ 7)

<i>man</i>	<i>kɔɔ</i>	<i>mii</i>	<i>lāk</i>	<i>naj</i>	<i>pʰúttʰáʔsāasàʔnāa</i>	<i>nīa</i>	<i>tʰān</i>
it	part.	have	principle	in	buddhism	this	he
<i>tʰū</i>	<i>wāa</i>	<i>mii</i>	<i>rāak</i>	<i>ŋāw</i>	<i>kʰɔɔŋ</i>	<i>kʰwaam</i>	<i>sāw</i>
believe	that	have	root	root	of	nom	sad
							darkened
<i>jūu</i>	<i>sāam</i>	<i>rāak</i>	<i>rīak</i>	<i>wāa</i>	<i>ʔàʔkuʔsōnlāʔmuun</i>	<i>sāam</i>	
with	three	root	call	that	root sins	three	

Well, there is a principle in the Buddhist religion. Buddha held that there are three roots of sadness. These three roots are called the *Akusalamun* ('three root sins').

(9) "Wealth" (¶ 2)

<i>p^hrá?p^hútt^há?sāasā?nāa</i>	<i>māj</i>	<i>sǝwn</i>	<i>hāj</i>	<i>t^hij</i>	<i>sáp</i>
buddha religion	not	teach	cause	drop	possession
<i>sǝmbàt</i>	<i>tææ</i>	<i>wāa</i>	<i>māj</i>	<i>sǝwn</i>	<i>wāa</i>
wealth	but	that	not	teach	that
				<i>jàa</i>	<i>mua</i>
				do not	blurry
					<i>maw</i>
					drunk
<i>t^hāan kǝw</i>	<i>sǝwn</i>	<i>wāa</i>	<i>jàa</i>	<i>mua</i>	<i>nèij</i>
he part.	teach	that	do not	blurry	one
					<i>k^hāw</i>
					enter
					<i>maa</i>
					come
<i>sǝm</i>	<i>wáj</i>	<i>k^hāw</i>	<i>rīak</i>	<i>sǝmbàt</i>	<i>rīak</i>
increase	purp.	they	call	wealth	call
					<i>p^haasāa</i>
					language
<i>wát wāa</i>	<i>?ā?rī?á?sáp</i>				
temple that	high wealth				

Buddhism does not teach us to throw away material wealth. It teaches, "Do not love it." It teaches, "Do not become enchanted with material wealth." And the Buddha added one more thing. He called it "Wealth of personhood." In the language of the temple it is called *Ariyasap* ('higher wealth').

Another important facet of the appeal to Buddhism is the introduction of key terms in the "language of the temple" or "language of the dhamma": the sacred Pali tongue. These terms will be repeated throughout the course of the sermon, and thus qualify as major themes.

Like the conflict situation, the appeal to Buddhism provides a justification for the rest of the sermon. It legitimizes the speaker, showing the authority from which the statements to follow are drawn. The appeal to Buddhism also contains a sort of implicit command: "Listen up! Something important--something related to Buddhism--is coming."

2.3 Body

The largest section of Phra Phayom's sermons is the body. The body itself can be divided into various layers, including megasection, section, subsection and paragraph, as shown below:

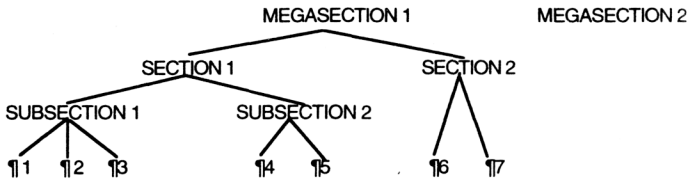


Figure 2. Schema of Megasection Organization (Hypothetical).

Determination of megasection boundaries lies with the use of a specific exclamatory word. In all of the sermons examined, the particle *ʔāw* (hereafter Romanized as *Aw!*) occurs infrequently, and virtually always seems to mark a division between previous material of secondary or tertiary pertinence to the sermon's overall theme and the introduction of either significantly new information or a further step in the argument.⁷

2.4 Conclusion

The conclusion of a Phra Phayom sermon serves to summarize the main points of the oration. Conclusions are marked by *ʔāw lāʔ* (hereafter Romanized as

⁷A note on *Aw!*: The exact meaning of this particle is somewhat hard to determine. A unique feature of spoken Thai, it can be written several different ways. Most of my language assistants rendered it either *เฮา* (definitely misleading) or *เฮ้*. The latter spelling was followed in a Thai newspaper cartoon (*Puatskan*, 7 January 1993, page 11) brought to my attention by William Hanna of Payap University. Neither Mary R. Haas' *Thai-English Student's Dictionary* (1964) nor So Sethaputra's *New Model Thai-English Dictionary* (latest printing, 1990) contain relevant entries for these spellings of *Aw!*. The latter volume does, however contain an entry for *เฮ้*, defined as "an exclamation of surprise" (Sethaputra, 338).

Other instances of *Aw!* in Phra Phayom's sermons are found in some cases of reported speech. In these, *Aw!* seems to express astonishment on the part of the quoted speaker, matching Sethaputra. Perhaps this "exclamation of surprise" has a different function on the discourse level.

Aw la!) and may contain both implicit and explicit commands as well as references to the main theme(s) of the discourse.

(10) "Wealth" (§ 154-56)

<i>ʔaw</i> aw	<i>láp</i> la	<i>kɔɔ</i> part.	<i>sàʔrùp</i> summary	<i>lɔɔj</i> at all	<i>wáa</i> that	<i>máʔnúť</i> human	<i>sǝmbàť</i> wealth
<i>kɔɔ</i> part.	<i>k^{hu}</i> is	<i>k^hráaŋ</i> device	<i>plúumcaj</i> happiness	<i>sanĩráp</i> for	<i>máʔnúť</i> human	<i>sáp</i> possession	
<i>sǝmbàť</i> wealth	<i>man</i> it	<i>kɔɔ</i> part.	<i>pen</i> is	<i>k^hráaŋ</i> device	<i>plúumcaj</i> happiness	<i>sámrap</i> for	
<i>máʔnúť</i> human	<i>tææ</i> but	<i>p^hráʔp^húťt^hásaasanāa</i> buddhism	<i>kɔɔ</i> part.	<i>máj</i> not	<i>dáj</i> did	<i>bòɔk</i> tell	
<i>wáa</i> that	<i>jàa</i> do not	<i>ʔaw</i> want	<i>sáp</i> possession	<i>sǝmbàť</i> wealth	<i>tææ</i> but	<i>t^háan</i> he	<i>klàp</i> return
<i>bòɔk</i> tell	<i>wáa</i> that	<i>háj</i> cause	<i>pàʔlit</i> produce	<i>háj</i> give	<i>máak</i> much	<i>ʔáj</i> ay	<i>sáp</i> possession
<i>sǝmbàť</i> wealth	<i>nía</i> this	<i>bóɔrĩʔp^hók</i> consume	<i>tææ</i> only	<i>nóɔj</i> little	<i>cháj</i> use	<i>càj</i> pay	<i>tææ</i> only
<i>lææw</i> then	<i>lǝa</i> excess	<i>cíat</i> give	<i>chúaj</i> help	<i>p^húu</i> person	<i>ʔúun</i> other	<i>háj</i> give	<i>máak</i> much
<i>máak</i> much	<i>thamháj</i> give	<i>máak</i> much	<i>háa</i> seek	<i>háj</i> give	<i>máak</i> much	<i>dúaj</i> with	<i>wíʔt^hii</i> technique
<i>sùʔcarít</i> truth	<i>lææw</i> then	<i>maa</i> come	<i>kin</i> eat	<i>jùu</i> live	<i>cháj</i> use	<i>càj</i> pay	<i>tææ</i> only
<i>nóɔj</i> little	<i>lææw</i> then	<i>lǝa</i> excess	<i>cíat</i> give	<i>háj</i> give	<i>p^húu</i> person	<i>ʔúun</i> other	<i>sáp</i> possession
<i>jàaŋ</i> sort	<i>nán</i> that	<i>kɔɔ</i> part.	<i>dii</i> good	<i>t^hii</i> at	<i>núu</i> here	<i>mii</i> have	<i>tææ</i> only
<i>t^ham</i> do	<i>nóɔj</i> little	<i>jàak</i> want	<i>dáj</i> get	<i>máak</i> much			

Aw la! In summary, wealth of personhood is a thing that gives human beings happiness. [Material] wealth is also a thing that gives human beings happiness. But the Buddhist religion, well, doesn't say, 'Don't have material wealth,' but rather, 'Give away a lot.' So produce a lot but use only a little of your wealth. Don't spend a lot. Give the excess to other people--that kind of wealth is good. Nowadays there are only the type that do a little and want a lot....(final story about people who buy refrigerators on credit only to fill them with bottles of water and a few oranges).

(11) "Greed" (§ 237-39)

kʰɔʔ ʔáw láʔ wan níi kʰoŋ kʰáæ nía náʔ
 part. aw la day this should amount this you know

kʰɔʔ jàak càʔ bòʔk wáj nía raw maa wát kan
 part. want will tell purp. this we come temple together

maa tʰáaŋ kan háj ʔàʔkùʔsǝnbun man baŋbaw
 come cleanout together cause root sins it lighten

paj láæw kʰɔʔ táŋ náa táŋ taa tʰam paj tʰə
 go then part. raise face raise eyes do go imp.

kʰraj kʰáw māj kʰáwcaj chíiwít raw jajpai
 anyone they not understand life us however

raw kʰɔʔ tʰam kʰɔʔŋ raw paj conkràʔtʰáŋ
 we part. do of we go until

tʰísùt háj man tʰáŋ kʰwaam pen kʰon māj
 finally make it until nom. is person not

mii loopʰá māj mii tʰoosàʔmāj mii moohàʔ
 have greed not have ugly not have ignorance

tɔʔn nán chíiwít kʰɔʔ càʔ mii chíiwaa mii
 time that life part. will have liveliness have

tʰáŋ chíiwít chíiwaa
 both life liveliness

Aw la! Well, this is enough for today, you know. I wanted to tell you these things. We came to the temple to clean things up and lighten the load of the root sins. So let us then raise our faces, raise our eyes and do it. Although other people might not understand us, we will live like this until we finally reach the point of being people who are without greed, without hatred, without ignorance. At that time, well, we will have liveliness—both life and liveliness.

2.5 Terminus

The termini of Phra Phayom's sermons are similar in form to the salutations.

Termini are marked by *Aw la!* and contain an obligatory blessing, an optional audience-specific reference, an obligatory back-reference to the main theme(s) of the discourse, and obligatory implicit and explicit commands.

(12) "Wealth" (§ 157-59)

<i>ʔāw láʔ</i> aw la	<i>bàtnii kɔɔ</i> now part.	<i>kʰɔɔ</i> request	<i>ʔuajpʰon</i> bless	<i>háj</i> give	<i>kʰáʔnáʔ</i> faculty
<i>kruu</i> teachers	<i>ʔaacaan</i> professors	<i>níʔsīt náksùksáa</i> studentstudent	<i>tʰii</i> that	<i>tāŋcaj faŋ</i> decide listen	
<i>maa dúaj</i> come also	<i>dii taʔlɔɔt</i> good all	<i>kɔɔ</i> part.	<i>kʰɔɔ</i> request	<i>háj</i> give	<i>tʰúk kʰon</i> every person
<i>dáj tʰáŋ</i> recive both	<i>sáp</i> possession	<i>sǝmbàt</i> wealth	<i>læʔ</i> and	<i>maʔnúʔ</i> human	<i>sǝmbát</i> wealth
<i>sáp</i> possession	<i>sǝmbàt</i> wealth	<i>háj</i> give	<i>kʰwaam</i> nom.	<i>sàʔdùak</i> comfortable	<i>sàʔbaaj</i> comfortable
<i>maʔnúʔ</i> human	<i>sǝmbát</i> wealth	<i>háj</i> give	<i>kʰwaam</i> nom.	<i>sùk</i> happiness	<i>saʔŋòpjen</i> calm cool
<i>kʰɔɔ</i> request	<i>háj</i> give	<i>tʰúk</i> every	<i>kʰon dáj tʰáŋ</i> person recive both	<i>kʰwaam</i> nom.	<i>sàʔdùak</i> comfortable
<i>sàʔbaaj</i> comfortable	<i>læʔ</i> and	<i>kɔɔ</i> part.	<i>bùak kàp</i> added with	<i>kʰwaamsùk</i> nom. happiness	<i>saŋŋòpjen</i> calm cool
<i>tàʔlɔɔt</i> every	<i>paj</i> go	<i>tʰúk</i> every	<i>tʰiʔwaa</i> day	<i>raatriikaan</i> night	<i>tʰəən</i> imp.

Aw la! Now, may blessings be upon the faculty, teachers, professors, and students who have given themselves to listening well throughout this time. May everyone get both material wealth and wealth of personhood. Material wealth gives convenience and comfortableness; wealth of personhood gives happiness, calmness, and coolness. May everyone get both convenient comfortableness and, added to that, happiness, calmness, and coolness throughout every day and night.

(13) "Greed" (§ 240-42)

<i>ʔāw láʔ</i> aw la	<i>kɔɔ</i> part.	<i>kʰɔɔ</i> request	<i>háj</i> give	<i>ʔamnáat</i> power	<i>kaan</i> nom.	<i>faŋ</i> listen	<i>tʰam</i> dhamma
<i>banjaaj kaan</i> lecture nom.	<i>tʰam</i> make	<i>bun sūn</i> make merit	<i>tʰaan</i> make merit	<i>kɔɔ</i> part.	<i>tàʔlɔɔt tʰáŋ</i> whole both	<i>wan</i> day	<i>nii</i> this
<i>càʔ sòŋ</i> will send	<i>pʰŏn</i> fruit	<i>háj</i> give	<i>mii</i> have	<i>kamlaj</i> power	<i>cīt</i> heart	<i>mii</i> have	<i>ʔamnáat</i> power
<i>cīt mii</i> heart have	<i>cīttaanúʔpʰáap</i> peace of heart	<i>tʰii</i> that	<i>càʔ</i> will	<i>kʰàp</i> drive	<i>láj</i> sendoff	<i>kʰwaam</i> nom.	
<i>ŋók</i> greed	<i>kʰwaam</i> nom.	<i>lôop</i> greed	<i>kʰwaam</i> nom	<i>kròot</i> angry	<i>kʰwaam</i> nom.	<i>lǝŋ</i> lost	

<i>jàa</i> forbid	<i>k^haw</i> enter	<i>maa</i> come	<i>biatbian</i> oppression	<i>t^hamháj</i> cause	<i>chiuwít sǎj</i> life sad	<i>sáw</i> sad
<i>ṇǎǎj nǎw</i> lonely	<i>ráp</i> receive	<i>kaam</i> karma	<i>ráp</i> receive	<i>wí?bàak</i> hardhip		
<i>jàaṇ</i> sort	<i>t^hi</i> that	<i>prà?sòp</i> happen to	<i>kan</i> with	<i>lǎaw t^hi</i> alreadythat	<i>lǎaw maa háj</i> alreadycome give	<i>hǎn</i> see
<i>k^hǎw</i> ask	<i>háj</i> give	<i>káawnáa</i> progress	<i>naj</i> in	<i>kaan</i> nom.	<i>ṇaan háj</i> work give	<i>p^hásùk</i> happiness
<i>naj</i> in	<i>k^hrǎǎpk^hrua</i> family	<i>dooj</i> with	<i>t^huan</i> fullness	<i>t^húk</i> every	<i>t^haan t^húk</i> you every	<i>k^hon t^hǎn</i> person imp.

Aw la! May you have power in hearing the dhamma lectures and the making of merit every day. It will bear fruit and cause you to have strength of heart, power of heart, and a peace of heart that will drive away greed, greediness, anger, and lostness. Do not be oppressive and make life sad, lonely, a receptor of karma, a hardship of the type that we have already passed through. May progress in work, happiness in family and everything else be to you, every one of you!

Like salutations, termini are uttered in a rote manner--fast and without much vocal inflection.⁸

Once again, the introductory and concluding material of the sermons are all fairly set, formulaic incantations that generally conform to the type of things that a monk would be expected to say in a way that he would be expected to say it. The body, however, shows a distinctly different organization.

3. Megasections and theme

Indeed, it is really the analysis of the body of Phra Phayom's sermons--the individual megasections, as I have called them--that helps shed light on Phra Phayom's thought process--and hence, the thought process of at least some of his listeners.

Though there are people with photographic memories, and though some specially trained individuals like ancient Greek and Celtic bards memorized entire epics, most people would confess to possessing less-than-perfect memories. We will often be able to remember the highlights or main points of a lecture, novel, or

⁸It is interesting to note that the conclusion and terminus of some sermons studied were edited out. For example, the "Taxi's Favorite" sermon ends abruptly--traditional Thai music comes in in the middle of an illustration, and a moment later a new sermon is begun. This could reflect an editorial decision to the effect that the conclusion and terminus were expendable.

television program, but only rarely could anyone perfectly reproduce something listened to, read, or seen. States Linda Neeley (1987:4):

When a reader is able to distinguish the backbone from support material, he is able to form a mental framework that enables him to comprehend the development of the discourse' theme and to recall the major points of the discourse later. Failure to make the distinction causes confusion of major and minor points, and often causes misinterpretation of illustrative or other supportive material because its connection to the thematic point is missed, and causes inability to recall the development of the discourse.

Similarly, very few politicians, corporate leaders, or teachers get in front of large crowds with their speeches completely memorized or written out. Rather, actual or mental outlines are used. These outlines contain the main points, the essential elements, of what we want to get across. The content of the actual communicative act often consists in a lot of "filler"--additional details, examples, etc., not related to the main points. This 'filler' is produced through what Van Dijk (1977) termed "macrorules," and perhaps sheds some light on generative psychological processes.

Phra Phayom is proud of the fact that he has not read from the Buddhist scriptures or even used written outlines for his sermons for years. Rather, he ascribes his ability to speak for literally hours on end without any notes to the fact that the things he talks about are on his mind all the time--that is, that the basic outlines are already there in his head--the points he wants to get across are already there, and it is just a matter of fleshing them out and presenting them to his audiences.

As mentioned earlier, the body of Phra Phayom's sermons are composed of several megasections marked by the particle *Aw!* In such situations, *Aw!* serves as the indication of a new "point of departure," the next step in the oration's progress. This is illustrated in figure 3, which summarizes the information preceding and following all *Aw!* sentences in the sermon "Greed."

	PRECEDING INFORMATION (Summary)	PARTICLE (vocalization)	MAINLINE SENTENCE (New Point of Departure)	SUBSEQUENT INFORMATION (Summary)
MEGASEC. #1	Statements about the danger of greed as warned by the Buddha.	AW!	"For that reason, what could be done to make people live in the world in a manner that reduces their greed?"	Question as to whether it is possible to reduce greed.
MEGASEC. #2	Observance of Buddhist principles will reduce greed.	AW!	"Now we can see that many people in Supaburi Province do not have lively life. Why is this?"	Stories related to airplane crash in Supaburi Province, as well as a gas truck explosion in Bangkok.
MEGASEC. #3	Monks, too, must clean out greed or else there will be disorder in the temple.	AW!	"Thus, at this time, what are we in the process of needing to cut out [of our lives]? Greed."	Pollution of forests, more on the airplane crash in Supaburi, a son killing his father to get insurance money, etc.
MEGASEC. #4	Everyone agrees that the people of Supaburi acted very badly.	AW LA!	"At this time Thai society and we ourselves need to watch carefully lest we become victims of--Ay--being controlled by greed."	Story about a greedy merchant being afflicted by a greedy cow and a greedy thief.
MEGASEC. #5	Moral of greedy merchant story: greed meets greed.	AW!	"Are we agreed that we are beginning to see?"	Talk of the relationship between greed and success, story about being ignored by taxis, etc.
MEGASEC. #6	Stories about greedy merit makers, Phra Phayom's alleged fortune	AW!	"It's strange when I think about it, but the more I give, the more I get."	Accounts of how donations at his temple have increased since he has become less selfish.
MEGASEC. #7	Strange, illegitimate beliefs about merit making	AW!	"How does this all fit together? The next time you make merit, don't pray for a long time. Pray a little--to overcome greed."	Stories about the frustrations of receiving greed-motivated alms, bizarre cases of child abuse.
MEGASEC. #8	Dhamma camp children stealing each other's underwear	AW LA!	"We must clean up things every day."	Statements about making merit, transvestites, the evil of smoking.
MEGASEC. #9	Modern life is too complex--much money is spent on unnecessary things like bottled beverages, comfortable beds, etc.	AW!	"Whatever the case, if we people release these three root sins and allow them to grow and flourish in our country...[we will have problems]"	Stories about his proposed anti-greed TV spots, addition of Thai people to caffeine.

Figure 3. Megasection divisions in "Greed."

For this reason, I assert that *Aw!* actually marks the backbone, the mainline of Phra Phayom sermons. This is somewhat in contrast to the more conventional assumption seen in many general works on discourse that claim the mainline of a hortatory speech (such as a sermon) is the explicit commands involved. I reject these for Phra Phayom on the basis that 1) Phra Phayom's sermons are much longer than most hortatory texts I have ever seen analyzed and 2) Phra Phayom, in fact, uses very few explicit command, reflective, perhaps, of the more "indirect" techniques of Thai social interaction.

As mentioned earlier, the introductory and concluding material in Phra Phayom's sermons is very formulaic. The megasections, however, display little in the way of internal organization. Rather, they seem to be "stream of consciousness" sessions, in which Phra Phayom makes significant associational divergences as he moves along. The direct object of one sentence might become the subject of the next sentence, and so forth, in what many Westerners would label a "ramble" or a "rabbit trail." This is reflected in a paraphrase of the latter third of megasection 6 of the sermon "Greed," shown below:

- (14) Recently I distributed a bunch of bamboo coin banks to encourage people to share with the disadvantaged. I told them to put one coin in the bank every day. This was to help people overcome greed.

But some people are very bad.

One man came for a coin bank and then started to complain about how monks throw away the excess of the food alms they receive each morning.

But it is not always monks that are throwing things away. Sometimes the food alms people give them are spoiled, and sometimes the monks are given too much food--and especially too much water.

Laypeople have strange beliefs about making "water merit" for the afterlife because of General Senna.⁹

Now laypeople put little bags of water in our alms bowls. The bags often burst, soaking the rest of our food.

Listen to the chanting of the monks. Do they ever say anything about the "water merit?" This "water merit" is far too narrow a view.

Aw! How does this fit together? Pray a little every day to defeat greed.

⁹General Senna is said to have been dead for three days before magically resurrecting in the middle of his own funeral! He claims to have visited the underworld, where he found many people suffering from intense thirst because they failed to make sufficient "water merit" while they were alive. As a result of Senna's report, people began giving monks plastic bags of water during the morning alms collection.

In essence then, Phra Phayom's sermons do not follow a linear, propositionally-driven organization, but a oscillating pattern of loosely connected free association. This can be illustrated as shown in figure 4:

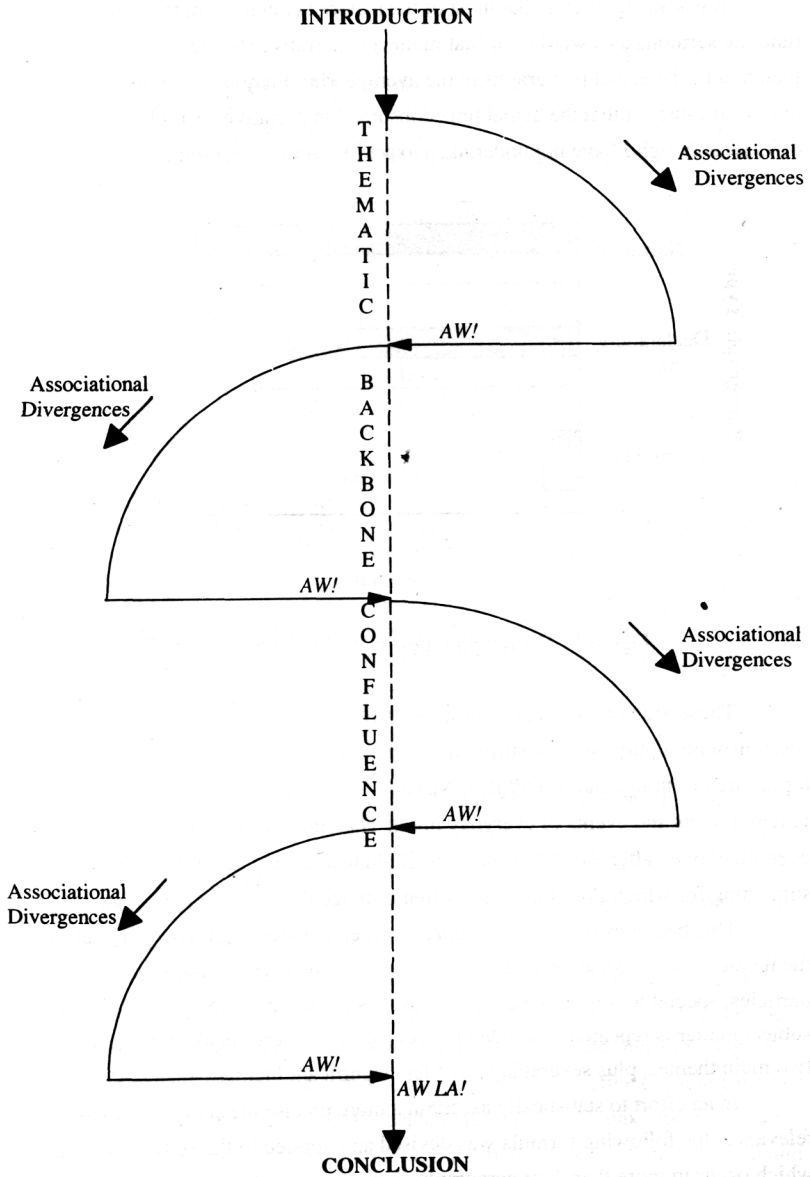


Figure 4. Phra Phayom's sermon development schema.

It is also significant that most of the material contained in the megasections (and the sermons as a whole, for that matter) is narrative (figure 5). In fact, more than half of the actual paragraphs in the average Phra Phayom sermon are narrative--one would suspect that the actual time consumed in narratives is probably in the range of 75%, although I have not undertaken exact real-time measurements.

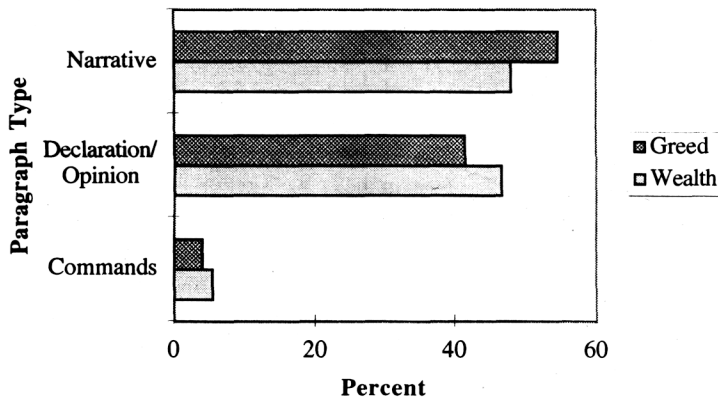


Figure 5. Paragraph types in "Greed" and "Wealth."

These are not abstract discussions of Buddhist doctrine, but storytelling sessions with a purpose. Not surprisingly, then, the most frequently mentioned topics are not things like Buddhism, Nirvāṇa, or Karma, but more immediate, tangible items and events of everyday life in Thailand. In fact, Buddhism often is not even mentioned after the initial appeal to Buddhism during the sermon introduction--something for which Phra Phayom is often criticized!

This becomes increasingly apparent when considering theme. By definition, the theme of a discourse may be indicated through the use of certain markers--particles, special tenses, and the like--as well as the brute frequency with which the subject matter is repeated or alluded to. A typical discourse is likely to have one or two main themes, plus several layers of less significant thematic material.

In an effort to statistically ascertain a more precise measure of thematic relevance, the following formula was devised and applied to the sixty-seven themes which occur in more than four paragraphs in "Solve Greed":

$$f=(n/N)r$$

Where f=frequency

n=number of actual occurrences

N=number of possible occurrences (total number of paragraphs in the discourse)

r=range of occurrences (number of paragraphs between first, last occurrences)

The highest-ranking theme is then assigned a value of 100; all other themes are then ranked as percentages of 100, as shown in figure 6.

High level themes (50-100)	Mid-low level themes (partial list)	
I... (100)	(1-19)	taxis (6.3)
greed (61)	child (18.7)	cigarettes (5.6)
wealth (50.7)	monk (18.7)	accidents (4.0)
	make merit (14.7)	grandmother (2.2)
	life (14.7)	suffering (2)
	root sin (14.7)	lostness (2)
	wife/woman (14.7)	heart (1.3)
	anger/cruelty (13)	
	father/man (12.4)	Low level themes
	offerings (11.2)	(partial list)
	dhamma (10.5)	(0-1)
	newspapers (8)	prayer (.9)
	Thai society (7.5)	addiction (.8)
	Buddhism (7.3)	evil (.5)
		disorder (.5)
		sadness (.1)

Figure 6. Relative frequency of select paragraph level themes in "Greed."

Under this analysis, several distinct bands of thematic material become evident. It is statistically obvious that "greed" and the closely related "wealth" are the main themes of this sermon (Phra Phayom's self-references being used for the many autobiographical illustrations). It is nevertheless interesting to note the nature of the themes which are found in what might be termed mid-range frequency. Themes like root sins, offerings, dhamma, belief, unwholesome thoughts, and merit making all are related to that pool of assumed common knowledge or collective consciousness of Thai Buddhists. There is no need to tell people that they should make merit, or that they should do this or that *if* they make merit, but rather that they should do such and such *when* they make merit. Similarly, the numerous examples involving family members in various problematic situations build on traditional Thai social values and recent news reports familiar to the audience.

This assumed common knowledge forms the canvas which Phra Phayom paints on. It gives authority to his declarations, linking them with the higher power of Buddhism. It makes the sermon relevant to those beliefs and practices which have been instilled in the listeners since birth, linking Buddhist doctrine to everyday situations.

4. Audience involvement devices

Dealing almost exclusively with the world that ordinary Thai people see, feel, and even smell everyday is one of the ways in which Phra Phayom gains audience interest--makes them feel a part of the sermon. Another is his frequent use of audience-involvement devices. These involve both rhetorical questions "What do you think this means?" "Which of these is better," etc., and requests for audience confirmation. The latter is accomplished with the sentence final *na* (equivalent to the American idiomatic use of "you know" or "right?"), as in "That is not good, *na* ." This is nothing new or novel: Socrates recognized that getting one's listeners to say "yes" "yes" "yes" to a series of non-controversial propositions increases the chances of their saying "yes" to more controversial ideas. And again, on a more pragmatic level, the use of these devices keeps the audience interested and involved--Phra Phayom is talking to them, asking them personal questions, engaging their minds. The consistency with which rhetorical questions are employed throughout the sermons is reflected in figure 7:

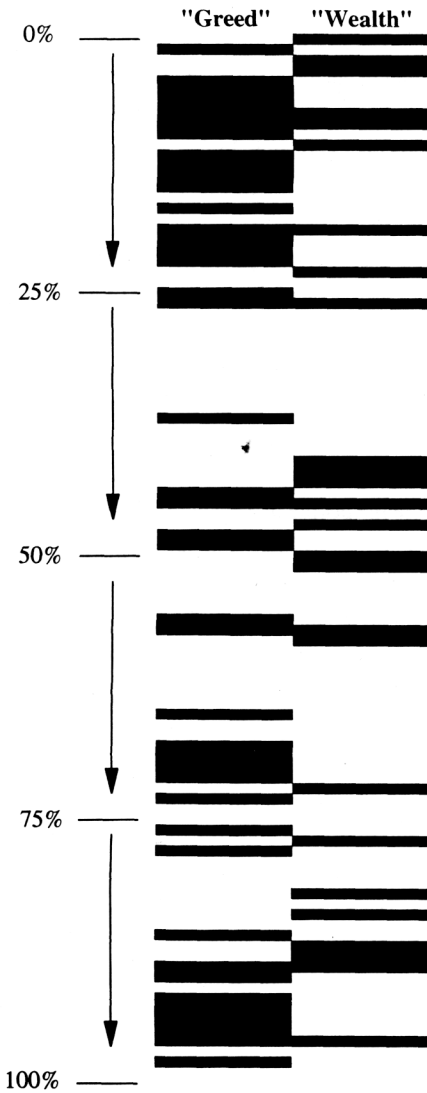


Figure 7. Relative placement of rhetorical questions over the course of "Greed" and "Wealth."

5. Hortatory intent

Despite the abundance of narrative content, these are sermons--hortatory texts--in that they attempt to change people's behavior. Still, the fact remains that there are very few explicit commands in any of Phra Phayom's sermons--occasionally one or two at the very end. In fact, almost all of the explicit commands found in the sermon body relate to material of low thematic value. How then is Phra Phayom making his hortatory points?

The answer to this question may lie with the power of storytelling. As mentioned earlier, more than 50% of the paragraphs of a typical Phra Phayom sermon are dedicated to narrative material--and the actual time spent in storytelling is takes up much more than half of a typical sermon. These stories, many of which are true, well-publicized news items, illustrate with great clarity the benefits of heeding Phra Phayom's points, as do the short, declaratory judgments/morals generally found preceding and following the stories. After all, who would want to be ridiculed in all the newspapers (as were the people of Supanburi mentioned in "Greed"), mocked as being stupid (as are smokers in "Wealth"), or socially condemned as one committing the ultimate crime of killing one's own parents for insurance money (as are several individuals in "Greed"). Why not be a good person like Phra Phayom, one who has sacrificed all personal possessions in order to help those in need and has, in the process, become a well known, meritorious, much-admired public figure (typically, about half of the stories are autobiographical).

The power of these stories in getting Phra Phayom's hortatory points across is shown in the way many people react to them. For example, one of my language assistants said that he felt extremely embarrassed when Phra Phayom talked about smoking in "Greed" (indeed, Phra Phayom's joke about the benefits of smoking--not needing to get hair cuts since nicotine slowly kills hair, not needing to have a guard dog to bark at robbers since smokers cough (bark) all night, etc.--seem to do more good for some people than abstract medical lectures about cancer, etc.). These feelings of embarrassment made the language assistant make (or at least state) a resolution to stop smoking.

It would therefore appear that Phra Phayom's hortatory points are made less through conventional, direct command structures, than through subtle, indirect examples and evaluations. Even Phra Phayom's jokes, which are abundant and usually very funny, can contain some very strong medicine. It would be interesting to further investigate how differing degrees of command directness affect hearer response in Thai society. Still, at the hazard of making generalizations or upholding

mere stereotypes, it would be plausible to say that the indirect way of doing things generally is more effective in Thai society than it is in the West. Thus, Phra Phayom's hortatory techniques may reflect deeper social patterns.

6. Conclusion

This paper has examined several sermons of Phra Phayom Kalayano in an effort to understand his discourse style. It has been shown that, while the introductory and concluding material of his sermons are orderly and formulaic, the sermon bodies follow more associational paths. As a discourse marker, the particle *Aw!* seems to mark the backbone of the sermons, advancing Phra Phayom's arguments. Although hortatory by definition, Phra Phayom's sermons are composed primarily of narrative material containing very few explicit commands; it is in the implicit "morals" of the stories that the hortatory points are made. These points are often underlined by Phra Phayom's sometimes very direct jokes. At the same time, the frequent use of audience involvement devices such as rhetorical questions attempts to give a sense of participation to the discourse--which, in turn, makes the hearers more inclined to agree with the speaker's conclusions. Buddhist concepts are rarely mentioned; the overall context of a typical Phra Phayom oration is thoroughly geared toward the lives of his hearers, taking examples from and making applications to everyday life in Thailand.

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