

# # C 411128 : MAJOR LINGUISTICS

KEY WORD: GRAMMATICALIZATION/ PREPOSITION/ VERB/ WORD CLASSIFICATION

CHARATDAO INTRATAT : GRAMMATICALIZATION OF VERBS INTO PREPOSITIONS  
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This study aims at investigating and explaining a phenomenon in Thai called grammaticalization, that is, words of the same form can occur as members of different word classes. For example, *khào*, *thǔŋ*, *chaāk*, etc. can be used as verbs and prepositions. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to search for the words that have this characteristic, to investigate their context in order to infer both syntactic and semantic criteria to classify them into two word classes : the verb and the preposition. Lastly, the researcher wants to explain the process whereby verbs are grammaticalized into prepositions.

Based on data of written Thai in articles randomly selected from journals and magazines published during 1990-1994, twenty three pairs of verbs/prepositions were found to have the characteristics mentioned above. The ones that are classified as prepositions have different characteristics from the verbs. Syntactically, the prepositions do not occur with the negative marker *mǎi* but the verb counterparts do. The former always occur in front of a noun phrase whereas the latter do not. The prepositions cannot be separated from the noun phrase because both of them constitute a single constituent called a "prepositional phrase". This phrase can be moved to the beginning of a sentence. The verb counterparts do not have these characteristics. Semantically, the verbs indicate the state or the action of their subjects, whereas the prepositions indicate case relations between a verb and a noun phrase. Most of the verbs dealt with in this study have one lexical meaning, but the prepositions may indicate more than one case relations. Some of the verbs have connotative meanings which signify subjective attitudes or emotions. In contrast, the prepositions have only denotative meanings.

The researcher uses the concept of grammaticalization to explain the mentioned phenomenon in Thai. It can be concluded that prepositions are grammaticalized from verbs of the same form because these verbs have developed through certain semantic processes : bleaching, persistence, and generalization or metaphorical extension. They also develop through syntactic processes, such as obligatorification and reanalysis. These processes are unidirectional and continual.

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