1. INTRODUCTION

The term 'temporal preverb' is used in this paper, in some sense, overlaps with the more familiar terms 'aspect', 'tense', and 'auxiliary'. The terms 'aspect' and 'tense' which are normally used in the Indo-European languages are mostly concerned with affixing, and the term 'auxiliary', which is not concerned with affixing, covers a wider range than the term 'temporal preverb' in this paper. The author will exclude some other preverbs such as khoŋ 'may', khuan 'ought to', àat 'probably', and tʊŋ 'must' which are not temporal preverbs. This analysis posits that all of the Thai temporal preverbs occur preverbally in the deep structure; they, thus, are legitimately called 'preverbs'.

2. TEMPORAL PREVERBS AND THEIR SEMANTIC FEATURES

This paper presents three kinds of temporal preverbs.

2.1. cà AS A PREVERB

Normally cà is interpreted as a future particle containing the feature [+future]. Let us consider the following sentences.

(1) khɔ̀w cà kìn khàaw
    he future eat rice
    'He is going to eat.'

(2) khɔ̀w cà mə́j kìn khàaw
    he future not eat rice
    'He is not going to eat.'

cà in (1) and (2) signifies a regular future. A negative may be introduced to the position following cà by a negative transformation in the surface structure.
2.2. kamlaŋ-yūu AS PREVERBS

This analysis proposes that kamlaŋ\(^5\) and yūu\(^6\) preverbs can occur as syntactic echoes\(^7\) to each other in the deep structure where both or either one of the two may occur in the same simple sentence. The features [+progressive] and [+definite] are assigned to kamlaŋ and the features [+progressive] and [-definite] to yūu. Let us consider the following sentences.

(3) khāw kamlaŋ kin khāaw
he progressive eat rice
'He is (definitely) eating.'

(4) khāw kin khāaw yūu
he eat rice progressive
'He is (indefinitely) eating.'

(5) khāw kamlaŋ kin khāaw yūu
he progressive eat rice progressive
'He is eating.' (emphatic)

yūu, an indefinite syntactic echo of kamlaŋ, is transformed to the position following a verb phrase in the surface structure. (3) and (4) have nearly the same semantic interpretation. (3) is taken to be more definite than (4) in the speaker's view. Any one of the sentences (3) to (5) can be the answer to any one of the following questions.

(6) khāw kamlaŋ tham ?āray
he progressive do what
'What is he (definitely) doing?'

(7) khāw tham ?āray yūu
he do what progressive
'What is he (indefinitely) doing?'

(8) khāw kamlaŋ tham ?āray yūu
he progressive do what progressive
'What is he (definitely) doing?' (emphatic)

When the feature [+definite] precedes the feature [-definite] in the same simple sentence, the feature [-definite] becomes [+emphatic]. Thus either (5) or (8) conveys emphaticness in its semantic interpretation.

(9) [-definite] \(\rightarrow\) [+emphatic] \(\lnot\) [+definite]

(10) khāw kamlaŋ că kin khāaw
he progressive future eat rice
'He will be eating.' ('He is about to eat.')
(11) khàw cā  kin khàaw yùu
he  future eat rice progressive
'He will be eating.'

(12) khàw kamlaŋ cā  kin khàaw yùu
he  progressive future eat rice progressive
'He will be eating.' (emphatic)

When cā is preceded by kamlaŋ, yùu, or kamlaŋ-yùu as in (10), (11), and (12), kamlaŋ cā, yùu cā, or kamlaŋ-yùu cā will be interpreted as a near future where the action will occur sooner than the one without either kamlaŋ or yùu, or both. It can be stated by the following rule.

(13) [+future] + [+future]9 / [+progressive]  

(11) is taken to be ambiguous with two readings. It either says that he will be (indefinitely) eating in the near future, or (I expect that) he will be (indefinitely) eating. The first reading is considered regular but the second reading must be derived from a different deep structure which will not be treated here.10

cā in (12) behaves in the same manner as cā in (10) but its semantic interpretation of emphaticness should be taken into account because both kamlaŋ and yùu appear in the same simple sentence as explained in 2.2.

2.3. lāw11 as a preverb

This analysis will treat lāw as a temporal preverb preceding kamlaŋ-yùu and cā in the deep structure. lāw is analysed to have the feature [+cessative] and it is later transformed postverbally to the end of the sentence in the surface structure before a performative transformation is applied.12

It must be noted here that this analysis will not consider lāw as the past tense marker as some authors do.13 The author believes that lāw has nothing to do with the past tense: it only shows that whatever the action is, it is ceasing and the state or condition of the action is changing. Let us consider the following sentences.

(14) khàw kin khàaw lāw
he  eat rice cessative
'He has already eaten.'

(15) khàw cā  kin khàaw lāw
he  future eat rice cessative
'He is going to eat soon.'

(16) khàw kamlaŋ cā  kin khàaw lāw
he  progressive future eat rice cessative
'He will definitely be eating very soon.'
(17) khāw cà  kin khāw yùu  lāaw  
he  future  eat  rice  progressive  cessative  
'He will indefinitely be eating very soon.'

(18) khāw kamīnān  cà  kin khāw yùu  lāaw  
he  progressive  future  eat  rice  progressive  cessative  
'He will definitely be eating very soon.' (emphatic)

(14) indicates that the action of eating is ceasing or has ceased. When cà preceded by lāaw as in (15), the sentence should be interpreted as the future is ceasing; thus, the action will occur in the nearer near future and sooner than the one with kamīnān cà as in (11), and kamīnān-yùu cà as in (12) in 2.2. It can be represented by the following rule.

(19) [+future] + [+future3] / [+cessative] __

lāaw kamīnān cà in (16), lāaw yùu cà in (17), and lāaw kamīnān-yùu cà in (18) indicate that the near future is ceasing and their semantic interpretation becomes the nearest near future which can be expressed by the following rule.

(20) [+future2] + [+future4] / [+cessative][+progressive] __

4. CONCLUSION

This analysis of temporal preverbs is obviously different from that of many others who have written about Thai. It aims to reveal the semantic functions of temporal preverbs and their interpretation in sentences which express progressiveness, futurity, and cessativeness. Combinations of any of the three kinds of temporal preverbs lead to different semantic interpretations. Especially when futurity is involved, there are four degrees of the future, the regular future as expressed by cà, the near future as expressed by kamīnān cà, yùu cà, or kamīnān-yùu cà, the nearer near future as expressed by lāaw cà, and the nearest near future as expressed by lāaw kamīnān cà, lāaw yùu cà, and lāaw kamīnān-yùu cà. It is hoped that this analysis will be beneficial to linguists and language scholars interested in the Thai language. Further investigation of another use of cà, deriving from a higher sentence in the deep structure, is needed to support this analysis.
NOTES

1. This is a revised version of a paper presented at the Ninth International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics in Copenhagen, Denmark, October 22-24, 1976. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Søren Egerod and William J. Gedney for their comments which persuaded me to clarify certain points in this paper.

2. The term 'preverb' is used in Anthony, French, and Warotamasikkhadit 1968, but the term 'temporal preverb' is adopted for this paper only. Haas and Subhanka (1948:582) use the term 'adverb-auxiliaries'.


4. This analysis posits four degrees of the future. câ normally conveys the meaning of futurity unless it is derived from a performative sentence or it is in a restricted environment.

5. See Warotamasikkhadit 1976. kamlan usually precedes a nonstate verb. A state verb like pen 'to be' which is derived from kh++ cannot be preceded by kamlan.

   (i) *khaw kamlan pen phii khseng phom he progressive be brother of I

   (ii) khaw kamlan pen wat he progressive be cold

   'He is having a cold.'

   pen in (i) is derived from kh++ in the deep structure but pen in (ii) is an experiential process verb.
6. ɣu, a syntactic echo of kamlaŋ, may convey a slightly similar meaning to the verb ɣu 'to stay, to remain' in some senses. Noss (1964:182, 186–8) treats ɣu as a frequent echo of yəŋ 'still' and he also defines ɣu as 'remaining on the scene, unchanged, action continuing, temporary, without necessary future significance'. He correctly states that the sentence containing the preverb ɣu signifies temporariness. This analysis also realises that temporariness plays a certain role in ɣu as well as in kamlaŋ. The feature [+temporariness] will not help in distinguishing ɣu from kamlaŋ; thus, the feature [+temporariness] is not employed here. Instead this analysis emphasises the definiteness versus the indefiniteness of the action in the speaker's view.

7. Formerly the term 'doublet' was used, but it may mislead some readers to understand that kamlaŋ and ɣu are philologically derived from the same original.

8. Noss (1964:137) gives the meaning of kamlaŋ cə as 'about to' and so do Haas and Subhanka (1948:647). kamlaŋ cə, ɣu cə, and kamlaŋ-ɣu cə will be compared to làm cə in 2.3.

9. The numeral following the feature [+future] signifies the degree of the future approaching the present time. The greater the numeral is, the closer to the present time the action will be. The numeral used here starts with 2.

10. cə of the second reading can also precede kamlaŋ as follows:

   (i) (mta khun t+in) khāw cə kamlaŋ kin khāw yu u
   when you wake up he future progressive eat rice progressive
   '(When you wake up, (I expect that) he will definitely be eating.' (emphatic)

(12) can also have cə preceding and following kamlaŋ as follows:

   (ii) khāw cə kamlaŋ cə kin khāw yu u
   he future progressive future eat rice progressive
   '(I expect that) he will definitely be eating.' (emphatic)

   cə in the above sentences clearly indicates a different semantic interpretation from a regular future as in 2.1. The performative transformation of the higher level sentence either superimposes the feature [+determination] on cə following làm kamlaŋ-ɣu or the feature [+determination] in the performative sentences becomes cə preceding làm kamlaŋ-ɣu as expressed by the following rules:
(11) \([+\text{performative}] \rightarrow [+\text{future}] / (låw)(kamląŋ-yùu)\]
\([-\text{determination}] / (låw)(kamląŋ-yùu)\)

(iv) \([+\text{future}] \rightarrow \text{cà} / (låw)(kamląŋ-yùu)\)

11. At first glance anyone who knows Thai may conclude that låw and dàay are syntactic echoes as kamląŋ and yùu in 2.2. dàay can occur before a verb in the surface structure and many authors seem to take dàay as the past tense marker. Panupong and Dhanvarjara (1975:370) state that dàay should be semantically interpreted as the past tense but Haas and Subhanka (1948:403) warn their students not to use dàay in all sentences which have the past tense in English.

This analysis will consider dàay as a verb meaning 'to obtain, to get' rather than a preverb. It requires either a noun phrase complement or a complement noun following it to complete the sentence and it can be negated as all other verbs by taking mày in front of it. The temporal preverbs cannot be preceded by mày. Let us consider the following sentences.

(1) khāw dàay kin khāw
  he get eat rice
  'He gets to eat.'

(11) khāw mày dàay krōt khun
  he not get angry you
  'He was not angry with you.'

Actually the translation of dàay as the past tense is not far-fetched but it does not always signify the past tense in English as in (1). dàay frequently occur with negative as mày dàay as in (ii) but it can also occur without mày as in (i). This analysis will consider dàay neither as a syntactic echo of låw nor a temporal preverb; it is merely a verb.


13. Noss (1964:121) treats låw as a specific adjective meaning 'already'. Haas and Subhanka (1948:144) also give the meaning of låw as 'already', and so does Panupong (1970:20-1). Panupong and Dhanvarjara (1975:365) refer to låw as the past tense.
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