

A Study of the Translation of Thai Serial Verb Constructions with Directional Verbs and Their Semantic and Syntactic Equivalence in English

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Abstract

This research explores Thai Serial Verb Constructions (SVCs) with six Directional Verbs (DVs - /paj0/ 'go', /maa0/ 'come', /khaw2/ 'enter', /?@@k1/ 'exit', /khvn2/ 'ascend', and /long0/ 'descend') in terms of their syntactic and semantic aspects in comparison with their English translations. The study is based on the 1,719 SVCs found in the selected sample which is an autobiography written in Thai and translated into English by the Chulalongkorn Translation Center. The main purposes are (1) to analyze the semantic and the syntactic characteristics of Thai SVCs with DVs in parallel with their English translations, (2) to examine whether the translations of those SVC concepts have the semantic and syntactic equivalence when comparing with those in Thai, and (3) to propose a possible direction in translating the concepts of those Thai SVCs into English. It is found that Thai SVCs with DVs totally denote seven concepts, i.e. directional, purposive, aspectual, time, sequential, resultative, and success. All of these relate to the spatial and temporal cognitive concepts. The SVCs understudied consist of DVs occurring either in the preceding or following position of certain verbs in which other directional verbs are included. The English forms representing those SVCs concepts are represented with different linguistic realizations which are varied upon both syntactic and semantic factors of SVCs and lexical chosen words in English. In respect of the semantic equivalence, the findings reveal the existence of the meaning gain and loss occurring in the English translations. And in term of the syntactic equivalence, there is no one-to-one correspondence between Thai SVCs with DVs and their translations in English. However, among those translated texts, some forms are found to be frequently employed in translating certain concepts of Thai SVCs into English.

1. Introduction

Serial Verb Construction (SVC) is a prominent syntactic feature occurring in Thai and other languages such as Chinese, some Southeast Asian languages, some African languages, etc. Syntactically, it is widely defined based on its surface form as a concatenation of at least two verb phrases immediately adjacent to each other (Thepkanjana, 1986). Semantically, it serves a variety of functions which expressed through different devices in non-serial verb languages (Masica, 1976 cited in Thepkanjana, 1986; Aikhenvald, 2006). Basing upon these, followings are some examples of SVCs in Thai and their translations in English (taken from the Thai story named 'Looking back' written by Anuman Rajdhon, 1967):

- (1) Direction: tiia1 naaj0 yak1song3 k@@@2 klap1_paj0 mvvang0 ciin0
father master Yaksong then return go city China
“...his father returned to China.”
- (2) Purpose: thaa2 paj0_tham0ngaan0
if go work
“When I went to work, ...”
- (3) Aspect: mvva2 ngvvan2khaj4 hxng1 khwaam0pen0juu1 pliiian1plxxng1_paj0
when condition of living change go
“As conditions of live have changed,...”
- (4) Sequence: than2 pen0 caw2mvvang0 khon0rxk2 thii2 daj2 paj0_hen4 khaw4....
he is governor first that get go see mountain...
“He was the first governor to have seen Khao (Phra Viharn).”
- (5) Time and:
Aspect lx3 thang3 saam4 nii3 k@@@2 taaj1_paj0 naan0 lxxw3
and all three this then die go long already
“All three of them have passed away.”

From the above sentences, the underlined SVCs consist of two serialized verbs in which /paj0/ ‘go’, a DV, co-occurring with another verb. It is seen that /paj0/ can occur before or after the other verb and denote different concepts – directional, purposive, aspectual, sequential and time. Contrast to English these expressions tend to retain the same concepts as those in Thai but they are represented with different linguistic structures e.g. adverb, preposition, inflection and auxiliary etc. To clarify, each Thai lexical verb in SVCs is not individually translated into a series of English lexical verbs but they are expressed through a main verb with different grammatical devices to carry over the same concepts instead. Apparently, these occurrences are consistent to those aforesaid linguists whose views on SVCs incline to the semantic-based aspect.

With this reason, it is interesting to search for answers to the questions: what are the forms in English translations selected to represent SVCs with DVs in Thai? Are there any potential corresponding forms between the two languages? However, in translation process the most exclusive concern is the equivalent meaning between the original texts in a source language (SL) and the translated texts in a target language (TL). Therefore, the concepts of SVCs with DVs have to be analyzed and compare with their English translations to find out whether there is the semantic equivalence in terms of gain and loss.

Besides, since there is no study found to dedicate directly to the translation of Thai SVCs into English, this research will do an in depth investigation with the intention to contribute another fruitful idea to translation studies in relation to SVCs and to provide possible patterns of translation of SVCs with DVs from Thai into English.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 General Theories of SVCs

SVCs have been extensively examined in many languages and are known to be widely studied in West African languages (Stewart, 1963; Ansre, 1966; Stahlke, 1970; Williams, 1971; Bamgbose, 1974; Givon, 1975; Sebba, 1987). They are also widespread in Creoles (Jansen, Koopman and Muysken, 1978), Asian e.g. Mandarin Chinese (Li and Thompson, 1973), Thai (Filbeck, 1975; Thepkanjana, 1986; Wilawan, 1993; Muansuwan, 2002), Oceania (Crowley, 1987) and New Guinea (Foley and Valin, 1984). SVCs in these studies are described with different theories employed. The theories mainly discussed are based on two major criteria, i.e., syntactic and semantic. In the earlier period, some linguists syntactically view SVCs as a multi-sentence structure via Transformations Theory (Stewart, 1963; Stahlke, 1970; Li and Thompson 1973; Bamgbose, 1974) while some view them as a mono-clausal construction produced by Phrase Structure Rules (Williams, 1971; Schachter, 1974; Jansen et al, 1978). In the later time, SVCs seem to be semantically viewed and discussed referring to a single event (Filbeck, 1975; Lord, 1973; Sebba, 1987; Crowley, 1987) and serving a variety of functions (Masica, 1976; Thepkanjana, 1986; Aikhenvald, 2006). With these two dissimilar viewpoints, the disagreement on the definition of SVC is inevitable. However, some linguists apply both semantic and syntactic aspects in defining SVCs as this may help to cover their characteristics more than using either aspect in isolation.

2.2 SVCs in Thai

A number of studies on Thai SVCs describe the syntactic and semantic characteristics of these constructions. For those focusing on the syntactic aspect, different opinions are presented. Filbeck (1975) proposes that verb serialization has a recursive property, i.e. the grammar may produce one or any number of verb phrases independently in a series. Wilawan (1993) suggests that the so-called SVCs in Thai are subordination constructions not real verb serialization. According to Chuwicha (1993), she classifies Thai SVCs into two main groups: 1) Basic SVC - composes of only two verbs in a construction, and 2) Complex SVC - consists of more than two verbs occurring in a series. Although her studies, considered most relevant to this research, focus on the SVCs syntactic form, the semantic notion of the lexical verbs in the constructions is taken into account. This suggests that the inter-relationship between the semantic and syntactic aspects is inseparably involved in analyzing SVCs. Two noted works are found to mainly present the semantic concepts of Thai SVCs.

Thepkanjana (1986) refers to SVC as a linguistic mechanism in which lexical verbs are used to express different semantic concepts, i.e. causative, resultative, directional, purposive, simultaneous, aspectual, passive, coverbs, complements of modality verb and cognition verb. Yangklang (2003) comments on Thepkanjana's concepts of complementing of modality verb and perception verb, which were classified by the syntactic criterion rather than the semantic one, and proposes the 'mental state' concept. He also nominates the term 'postural' to replace the 'simultaneous' concept of Thepkanjana as the latter name implicates temporal meaning rather than semantic concept. Furthermore, he presents two new concepts of 'sequential SVCs' and 'manner SVCs' which are found in his studies.

2.3 Directional Verbs in Thai

Thepkanjana (1986) refers to directional verbs as lexical verbs whose semantics are inherently related to motion and direction. There are many directional verbs in Thai but the common ones are /paj0/ 'go', /maa0/ 'come', khaw2/ 'enter' (in), /?@@k1/ 'exit' (out), /khvn2/ 'ascend' (up), and /long0/ 'descend' (down). Certain studies on these six verbs (which are called DVs in this research) present that when they occur as subsidiary verbs or post verbs, they express the directional concept (Thepkanjana, 1986; Luksaneeyanawin, 1986; Rangkupan, 1992; Saengchai, 1994; Saralamba, 1995; Wongsri, 2004). They also denote other meanings to the main actions, varying to their different contexts. Supanwanit (1972 cited in Rangkupan, 1992) and Rangkupan reveal that /paj0/ and /maa0/ denote the temporal meaning. When they co-occur with other verbs, /paj0/ is a past time marker, and /maa0/ is a past time and a present progressive time marker (Supanwanit, 1972). Thepkanjana (1986) considers /paj0/, /maa0/, /khvn2/, /long0/ and /khaw2/ expressing the aspectual concept of which the context of each DV with other verbs in a series is varied. Regarding /khvn2/ and /long0/, when they occur after stative verbs, they imply a change of state (quality or quantity) and the attitude of the speaker toward the change (Luksaneeyanawin, 1986; Saengchai, 1994). According to Saralamba (1995), /khaw2/ implies many contextual meanings e.g. perception, a change of state, success of action. In reference to /?@@k1/, Wongsri (2004) states that it contains many senses such as initiating actions, changing status, being successful and obvious, etc.

2.4 Translation and Equivalence

Translation is a process of transferring the meaning of texts in the SL to the TL in the appropriate forms. The process involves three phrases (Nida, 1975): i) analyze the message of the text in question into its simplest forms in the SL, ii) transfer the message to the receptor language, and iii) restructure it at the simple level to the receptor language which is most appropriate for the particular type of audience in mind. It is in the stage two or three that the message is possibly modified with some degree of loss or gain. Such procedure can be represented diagrammatically in the below figure:

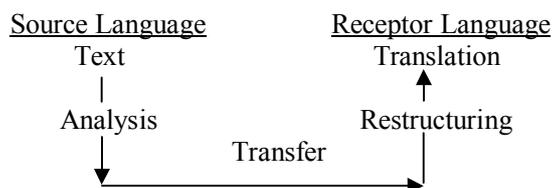


Figure 1: Translation process (Nida, 1975)

However, the concept of equivalence has been discussed in various dichotomous ways varying to theories that linguists based on. Nida (1964) proposes 'formal equivalence' and 'dynamic equivalence'. *Formal equivalence* refers to the translation consisting of a TL item which represents the closest equivalent of a SL word or phrase. However, in preference of meaning to form, Nida emphasizes *dynamic equivalence*, as effective translation that a translator seeks to translate the meaning of the original in such a way that the TL wording will trigger the same impact on the TL audience. According to Baker (1992), the *equivalence at word level* is the first element that the translators see as single units in order to find a direct 'equivalent' term in the TL. There is also 'meaning' lying above the word level that translators need to comprehend in order to produce textual and pragmatic equivalence in the TL. Larson (1998) proposes *lexical equivalents* as what translators

look for although they often finds that there is no exact equivalent between the words of one language and the words of another. Opposite to the semantic-based approach, Catford (1965), basing on the linguistic theory, defines the translation equivalence as ‘*textual equivalence*’ - any text or portion of text in the TL form which is observed on a particular occasion... to be the equivalent of a text or portion of text in a given SL form, and ‘*formal correspondent*’ - any TL category which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the ‘same’ place in the ‘economy’ of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL (Catford, 1965: 27). So, in his point of view, syntactic equivalence can be claimed for its existence. Baker (1992) suggests the ‘*grammatical equivalence*’ as another attempt of the translators to reach in the TL. But with the effort to find the form equivalence, this may induce an effect on the semantic equivalence, i.e. gain or loss of information in the SL texts. Even those terms are given differently, they all focus on ‘meaning’ and ‘form’ between the SL and the TL. So, the semantic and syntactic aspects happen to be the major equivalence in translation.

3. Research Procedure

3.1 The Corpus

The corpus for this study is based on the Thai story named /fvvn3khwaam0lang4/ ‘Looking Back’ written by Phraya Anuman Rajdhon (1967) and its English translations which were translated by professional translators of the Translation Center, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University (1996). The sample is a high standard translation to make sure that the semantic mapping to the TL (English) is very close to the SL (Thai). The sample contains 223 pages of approximate 142,000 words in total.

3.2 Data Collection

In order to identify and collect the data properly, Thai SVCs were firstly specified and defined as “the constructions in which two or more verbs are strung together without any words occurring in between except a single noun which has no modification and functions as an object to its preceding verb. Such combination of serial verbs includes any one or more than one DVs of /paj0/ ‘go’, /maa0/ ‘come’, /khaw2/ ‘enter’, /?@@k1/ ‘exit’, /khvn2/ ‘ascend’, and /long0/ ‘descend’ adjoining other DV(s) or lexical verb(s) in which each verb is capable to occur as a main verb outside the string”. So, the term DVs in this research are used to refer to these six verbs only. Then, SVCs with DVs were manually marked along with their English translations. After that, data verification was conducted to ensure that the acquired data are correct. Totally, 1,719 SVCs with DVs are found in the sample. All these SVCs and their English translations were then analyzed and coded for their semantic concepts and syntactic forms. Finally, a corpus of SVCs and their translations were built by using the KWIC Concordance Program.

3.3 Research Instrument

The KWIC Concordance Program (Key Word In Context) is used as a tool to collect, compare and analyze the data of SVCs and their English translations. By putting-in a keyword of meaning or form (which were earlier coded), the program will find it in the corpus and display the search word on the screen for further analysis assistance in term of word occurrence and its frequency. See figure 2 below:

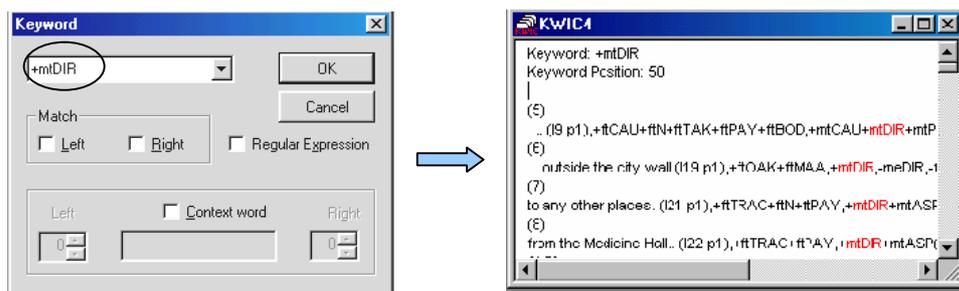


Figure 2: The KWIC Concordance Program

3.4 Data Analysis

The major focus in analyzing the data in this research rests on the syntactic forms and semantic concepts of Thai SVCs and their English translated forms selected to represent those original concepts. The other area to be emphasized on is the semantic equivalence in term of the meaning gain and loss in the translated texts (as the sample was translated into English by professional translators, there will be no concern on the mapping of the meanings between the two languages) and the syntactic equivalence in term of form correspondence. Figure 3 shown below is an outline for analyzing Thai SVCs with DVs and their English translations in this research. (Abbreviations: DirV=Directional Verb (excluding six DVs), ActV=Action Verb, MotV=Motion Verb. See full names of other abbreviations in Appendix.)

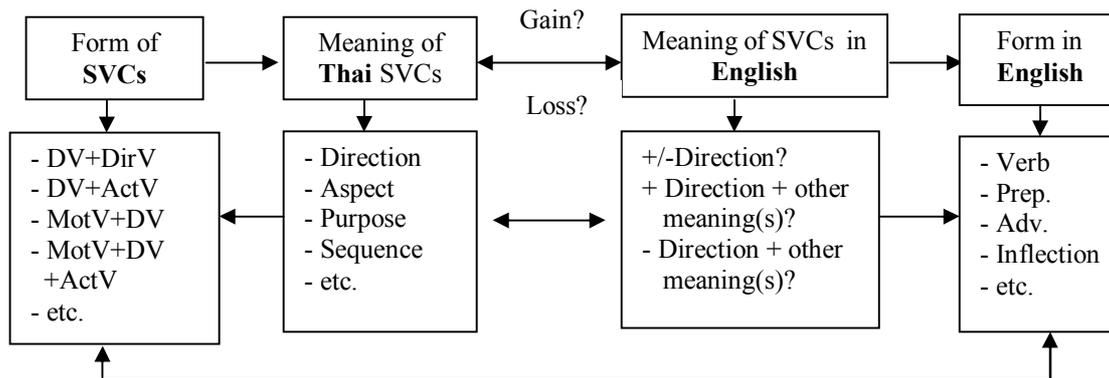


Figure 3: The analysis of Thai SVCs with DVs and their English translations (adapted from the concept of Catford, 1965; Nida, 1964; Newmark, 1981; and Larson, 1998)

To clarify the above, the analysis will be conducted into six steps:

- Step 1 - Identify SVCs with DVs in Thai.
- Step 2 - Find the form equivalents in English which represent those SVCs.
- Step 3 - Analyze the semantic concepts of SVCs with DVs and then their English translations.
- Step 4 - Analyze the forms in Thai for each concept of SVCs and the forms in English representing those SVC concepts.
- Step 5 - Map the forms of SVCs with the English forms and compare the semantic concepts of SVCs with their English translations in term of the meaning gain and loss.
- Step 6 - Use KWIC to obtain potential patterns (based on the frequency of form occurrence) in translating the concepts of SVCs into English.

4. Findings

Based on the data of 1,719 SVCs found in the sample, if an SVC with a single DV is considered, it is the DV /paj0/ 'go' which co-occurs most frequently with other lexical verbs. The second is /maa0/ 'come' and the third is /khvn2/ 'ascend'. Moreover, the findings show that more than one DV can frequently co-occur together with other verbs. This kind of construction is grouped as Mixed DVs. Table 1 below shows the overall number of all DVs occurrences:

Table 1: The overall numbers of DV occurrences in SVCs

Directional Verbs	No. of Constructions	Percentage
/paj0/ 'go'	690	40%
/maa0/ 'come'	556	32%
/khaw2/ 'enter' (in)	42	2%
/ʔ@@k1/ 'exit' (out)	62	4%
/khvn2/ 'ascend' (up)	98	6%
/long0/ 'descend' (down)	30	2%
Mixed DVs	241	14%
Total	1,719	100%

According to those numbers in Table 1, the DV /paj0/ 'go' occurs most frequently with other lexical verbs for 690 constructions out of 1,719 (40%). The second is /maa0/ 'come' – 556 constructions (32%) and the third is Mixed DVs – 241 constructions (14%). In Mixed DVs, it is found that each DV of /paj0/ or /maa0/ often co-occurs with other DVs e.g. /khaw2/ 'enter', /ʔ@@k1/ 'exit', /khvn2/ 'ascend', /long0/ 'descend'. Sometimes these two DVs /paj0/ and /maa0/ also co-occur together.

When those DVs co-occur with other lexical verbs, the whole SVCs can denote a certain concept. The data reveal that SVCs with those six DVs can totally denote seven semantic concepts, i.e. direction, aspect, sequence, purpose, time, result and success. The concept categories denoted by each DV to SVCs can be illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Semantic concepts of Thai SVCs with six DVs compared to the previous studies

Concepts	/paj0/ 'go'	/maa0/ 'come'	/khaw2/ 'enter'	/ʔ@@k1/ 'exit'	/khvn2/ 'ascend'	/long0/ 'descend'
1. Direction	* ✓	* ✓	* ✓	* ✓	* ✓	* ✓
2. Aspect	* ✓	* ✓	* ✓	✓	* ✓	* ✓
3. Sequence	* ✓	* ✓	* ✓	-	-	-
4. Purpose	* ✓	* ✓	* ✓	* ✓	✓	-
5. Time	* ✓	* ✓	✓	-	-	-
6. Result	-	✓	-	-	-	-
7. Success	-	-	*	* ✓	-	-

Remarks: ✓ = concepts found in this study * = concepts from previous studies

From Table 2, it shows that an individual DV occurring in SVCs can express several semantic concepts but all of them are used to denote the concepts of direction and aspect. These seven notions relate to two main semantic concepts: spatial and temporal. The directional concept involves the spatial whereas the aspectual, time and success involve the temporal. For the rest of sequential, purposive and resultative, they are the combination of both spatial and temporal concepts. Considering the number of concepts denoted by DVs, it can be seen that the pair of /paj0/ and /maa0/ carry the most concepts. This heavy functional load is possibly reflected in their higher number of occurrences – 40% for /paj0/ and 32% for /maa0/ as shown in Table 1 above. On the other hand, it could be claimed that /long0/ in Table 2 carries the least concepts in proportion to its least number of 30 constructions as evidenced in the first table.

When comparing the concepts discovered in this research with those in earlier studies, they are mostly the same. Nevertheless, some new concepts are found with certain DVs in this study. That is /maa0/ can denote another concept of result while /khaw2/ can denote the concept of time which has been never mentioned before. Besides, /ʔ@@k1/ and /khvn2/ can additionally express the aspectual and purposive concepts respectively. It is however noticeable that each new concept is mostly found with either member of the pair, i.e. /maa0/, /khaw2/, and /khvn2/ but not their opposite DVs /paj0/,

/ʔ@@k1/, and /long0/. In addition, some concepts are discovered to occur more frequently than others. See Table 3 for the overall number of occurrences for each concept.

Table3: The overall number of each concept occurrences of Thai SVCs with DVs

Concepts	/paj0/ 'go'	/maa0/ 'come'	/khaw2/ 'enter'	/ʔ@@k1/ 'exit'	/khvn2/ 'ascend'	/long0/ 'descend'
1. Direction	282 (30%)	228 (31%)	15 (32%)	48 (77%)	30 (33%)	18 (56%)
2. Aspect	169 (18%)	96 (13%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	59 (66%)	14 (44%)
3. Sequence	55 (6%)	22 (3%)	14 (30%)	-	-	-
4. Purpose	311 (34%)	230 (31%)	13 (28%)	3 (5%)	1 (1%)	-
5. Time	108 (12%)	131 (18%)	3 (6%)	-	-	-
6. Result	-	27 (4%)	-	-	-	-
7. Success	-	-	-	10 (16%)	-	-

Table 3 shows that all DVs except /khvn2/ denote the directional concept in a high percentage especially /ʔ@@k1/ of which its number of occurrences (77%) is significantly higher than the others. Unlike /ʔ@@k1/, the number of occurrence of /khaw2/ mainly spread across the three concepts of direction (32%) sequence (30%) and purpose (28%). For /paj0/ and /maa0/, the number of each concept occurrences between the two DVs is not much different. However, the concept occurring frequently in the third rank for /paj0/ is the aspectual (18%) whereas it is the concept of time for /maa0/ which comes the third. Considering the pair of /khvn2/ and /long0/, it is surprisingly found that /khvn2/ denotes the temporal concept much more often than the spatial one, i.e. 66% against 33%. Although this DV denotes the purposive concept, there is only 1% for it to occur. Opposite to /khvn2/, /long0/ denotes the directional concept more frequently than the aspectual.

When the syntactic characteristics of those seven concepts are taken into consideration, each notion is normally derived from a construction in which a DV comes either prior to or after other lexical verbs. Although the position of the DVs co-occurring with other verbs in a series sometimes looks the same, each combination denoting each concept is not identical due to the different types of verbs to which they attached. The verbs found to co-occur with DVs can be classified into three types, i.e. action verbs, stative verbs and process verbs (based on Chafe, 1970). The action verbs can be divided into motion and non-motion verbs. The motion verbs include transfer verbs, displacement verbs, directional verbs, bodily movement verbs, communication verbs, travel verbs, etc. whereas the non-motion verbs include actions which do not belong to the motion group. (This verb type will be called the action verbs in this research). The process verbs cover creation verbs, disappearance verbs, destruction verbs, perception verbs, cognition verbs, etc. The stative verbs include quality verbs, quantity verbs, equative verbs, etc. It can be analyzed that when all DVs follow the motion verbs, such SVCs convey the directional concept. When the DV /khvn2/ 'ascend', for example, follows creation verbs, or /long0/ 'descend' follows destruction verbs or disappearance verbs, those SVCs denote the aspectual concept. Following is Table 4 which presents the different syntactic forms of four DVs denoting various concepts to SVCs.

Table 4: Syntactic forms of Thai SVCs concepts denoted by the DVs /khaw2/ 'enter', /ʔ@@k1/ 'exit', /khvn2/ 'ascend', and /long0/ 'descend'

Concepts	/khaw2/ 'enter'	/ʔ@@k1/ 'exit'	/khvn2/ 'ascend'	/long0/ 'descend'
1. Direction	1.MotV+DV+(DirV) 2.DV+DirV 3.MotV+TakV+DV	1.MotV+(ObjN)+DV 2.DV+DirV 3.DV+TravV 4.MotV+MotV+DV 5.MotV+DV+DirV	1.MotV+DV 2.DV+DirV 3.QanV+DV	1.MotV+DV 2.DV+DirV 3.DecV+DV
2. Aspect	1.PerV+DV 2.ProcV+DV	1.DV+MenV+EmoV	1.CreV+DV 2.CogV+DV 3.StaV+DV 4.EmoV+DV	1.DesV+DV 2.DisaV+DV 3.StaV+DV

3. Sequence	1.DV+ActV 1.DV+ProcV			
4. Purpose	1.DV+ActV+(ComV) 2.DV+EquV	1.DV+ActV+(PerV) 2.DV+ObjN+ActV	1.DV+ActV	
5. Time	1.DispV+DV			
6. Success		1.CogV+DV 2.PerV+DV		

(Note: See Appendix for the full names of verb abbreviations)

Table 4 shows that to denote the directional concept for those four DVs, their syntactic forms are rather similar in term of containing the motion verbs as their components. Seeing /khaw2/ and /?@@k1/, one or two motion verbs can occur before the DVs. Sometimes these DVs occur before the directional verbs or the travel verbs. Sometimes they also occur between the motion verbs and the directional verbs. For /khvn2/ and /long0/, their forms denoting the directional look similar, i.e. DVs occur either in front of the directional verbs or after the motion verbs or the quantity verbs (for /khvn2/) or the decrease verbs (for /long0/). Considering the aspectual concept, the forms between /khaw2/ and /?@@k1/ are different in term of the position of verbs but not the verb type. To denote the concept of aspect, /khaw2/ occurs after the process verbs which include the perception verbs while /?@@k1/ occurs before the mental verbs. For the other pair of DVs denoting vertical motion, /khvn2/ and /long0/ co-occur with the same types of verbs, i.e. the process verbs and the stative verbs, and in the same position, i.e. follow those two types of verbs. But, if one observes the sequential and purposive concepts, the serialized verbs seem to be the same, i.e. DVs occur before the action verb. To distinguish between these two concepts, not only the type of lexical verbs which has semantic influence on the SVCs concept categorization is taken into account, but the contextual words or grammatical markers also need to be considered. For instance, /maa0/ ‘come’ can denote six concepts, i.e. direction, aspect, sequence, purpose, time and result. Each concept is derived from the co-occurrences between different contexts, type and position of lexical verbs and /maa0/. See following examples:

- (1) Thai: sak1khruu2 yaj1 cvng0 klap1 maa0 (Direction)
a moment big then return come
English: He came back a long while later. (Direction+Time)
- (2) Thai: mvva2 sip1haa2 pii0 luang2 maa0 lxxw3 (Time)
when fifteen year pass come already
English: About fifteen years ago, ... (Time)
- (3) Thai: kha2pha1caw2 law2 maa0 pen0khung3pen0khxxw0 (Aspect)
I tell come a lot
English: I have said a lot about Yaksong... (Aspect+Time)
- (4) Thai: than2 maa0 tham0ngaan0 thii2 krom0 sun4la3kaa0k@@@n0 (Purpose)
he come work at department customs
English: He regularly came to work at the Department of Customs... (Direction+Time+Purpose)
- (5) Thai: mvva2 naj0 mxk3wel0 maa0 pen huua4naa2 (Result)
when Mr. Maxwell come be chief
English: When Mr. Maxwell became Chief... (Result+Time)
- (6) Thai: maa0 saap2 rrvng2 phaaj0lang4 (Sequence)
come know story later
English: I learned about it later. (Time)

In sentence (1), /maa0/ occurs after the directional verb /klap1/ ‘return’ to denote the directional concept. But in sentence (2) when /maa0/ occurs after the verb /luang2/ ‘pass’, which is also a directional verb, the whole SVCs express the concept of time in the past. This is because of the existence of the time markers, i.e. /mvva2+sip1haa2+pii0/ ‘when+fifteen+years’ and /lxxw3/ ‘already’ in the sentence that influence the verb /luang2/ ‘pass’ to obviously convey the notion of the past time. In sentence (3), the position of /maa0/ in SVCs is the same as those in (1) and (2) but with the different type of verb that precedes it. It is the process verb /law2/ ‘tell’ which comes before

/maa0/ to denote the perfect aspect of the action that has happened before and continued until the time that the speaker made his utterance. To denote the purposive concept of SVC in (4), /maa0/ occurs before the action verb, i.e. /tham0ngaan0/ ‘work’. It is the second verb that denotes the goal of the first verb. In sentence (5), the position of /maa0/ is the same as that in (4) but its following verbs are different. The verb which follows /maa0/ in (5) is the equative verb /pen0/ ‘be’ which denotes the state of things or persons. So, the combination of /maa0+pen0/ ‘come+be’ denotes the resultative concept in which the second verb implies the change of state of the agent resulting from the action denoted by the initial verb. In the last sentence, the position of /maa0/ again looks similar to those in (4) and (5), but the verb /saap2/ ‘know’ that follows /maa0/ in (6) is regarded as the cognition verb which is different from those in (4) and (5). Apart from that, the appearance of the contextual word /phaaj0lang4/ ‘later’ after the SVC reinforces the sequential concept of the event. This is the reason why the SVC in (6) is semantically categorized to denote the concept of sequence not the purposive one.

Regarding the English translations of SVCs with DVs, their semantic concepts are mostly found to convey the same concepts as those in the SL but sometimes with other concepts included to the original. This can be clearly seen from sentences (1) to (5) above of which their translations have a tendency to maintain Thai original concepts. However, if considering sentences (1), (3), (4) and (5), it can be seen that the English translations gain the other concepts of time in (1), (3) and (5), and direction and time in (4). Comparing the concepts between Thai and English in (6), even the specified concepts of both relate the temporal concept, the English verb ‘learned’ used as a linguistic representation for the SVC conveys only the past time, missing the information of the sequence of the event. This sequential notion, however, does not disappear but existing in the adverb ‘later’ instead. This kind of unreal meaning loss is often found in the findings for other DVs occurring in SVCs as well. After having compared the SVCs and their English translations, some findings of the semantic equivalence between the two in terms of the meaning gain and loss can be displayed in the following table:

Table 5: Semantic equivalence (meaning gain and loss) for the DVs /khaw2/ ‘enter’, /?@@k1/ ‘exit’, /khvn2/ ‘ascend’, and /long0/ ‘descend’

	Thai	Eng.	Thai	Eng.	Thai	Eng.	Thai	Eng.
Concepts	/khaw2/ ‘enter’	Trans.	/?@@k1/ ‘exit’	Trans.	/khvn2/ ‘ascend’	Trans.	/long0/ ‘descend’	Trans.
Direction	✓	✓ + -	✓	✓ + -	✓	✓ + -	✓	✓ + -
Aspect	✓	+	✓	+	✓	✓ + -	✓	✓ + -
Sequence	✓	✓ + -						
Purpose	✓	✓ + -	✓	✓ +	✓	+		
Time	✓	✓						
Success			✓	✓ + -				

Remarks: ✓ = equal + = gain - = loss

According to Table 5, it can be concluded that there are the meaning gain and loss in the translations of Thai SVCs but it is the meaning gain which mostly happens in all English translations. Looking at the translations of SVCs with /khaw2/, for example, the semantic equivalence in English for the original concepts of direction, sequence and time can be explained that the meaning equal, gain and loss are found in translations, sometimes separately; sometimes simultaneously. The findings reveal that both meaning gain and loss most frequently occur together in the translations of those three concepts, followed by the single meaning gain and the meaning loss respectively. Opposite to the SVCs with /khaw2/, in the translations of SVCs with /khvn2/, the meaning gain is individually found to occur most often, followed by the concurrent feature of the meaning gain and loss.

With respect to the syntactic characteristics of those translated concepts in English, different linguistic realizations are discovered to employ to denote the concepts. Sometimes they are lexical words e.g. verbs, adverbs, prepositions, etc. Sometimes they are phrases e.g. verb+adverb, auxiliary+verb, verb+preposition, verb+adjective, to-infinitive, etc. And sometimes they are clauses. As exemplified in sentence (1) above, the directional concept in English is represented by the main

verb followed by the adverb as ‘came+back’. Since this sentence also denotes the concept of time in the past, an inflection of the past time reflects in the main verb. In comparison with its Thai form (directional verb+maa0), this English pattern, i.e. verb+adverb can be regarded as one corresponding form to that one in Thai since it is often found in the data. In sentences (2) and (5), the translations denote the concepts of time and result through the forms of adverb ‘ago’ and verb ‘became’ respectively. Apart from adverb which reflects the past time in English translations in (2), inflectional morpheme, as attached to the verbs ‘came’ in (1) and (4), ‘became’ in (5), and ‘learned’ in (6), is another linguistic device mostly found in the data to denote such concept. See Table 6 for some linguistic realizations in English of those SVCs with /khvn2/ and their syntactic equivalence:

Table 6: Syntactic equivalence of the SVCs with the DV /khvn2/ in English

Thai (SL)		English (TL)		No. of occurrence	
Concepts	Forms	Concepts	Forms		
1. Direction	1.MotV+DV	Direction	V(base)+Adv	2	
		Direction+Time	V(past)+Adv	3	
		Direction+Time+Passive	PasAux(past)+V(ppt)	1	
	2.QanV+DV	Direction	Art+N		2
			V(base)		1
	3.ComV+DV	Direction+Time	V(past)+Adv		1
4.DV+DirV	Direction+Time	V(past)		1	
2. Aspect	1.CreV+DV	Aspect	Adj		2
			N		3
		Aspect+Time	V(past)		3
		Aspect+Time+Direction	V(past)+Prep+N		3
		Passive+Time	PasAux(pre)+V(ppt)		1
	2.CogV+DV	Aspect+Time+Passive	PasAux(past)+V(ppt)		7
		Aspect+Time	V(past)+Prep		2
	3.EmoV+DV	Aspect	Adj		1
3. Purpose	1.DV+ActV	Time+Purpose	V(past)		1

(Note: See Appendix for the full names of abbreviation)

Table 6 shows that there is no one-to-one correspondence between the forms of SVCs and their English translations. A single concept of SVCs can be conveyed through various Thai forms and correspond to many linguistic realizations in English. At the same time, it can be seen that different forms of SVCs correspond to a same form in English as well. Or it can be said that more than one-to-one correspondence is possible. Anyhow, some certain translated forms or patterns of those SVCs with the DV occur more frequently than others. Based on the eighty-eight SVCs with /khvn2/, the aspectual concept is most found with the creation verbs e.g. /saang2/ ‘build’, /tang2/ ‘set up’, /kqqt1/ ‘born’, /tii0phim0/ ‘publish’, etc. Their translated forms in English are various. However, this form of a single creation verb and /khvn2/ is most frequently represented by a passive structure in English for 8 out of 28 translations (28.5%) while other forms of SVCs e.g. cognition verbs plus /khvn2/ also sometimes employ this English passive form. Besides, this pattern is also used as the translations for the construction in which the creation verb is preceded by another verb. For the directional concept of SVCs which are conveyed through the motion verbs followed the DV, the most frequently used form in English is ‘verb+adverb’. This form occurs 5 times out of 8 translations (62.5%). With this statistic occurrence, those English forms therefore may be considered as potential forms or patterns to be selected in doing translation of the SVC concepts.

Conclusion and Discussion

The results have shown that each construction of Thai serial verbs with DVs can denote a single or multiple semantic concepts. The concepts discovered in this study are directional, aspectual, purposive, sequential, resultative, time, and success. These can be grouped into two major categories of spatial and temporal cognitive concepts. Some of those seven notions can belong to both spatial and temporal. To be categorized, the spatial concept covers only the directional while the temporal covers the aspectual, time and success. For the purposive, sequential and resultative, they are grouped as the combination of spatial and temporal concepts. Syntactically, it is also found that each concept in Thai can be expressed through various forms in which one of those six DVs precedes or follows different types of lexical verbs (except directional concept which can consist of two DVs or more). It is these verb types that have an influence on the concept categorization of SVCs with DVs. These verbs can be also divided into the spatial and temporal or both. The spatial verbs cover the motion verbs and the quantity verbs whereas the temporal verbs cover the action verbs (non-motion verbs), some stative verbs, i.e. the equative verb and the emotion verbs, and some process verbs, i.e. the mental verbs, the cognition verbs, and the perception verbs. For the rest, i.e. the creation verbs, the destruction verbs, the disappearance verbs and the decrease verbs, they are grouped as the combined spatial and temporal verbs. Furthermore, it is often found that the same form of SVCs can denote different concepts. This is due to the semantic influence of the contexts that has on those SVCs concept categorization. Since doing translation is not only always a process of finding of a word by word equivalent but it is also a discovery of the meaning arising from the relationship between individual words in the same or other contextual sentences. The English translated forms of each concept seem to vary according to the position of DVs co-occurring with other verbs and grammatical markers. Besides, the relationship between words or the type of words in both languages has an effect on choosing a certain structure or form to convey the meaning. So, to decide which TL forms should be used as the representations of SVCs, it involves many factors that lead to the selection of appropriate English words and pattern choices in translations.

In the aspect of the semantic equivalence, the findings reveal the existence of the meaning gain and loss between SVCs with DVs and their English translations. Due to the different linguistic systems between the SL and TL, both meaning gain and loss are unavoidable even the translations were done by professional translators. SVC, a distinctive feature in Thai, is unavailable in English syntactic system. In particular, when those DVs are attached to SVCs, the derived constructions inherit several referential concepts e.g. directional and sequential, and expressive concepts like attitudinal aspect or success. However, translation is the process of transferring the meaning from the SL into the TL through the natural forms of the TL. There are ways in doing so on SVCs with DVs as evidentially shown in the example sentences in this paper. The English translations, on the other hand, also reflect the meaning of SVCs which has never been analyzed in the previous studies. The concepts of SVCs with DVs are represented by different grammatical devices in English such as verbs, prepositions, adjective, adverbs, infinitives, phrases, clause, etc. And those English linguistic realizations can be used correspondingly to many forms for certain concepts of Thai SVCs. Among those English syntactic correspondences, it can be stated, based on the empirical statistic evidence, that a certain forms are discovered to be frequently employed to represent certain concepts of SVCs in Thai. Nevertheless, when the syntactic equivalence is taken into consideration, one-to-one correspondence between Thai SVCs and English translations are not found to be in existence.

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Appendix

Abbreviations

ActV	=	Action verb (non-motion verb)
MotV	=	Motion verb
DirV	=	Directional verb
DispV	=	Displacement verb
TravV	=	Travel verb
ComV	=	Communication verb
TakV	=	Take verb
StaV	=	Stative verb
EquV	=	Equative verb
EmoV	=	Emotion verb
QanV	=	Quantity verb
ProcV	=	Process verb
PerV	=	Perception verb
MenV	=	Mental verb
CogV	=	Cognition verb
CreV	=	Creation verb
DecV	=	Decrease verb
DesV	=	Destruction verb
DisaV	=	Disappearance verb
Adj	=	Adjective
Adv	=	Adverb
V	=	Verb
Prep	=	Preposition
Art	=	Article
NP	=	Noun Phrase
Pas	=	Passive
Aux	=	Auxiliary
ppt	=	Past participle
pre	=	present tense
past	=	past tense