

SOMSAMAI MANEESAI : THE USE OF VERBS REPRESENTING VISUAL
PERCEPTION IN THAI CONVERSATION OF BLIND SPEAKERS.

THESIS ADVISOR : ASST. PROF. PEANSIRI VONGVIPANOND, Ph.D.

113 pp. ISBN 974-584-940-5

This is a study of the use of verbs representing visual perception of the blind speakers of Thai. The hypothesis of the study is that the blind will use the verbs of vision in fixed phrases, in sentences which refer to seeing persons or objects which cannot be touched. Data were collected from natural conversation of eight completely blind students of the School for the Blind in Bangkok, which consist of two sets of sentences: 102 sentences with verbs of visual perception and 105 sentences with verbs of tactile perception. A test with seeing speakers of Thai reveals a distinction between the regular use of verbs of tactile perception, 29 sentences, and the use of these verbs as substitute of verbs of visual perception by the blind, 76 sentences. An analysis of these 76 sentences together with the 102 sentences with verbs of visual perception reveals the following findings. An important factor which explains the use of these two types of verb by the blind is the distinction between realis and irrealis sentences. In the realis sentences, the use of verbs of visual perception by the blind is conditioned by two factors: linguistic and physical. The blind will use verbs of visual perception when it is not the main verb, but rather a pre-verb auxiliary, a post-verb or in fixed phrases. They will also use verbs of visual perception when they are talking about seeing persons or about objects which cannot be touched. As for the irrealis sentences, which consist of imperative, interrogative and negative sentences, both types of verb are used in the same contexts though the frequency of the verbs of tactile perception is higher than that of the verbs of visual perception.