

Thematic Progression in Tai Dam Ritual Procedural Texts

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Abstract

This study draws on a framework of Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP) which was developed by Daneš (1974). Tai Dam ritual procedural texts were analyzed within a scope of thematic progression. The objective of this study is to study thematic progression in Tai Dam ritual procedural texts. Nine texts were collected from Tai Dam ritual masters.

The results revealed that there are three patterns of thematic progression found in Tai Dam ritual procedural texts: (1) constant thematic progression (70.6%), (2) simple linear thematic progression (29.2%) and (3) split Rheme pattern (0.2%). Primarily, the selected texts are developed by the selection of Process Theme (or action verb) which plays significant role in ritual meaning.

Keywords: Theme, Rheme, Tai Dam ritual procedural texts, thematic progression

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การพัฒนาของข้อความหลักในตัวบท ประเภทกระบวนการในภาษาไทย

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บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาค้นคว้าครั้งนี้มุ่งศึกษาตัวบทประเภทกระบวนการในภาษาไทยตามแนวคิดทฤษฎีการวิเคราะห์ประโยคเชิงไวยากรณ์หน้าที่ของศาสตราจารย์ฟาร์ติเชก เดนส์ (1974) โดยเน้นการวิเคราะห์การพัฒนาของข้อความหลักในการศึกษาค้นคว้านี้มีวัตถุประสงค์ เพื่อศึกษาการพัฒนาตัวบทของข้อความหลักในตัวบทประเภทกระบวนการพิธีกรรมในภาษาไทย คำข้อมูลที่ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ประกอบด้วยตัวบทประเภทกระบวนการของพิธีกรรมในภาษาไทยจำนวนเก้าตัวบท ซึ่งเก็บข้อมูลจากผู้ออกภาษาที่เป็นผู้ประกอบพิธีกรรม

ผลการศึกษาพบว่าโครงสร้างแสดงข้อความหลักของตัวบทประเภทกระบวนการของพิธีกรรมในภาษาไทยประกอบด้วยข้อความหลักที่ปรากฏในตำแหน่งต้นอนุพยางค์ และข้อความส่วนที่ตามมา การพัฒนาของข้อความหลักที่พบมีสามรูปแบบดังนี้ 1) รูปแบบข้อความหลักต่อเนื่อง 70.6%, 2) รูปแบบข้อความหลักเชิงเส้น 29.2% และ 3) รูปแบบการแตกตัวของข้อความที่ตามมา 0.2% นอกจากนี้ยังพบว่าการคัดเลือกข้อความหลักแสดงการกระทำมีบทบาทสำคัญในการพัฒนาตัวบทประเภทดังกล่าว

คำสำคัญ : ข้อความหลัก, ข้อความส่วนที่ตามมา, ตัวบทประเภทกระบวนการของพิธีกรรมในภาษาไทย, การพัฒนาของข้อความหลัก

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1. Introduction

Over time, there has been a growing interest in the study of Tai Dam. Previous studies on Tai Dam have focused on both the field of linguistics and anthropology. In linguistic oriented research, many studies have concentrated on phonological systems (Anantrawan, 1978; Decha, 1987; Wattanaprasert & Liamprawat, 1988), morphological systems (Yensamut, 1981; Buranasingha, 1988), grammatical systems (Jiranuntanaporn, 2003; Panitch, 1994) and folklore (Suebsook et al., 1980). In terms of discourse studies, Hartmann's (1994) work on pronominal strategies in Tai Dam poetic discourse was the first conducted. Edwards (2011) studied participant reference in narrative discourse. Later, Patpong (2011a) analyzed the Generic Structure Potential of Tai Song Dam folktales and her later work, entitled "Textual Resource of Thai Song Dam Folktales," was presented in the same year. As few works have been conducted at the discourse level in Tai Dam, this study is an attempt to further analyze the units at a higher level than sentence level.

When considering recent discourse studies in Thailand, many researchers have focused on a corpus of narrative discourses, folklore, advertisements and dialogues, but rather less attention has been paid to procedural discourse. Loos (2003) defined the concept of procedural discourse as that which refers to written and spoken discourse that tells people "How to do something" or guides people performing a task; furthermore, procedural discourse shows the steps leading to a goal. According to the characteristics of procedural text mentioned, to study the system of Theme and thematic progression is necessary in this kind of text.

According to Daneš (1974) and Fries (1995), the notion of thematic progression is the way that the presented ideas are developed. Besides, the thematic progression tells us how a Theme is related to other Themes and Rhemes in a text.

As pointed out above, this paper utilizes the notion of thematic progression of Tai Dam procedural texts. The framework of this present study draws on Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP) of Daneš (1974). The nine ritual procedural texts are collected from Tai Dam ritual masters. The selected texts consist of 833 clause complexes and 2,262 clause simplexes.

2. The system of Theme

In the flow of discourse, the system of Theme establishes a local environment, providing a point of departure by reference to which the listener interprets the message. Here the local environment is Theme, serving as the point of departure, and what is presented in this local environment is the Rheme. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 66) state that the organization of the textual organization of the clause presents as a configuration of two thematic statuses. That is, Theme and Rheme constitute the ‘thematic structure’ (or Theme – Rheme structure).

In Tai Dam, Theme is realized by position in sequence; that is, Theme, serving as the point of departure of the message, is followed by Rheme, serving as the reminder of the message. In the selected texts, Theme is marked by the first position of the clause or the thematic particle *naʔ4*.

An example of Theme marked by the thematic particle *naʔ4* is shown below.

Example 2.1:

Theme	Rheme
taŋ5tæ:3 ca:w6 ni:4 naʔ4	ciʔ3 ma:2 khaw5 nuuŋ3 moŋ2
since morning this PTCL	FUT come enter one o'clock

‘(The groom) will arrive at (the bride’s house) by early morning.’

The thematic particle *naʔ4* is located after Themes to signify Theme of the clause taŋ5tæ:3 ca:w6 ni:4 ‘since early morning’.. The thematic particle *naʔ4* in example 1 indicates the circumstance Theme.

Focusing on the thematic structure, Tai Dam and English have the same thematic structure; that is, Theme is followed by Rheme. Themes both in Tai Dam and in English are realized by the initial position of the clause, but there are some differences. Thematic structure in Tai Dam correlates to the mood types (or mood selection) particularly in declarative, imperative, and wh-interrogative mood

types. However, in polar interrogative mood type, Tai Dam does not give thematic prominence according to the mood types. The initial position is given thematic status, but it is the end of the clause that is interpersonally significant. The polar interrogatives differ from declaratives by locating the interpersonal negotiators or particles at the end of the clause. The elemental interrogative, i.e. Wh-element interrogative clause, typically appears in the same position, as a non-interrogative element would have in the corresponding declarative variant of the clause (see systemic functional interpretation of Thai and Chinese in Patpong, 2006 and Halliday and McDonald, 2004); respectively, see example 2.2.

example 2.2.

Theme	Rheme
kaj2	laɟ5 taŋ1 ʔe:1 lej6
Wh-element: who	get money a lot of Q

‘...who earns more money?’

In the interrogative mood type, wh-interrogative elements serve as a Theme. In the given example, wh-interrogative element kaj2 ‘who’ is given thematic status. It functions as the Theme of the clause.

3. Thematic progression in Tai Dam ritual procedural texts

According to Daneš (1974) and Fries (1995), thematic progression is the choice and ordering of the utterance themes. The text presents the idea by developing its Themes related to other Themes and Rhemes in a text. Based on Daneš (1974)’s work on the analysis of scientific Czech, other professional texts, and German and English language materials, three main types of thematic progression (i.e. constant Theme, simple linear Theme, and split Rheme) have been provided. Each type of thematic progression is discussed in turn.

This study has found all three patterns of thematic progression (i.e. constant Theme, simple linear Theme and split Rheme). The most selected thematic progression pattern is constant Theme progression pattern (70.6%), while the simple linear Thematic progression pattern is less frequently found (29.2%), and the split Rheme is found in the lowest frequency (0.2%). Table 4.1 shows the number of instances and percentages of thematic progression found in this study.

Table 3.1 Thematic progression in Tai Dam ritual procedural texts

No.	Text	Thematic progression			Number of thematic progression patterns
		Constant Theme	Simple linear Theme	Split Rheme	
1	Sen Ruen Phu Taw	53	24	-	77
2	Sen Ruen Phu Noi	63	24	-	87
3	Wedding of Phu Taw	21	6	-	27
4	Wedding of Phu Noi	32	5	-	37
5	Funeral ritual of Phu Taw	52	16	-	68
6	Funeral ritual of Phu Noi	31	11	-	42
7	Sen Tua Phu Taw	25	13	-	38
8	Sen Tua Phu Noi	51	39	1	91
9	Village shrine worship	13	3	-	16
	Total	341 (70.6%)	141 (29.2%)	1 (0.2%)	483 (100%)

Each pattern will be discussed in more detail below.

3.1 Constant Theme pattern

In constant Theme pattern, the series of the utterances share the same Theme, while the different Rhemes are linked up (Daneš, 1974, p. 119). The Themes of utterances 2 and 3 are derived from the Theme of utterance 1. A figure of constant Theme pattern is illustrated as follows.

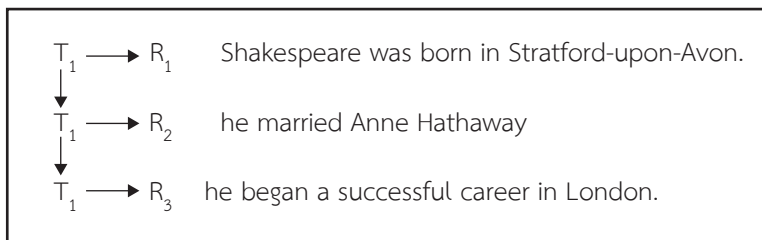


Figure 3.1: Constant Theme pattern

As shown in the example given in figure 3.1, utterances 1-3 share the same Themes (i.e. Shakespeare). The pronoun 'he' is selected as Themes of the following utterances in order to substitute for a noun Theme in utterance 1, 'Shakespeare'.

Within the thematic progression patterns found in Tai Dam ritual procedural texts, the constant theme is the most selected thematic progression pattern found in this study. Based on Theme selection, this study found two sub-types of the constant Theme patterns: the constant Theme which is realized by a verbal group and the constant Theme which is realized by a nominal group. The constant Theme pattern which is realized by the verbal group is mostly selected. The constant Theme realized by a verbal group can be categorized into two subtypes: (1) constant Theme progression realized by a single verb and (2) constant Theme progression realized by an existential verb. The constant Theme realized by a nominal group is classified into three sub-types according to types of noun: (1) pronoun, (2) common noun and (3) temporal word.

3.1.1 The constant Theme realized by a verbal group

In this type, a Theme which is realized by a verbal group appears in a series of utterances. Verbal groups found in this study are categorized according to type of verb: (1) lexical verb in imperative clauses and (2) existential verb in existential clauses.

(1) The constant Theme realized by a lexical verb

This type appears only in the utterances of imperative clause. Utterances 1 to 3 share the same Themes (lexical verb as Theme), while the different Rhemes are linked up. An example of thematic progression pattern realized by a lexical verb is given below.

Example 3.1:

Theme	Rheme
38.2 kɔ:5 ma:2 kin1 then come eat	khaw5 rice
38.3 kin1 eat	na:m6 water
38.4 kin1 eat	maʔ3 su:p3ja:2 betal nut cigarette
38.5 kin1 eat	law5 kan1 saʔ3 kɔ:n3 liqueur together before

‘...then eat some rice, drink water, eat betal nut, have a cigarette and drink alcohol first.’

As the given example indicates, the utterances 1 – 4 (clause 38.2- 38.5) have the same process Theme (i.e. kin1 ‘to eat’), whereas the different Rhemes of each utterance are linked up. In clauses 38.2- 38.5, the speaker talks about the steps by which the ritual master asks the ancestor spirit to eat the prepared offerings. Therefore, the same process (i.e. kin1 ‘to eat’) is shared, while the different Rhemes (i.e. offerings) are listed.

The other lexical verbs which are selected in constant Theme pattern are ʔaw1 ‘to take’, ʔet3 hɔt3 ‘to do’, se:n1 ‘to perform’, jok4 ‘to carry’, etc. The most frequently selected verb in constant Theme pattern is ʔaw1. It always occurs when a speaker tells listeners how to prepare offerings for performing a ritual (i.e. take the offerings in to a container). An example is given below.

Example 3.2:

Theme		Rheme
34.2	kɔː5 ʔaw1 CONJ take	koːŋ2pok3 spare ribs
34.3	ʔaw1 take	khɔː5tɔː1 saj5 loŋ2 paj1
34.4	ʔaw1 take	pork leg pork intestine down go koːŋ2pok3 saʋ3 loŋ2 paj1 spare ribs put down go
35	læːw6 kɔː5 ʔaw1 CONJ take	hua1muː1 paj1 taŋ5 pork head go put
36.1	ʔaw1 take	hua1muː1 paj1 taŋ5 set3 læːw6 pork head go put finish ASP
36.2	kɔː5 læːw6 tæː5 thiː2niː6 CONJ ciʔ3 ʔaw1 MOD FUT take	khaw5tom5 khə3nom1 saʋ3 sticky rice and bananas dessert put

Then, take some spare ribs, put some pig’s leg and pig’s intestine into a container, put it down. Then take pig’s head. When some pig’s head has been taken, then put some sticky rice and bananas dessert down.’

(2) The constant Theme realized by an existential verb

This subtype is limited to an existential clause. In utterances of existential clause, Theme is realized by an existential verb mi:2 ‘exist/have’. Therefore, Themes of utterances 2 and 3 are derived

from the theme of utterance 1 mi:2 ‘exist/have’. This thematic progression pattern always appears when the speaker wants to give the information about offerings used for performing rituals. An example of this subtype is given as below.

Example 3.3: Text 6: 19.2- 19.7

	Theme		Rheme
19.2	mi:2	→	khaw5
	exist/have	↓	rice
19.3	mi:2	→	kh๗๗๗4nəj2
	exist/have	↓	boiled entrails
19.4	mi:2	→	tuʔ3ja:ŋ3
	exist/have	↓	everything
19.5	mi:2	→	kh๗๗๗4nəj2
	exist/have		boiled entrails
19.6	mi:2	→	kæ:ŋ1
	exist/have	↓	food
19.7	mi:2	→	haŋ5
	exist/have		whatever

‘... there are some rice, boiled entrails, everything, boiled entrails, food and whatever.’

As shown by the given example, clauses 19.2 to 19.7 are all existential clauses which have the same Theme, mi:2 ‘exist/have’; the existential verb ‘mi2’ is selected in a series of the utterances.

It is typical that Tai Dam procedural texts mainly consist of lexical verbs in imperative clauses. This is because the selected texts are procedural monologic texts. The speakers describe how a ritual is performed through a sequence of steps. The steps of performance are expressed by series of action verbs. Therefore, the lexical

verbs picked up as unmarked topical Theme in the constant Theme pattern are motivated and make sense. In addition, the constant Theme pattern expressed by series of the existential verb *mi:2* ‘exist/have’ is used for describing the stages of preparing offerings. Not only is the selection of an existential verb *mi:2* employed, but also the lexical verb *ʔaw1* ‘to take’ is used when the speaker wants to list items for an offering.

3.1.2 The constant Theme realized by a nominal group

In this type, Theme realized by a nominal group appears in a series of utterances. This thematic progression pattern includes the thematic progression pattern which is realized by pronoun, common noun and temporal word, discussed as follows. The constant Theme realized by a nominal group: pronoun

Example 3.4:

Theme		Rheme	
12.2	haw2 kɔ:5	→ ʔi:ʔ3 tɔ:ŋ5	ʔaw1 se:n1to:1 mi:2 haŋ5
	we CONJ	↓ FUT MOD	take Sentua have what
13.1	haw2 kɔ:5	→ ʔi:ʔ3 tiəm1	khɔ:ŋ1 waj6
	we CONJ	↓ FUT	prepare thing perform
13.2	haw2	→ ʔi:ʔ3 se:n1to:1	ni:4
	we	↓ FUT	Sentua this
14.1	tha:5 haw2	→ ciʔ3 ʔet3	
	CONJ we	↓ FUT	do
14.2	haw2	→ tɔ:ŋ5	lɔ:m4 khɯn5 ma:2
	we	MOD	start up come

‘... then we will perform Sentua ritual, then we will prepare the things used for performing ritual, we will perform this ritual, if we will do it, we have to start performing this ritual.’

As shown by the given example, it is obvious that the pronoun Themes haw2 ‘we’ are selected as unmarked Themes of all utterances. haw2 in this particular text refers to the host. In Tai Dam ritual, the ritual master and host are the most important participants. Therefore, it is typical that the procedural text is constantly developed by the selection of the major participant in ritual, such as haw2 ‘we’ in example 3.4., and haw2, in this case, referring to the host. Besides, this study also found the pronouns saw2 ‘they’ and man2 ‘it’, which are selected in constant Theme pattern. The pronouns saw2 and haw2 found in this study refer to host, ritual master and ritual participants who come to join the ritual. The pronoun man2 in constant Theme pattern refers to an offering (i.e. pig) used for worship.

The constant Theme realized by a nominal group: common nouns

Example 3.5:

	Theme		Rheme
63.2	ca:ŋ2	kɔ:5	khɯn5 wa:4 paj1
	ritual master	CONJ	start cast go
63.3	ca:ŋ2	kɔ:5	tɔ:ŋ5 taj1 pa:ŋ1se:n1 lap4
	ritual maste	CONJ	must perform Pangsen receive
64.1	ca:ŋ2		taj1 pa:ŋ1se:n1 lap4 læ:w6
	ritual master		perform Pangsen receive ASP: pfv
64.2	ca:ŋ2	kɔ:5	wa:4 lɯaŋ4 khɔ:ŋ1 ca:ŋ2 paj1
	ritual master	CONJ	cast story of ritual master go

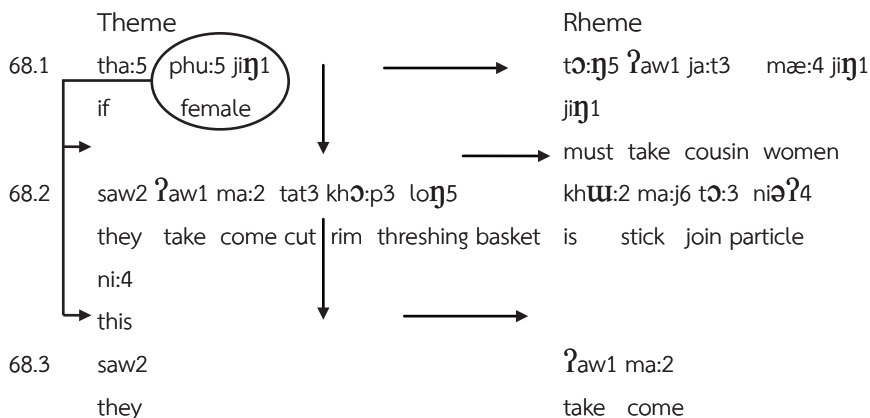
‘... then the ritual master starts to cast the ritual spell, then he must perform Pangsen ritual, he performs it, then he continues performing ritual.’

As indicated by the given examples, the Themes realized by a common noun ca:ŋ² ‘Sen Ruen Phu Taw ritual master’ appear in a series of utterances (clause 63.2 – 64.2). In Tai Dam ritual procedural texts, the constant Theme pattern is mostly expressed by various actors of the ritual, for example ca:ŋ², mɔ:1se:n1, mɔ:1 ‘ritual master’, khʷəj1ha:m1 ‘funeral master’s assistant’, pɔ:5ca:j2 ‘groom’, mæ:4jɪŋ1 phu:5jɪŋ1 ‘female’, caw5ba:n5 ‘host’. Additionally, constant Theme pattern is also expressed by an offering, for example pha:5sin5 ‘cloth’ and mu:1 ‘pig’. It is obvious that this subtype is mostly expressed by a series of common nouns (i.e. various actors). It is typical that Tai Dam ritual procedural texts are not only expressed by the constant Theme pattern realized by process Theme, but also expressed by a series of actors. As mentioned in the introduction, procedural discourse is goal-oriented, which is expressed by process Theme in imperative clause and is not oriented around a specific person. In Tai Dam ritual procedural texts, there are a number of actors who perform the ritual. So, in some parts of the texts, these actors need to be specified so that it will be clear to the text receiver (the researcher) who performs what part of ritual. Moreover, some parts of the ritual procedural texts consist of supportive information such as explanation and description, which are realized by declarative clauses. Consequently, the unmarked Subject Theme is specified.

In some cases, it is possible that the successive Theme (i.e. pronoun) is used in order to refer to the common noun of the first utterance. This is not only a typical feature of procedural discourse but also other text types (e.g. narrative, folktale, expository).

This pattern shares the same Theme in a series of utterances. The Theme of utterance 1 becomes the new Theme of utterances 2 and 3 by using a pronoun instead of a common noun. An example is given as follows:

Example 3.6:



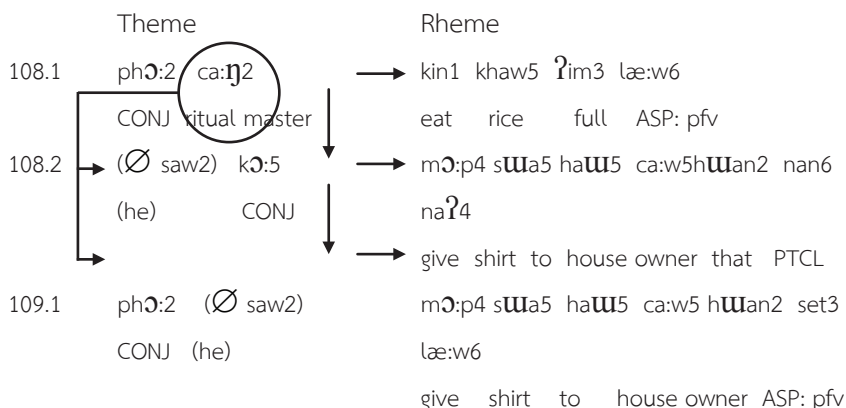
‘ If women have to invite their cousins, they invite them to cut the rim of the threshing basket, they take them.’

As shown in the given example, it is obvious that clauses 68.1-68.3 share the same Theme. The Theme of utterance 1 is realized by a common noun phu:5 jiŋ1 ‘female’. The speaker then uses the pronoun saw2 ‘they’ in utterances 2 and 3 instead of reusing the common noun phu:5 jiŋ1 ‘female’.

The pronoun Theme of the following utterance is used for referring to the common noun of the previous clause. Considering the function of the pronoun, it is used to refer to a noun which is mentioned in the previous clause, and used when the speaker does not want to repeat it. It is typical in Tai Dam that once the subject of a clause is introduced, the Subject Themes of the following clauses can be ellipsed. The ellipsed Subject Themes can be realized by a zero pronoun which can be tracked back from the previous clause — referential presumption. Matthiessen (1995, p. 780) calls it an ellipsed or presumed subject.

This typical feature can be found in Southeast Asian languages (e.g. Thai , Tai Dam). An example is given as follows:

Example 3.7:



‘ When the ritual master has eaten some rice, then he gives the shirt to the house owner, when he has given the shirt to the house owner...’

The constant Theme realized by a nominal group: temporal word

This study also found a thematic progression pattern realized by a temporal word. The nominal group which functions as the Theme of the utterances expresses the temporal meaning, such as, mɯ:6we:n2tong1 ‘time used to perform ritual’, and wan2paʔ3lɯʔ3hat3 ‘Thursday’. Based on the selected texts, thematic progression realized by a temporal nominal group is mostly used when the speaker wants to specify the time when the given ritual is held. An example is given as follows.

Example 3.8:

Theme		Rheme
3.1 mu:6 we:n2 toŋ2 time Wentong	→	mɯ:6 haŋ5 de:j6 time what particle
3.2 mu:6 we:n2 toŋ2 time Wentong	→	khɯ:2 mɯ:6 ʔa:j5 ta:j1 mɯ:6 kat3caɯ2 is time parent die time Katcaw mɯ:6 hə:2rɔ:n4 time Heron

‘Mu Wengtong is the day that parent died, also known as Mu Katcaw and Mu Heron.’

3.2 Simple linear thematic progression (TP)

The simple linear TP is the basic thematic progression. Theme 2 (or T₂) is derived from Rheme 1 (R₁) of utterance 1. Theme 3 (T₃) is derived from Rheme2 (R₂) of utterance 2, (Daneš, 1974, p. 118). See figure 3.2 below.

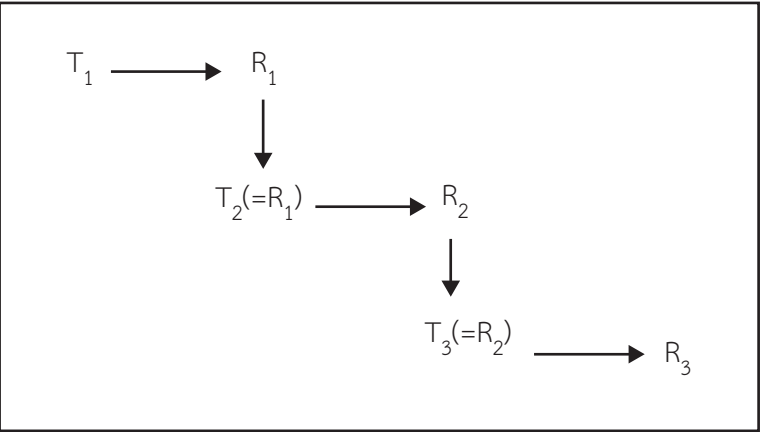


Figure 3.2 Simple linear thematic progressions

If considering thematic progression based on Theme selection, this study found three subtypes of simple linear thematic progression: (1) Process R1 = Process T2, (2) Object R1 = Subject T2 and (3) Marked Theme → Subject R1 = Subject T2. Based on its frequency, subtype (1) is most prevalent (63.2%), followed by subtype (2) (31.16%), and subtype (3) (5.64%), respectively. Each subtype of simple linear thematic progression pattern is discussed below.

(1) Process R1 = Process T2 (63.2%)

In this type, the successive Theme of utterance 2 is picked up from the Process or Rheme of utterance 1. Within simple linear thematic progression patterns, this subtype is most prevalent. The speaker wants to start a new activity and tells the ritual performer to perform the next step by selecting a verbal group to be the next Theme of the following imperative clause. An example is given below.

Example 3.9:

	Theme		Rheme
17.3	læ:w6 mæ:4jiŋ1 sɔ:ŋ1 kon2 nan4	→	saw2 naŋ4 sa:ŋ5 ni:4 sɔ:ŋ1
	then women two CLF that		sa:ŋ5
			they sit side this two side
17.4	naŋ4 naŋ4	←	sa:ŋ5 diəw1kan1
	sit sit	→	side same

‘...then, two women sit on opposite sides, sit! Sit on the same side.’

As the given example indicates, the Process (naŋ4 ‘to sit’) which occurs in the Rheme of utterance 1 becomes the new unmarked Theme (naŋ4 ‘to sit’) of the next utterance. Based on the corpus of this study, there are other action verbs which are selected in simple linear thematic progression patterns, for example, ɰaw ‘to take’, ɰet3 ‘to do’, ta:ŋ1 ‘to get back’, thaŋ1 ‘to take something off’, se:n1 ‘to offer up’, ha:1khwān1 ‘to find a life-soul’, and cut3tiŋ2 ‘to light the candle’. It is obvious that the Process Theme is picked up again in order to elaborate the process activities. If considering the relationship between ritual masters and researcher, the researcher is a Thai native speaker who is an out-group member, and basically has no knowledge about Tai Dam ritual. When collecting data, more information about each step is needed to elaborate and make a clearer picture of how Tai Dam ritual is performed.

(2) Object R1 = Subject T2 (31.16%)

In this type, the object which appears in the Rheme of utterance 1 becomes the Subject Theme of the following utterance. An example is given below.

Example 3.10:

Theme			Rheme		
147.2	saw2		ɰaw1	taj1	paj1 khu:1nɰuŋ1
	he/she		take	amulet	go CLF one
148	taj1	ni:6	sam1kan2	khə:ŋ1	paɰ3cam1to:1
	amulet	this	important	of	personal thing

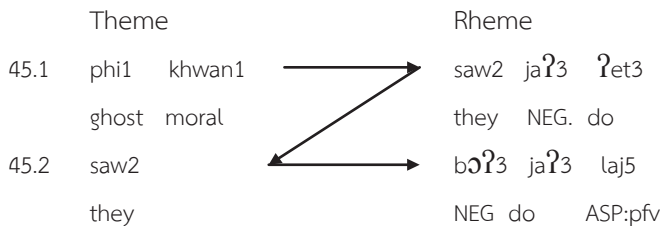
‘... he takes a pair of amulets, this amulet is the important personal thing.’

As the example illustrates, the object appearing in the Rheme (*taj1* ‘*amulet*’) is selected to be a new unmarked Theme of utterance 2. The new Theme *taj1* is picked up in the successive clause, as its significance is needed to be described in further detail.

(3) Marked Theme → Subject R1 = Subject T2 (5.64%)

In this type, the Theme of utterance 1 is a marked Theme expressed by a complement Theme or a circumstantial Theme. The subject of the clause appears as a part of the Rheme, and it becomes the successive Theme (Subject Theme) of utterance 2. An example is illustrated below.

Example 3.11:



‘They do not perform the ritual concerned with the spirit of moral, they cannot do it’

As shown in the given example, the Theme of utterance1 (*phi:1 khwan1* ‘the spirit of moral’) is a marked Theme which functions as a complement Theme (or non-subject participant Theme). The word *saw2* ‘they’ in utterance 1, which functions as the subject of the clause, is in a Rheme position. The extract in the example is developed from the Rheme of utterance 1 to the following Theme of utterance 2.

3.3 Split Rheme

In this type, a Rheme includes many of different pieces of information, each of which is taken up as Themes of subsequent clauses (Paltridge, 2000, p. 141). See Figure 3.3.

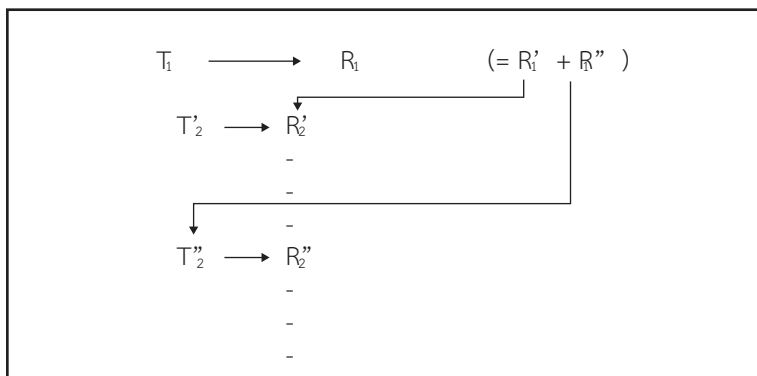


Figure 3.3: Split Rheme

Based on the selected texts, only one instance of split Rheme pattern is found (0.2%). The example of split Rheme pattern found in Tai Dam ritual procedural text is given below.

Example 3.12:

Theme	Rheme
102.5 sa:m1 t <u>wa</u> 1 wa:4	phu:5 n <u>o</u> :j6 phu:5 ta:w6 kh <u>u</u> :2 kan1
three round that	Phu Noi Phu Taw same together
102.6 phu:5 ta:w6 ni:4	<u>ʔi</u> ʔ3 t <u>o</u> ŋ5 mi:2 baj1 si:1
Phu Taw this	FUT MOD have rice offering
102.7 phu:5 n <u>o</u> :j6	b <u>o</u> ʔ3 mi:2
Phu Noi	NEG have

‘...Phu Noi and Phu Taw perform this step three times, it is same, Phutaw has to have the rice offering, whereas Phu Noi does not have.’

As the given example indicates, the Rheme of utterance 1 (or clause 102.5) consists of doubled Rhemes (i.e. phu:5 nɔ̌:j6 and phu:5 ta:w6). The Rhemes (R' and R'') become the next Themes of the following utterances (clause 102.6-102.7). In this particular text, two pieces of information are picked up in the next Themes. This is because they need to be further explained. Due to limited data, this study found only one instance of split Rheme. If more procedural texts are collected and analysed, it is possible that more instances of the split Rheme will be found.

The system network of thematic progression patterns found in this study is shown in figure 3.4.

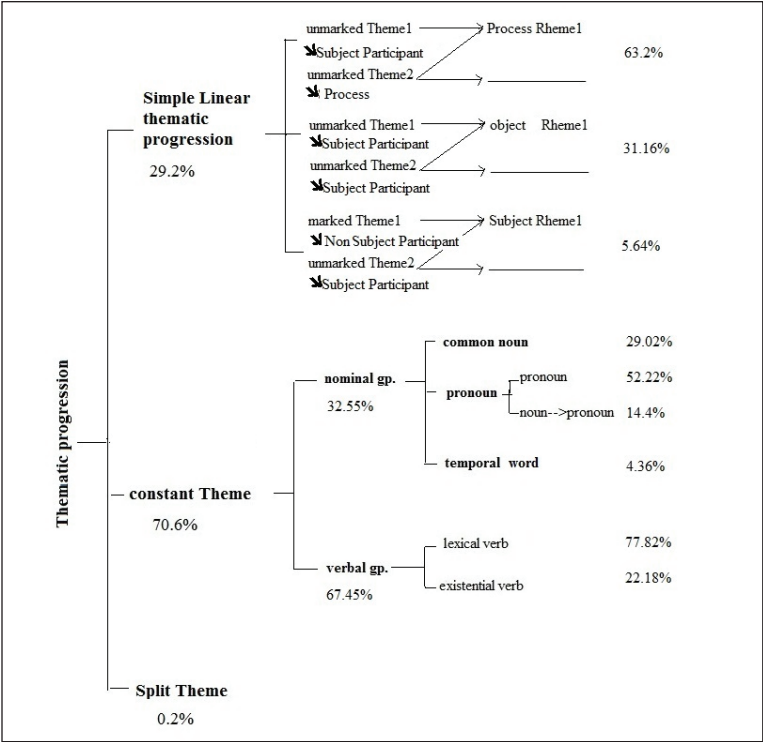


Figure 3.4 System network of thematic progression in this study

As the given example indicates, the Rheme of utterance 1 (or clause 102.5) consists of doubled Rhemes (i.e. phu:5 nɔ:j6 and phu:5 ta:w6). The Rhemes (R' and R'') become the next Themes of the following utterances (clause 102.6-102.7). In this particular text, two pieces of information are picked up in the next Themes. This is because they need to be further explained. Due to limited data, this study found only one instance of split Rheme. If more procedural texts are collected and analysed, it is possible that more instances of the split Rheme will be found.

The system network of thematic progression patterns found in this study is shown in figure 3.4.

According to Daneš (1974), types of thematic progression may be employed in various combination; therefore, in the next section, the combined patterns of thematic progression found in this study is presented in more detail.

3.4 Combined patterns of thematic progression

Based on the corpus of this study, combined patterns of thematic progression are found. The combined pattern is a thematic progression pattern (i.e. constant Theme, simple linear, and split Rheme patterns) in which one of the three mentioned patterns is instantiated at the first clause and the following clauses are extended by another pattern. This study found three types of combined thematic patterns: (1) simple linear Theme + constant Theme (63.7%), (2) constant Theme + simple linear Theme (27%) and (3) constant Theme + simple linear Theme + constant Theme (9.3%). Each type of combined pattern will be discussed individually.

(1) Simple linear Theme + constant Theme (63.7%)

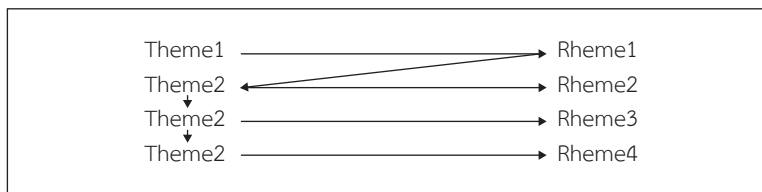


Figure 3.5 Combined pattern: simple linear Theme+ constant Theme

In this type, the initial utterance starts with a simple linear thematic progression pattern, and the following utterances are extended by a constant thematic progression pattern; see the example 3.13 below.

Example 3.13:

	Theme		Rheme
1	saw2 they	→	ma:2 hap4 mɔ:1kʷəj1 come take funeral master
2	mɔ:1kʷəj1 ritual master	→	ciʔ3 loŋ2 hʷən2 FUT down house
3	(∅ saw2) (he)	→	baŋ1 to:1 cast a spell
4.1	(∅ saw2) (he)	→	baŋ1 to:1 læ:w6 cast a spell ASP: pfv

‘ They come to take the funeral master at his home, the ritual master comes out of home, he casts a spell, he has already cast a spell... ’

As shown in the given example, the Theme of utterance 2 mɔ:1kʷəj1 ‘funeral master’ is derived from the Rheme of utterance 1. This presents the simple linear thematic progression pattern. Then, the Theme of utterance 2 has the same Theme in a series of subsequent utterances; that is, the constant thematic progression pattern is selected in order to provide more information about what is done by the same subject mɔ:1kʷəj1. When the subject of a clause (i.e. mɔ:1kʷəj1) is introduced, the Subject Themes of the following clauses can be ellipsed. The ellipsed Subject Themes are realized by zero pronouns (i.e. ∅ saw2) which can be traced back from the previous clause.

In this type, the initial utterance starts with a simple linear thematic progression pattern, and the following utterances are extended by a constant thematic progression pattern; see the example 3.13 below.

Example 3.13:

(2) Constant Theme + simple linear Theme (27%)

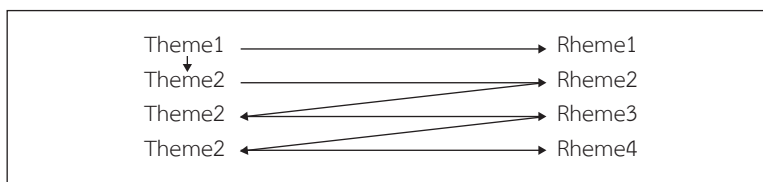


Figure 3.6: Combined pattern: constant Theme + simple linear Theme

Different from type (1), this combined pattern starts with a constant thematic progression pattern, and then is extended by a simple linear thematic progression pattern (see figure 3.6). An example is given as follows.

Example 3.14:

	Theme		Rheme
50.4	kh <u>uəj</u> 1 ha:m1 funeral master's assistant	→	mi:2 si:3 kon2 has four CLF
50.5	kh <u>uəj</u> 1 ha:m1 funeral master's assistant	→	tɔ:ŋ5 pen1 pɔ:5ca:j2 must be male
51.1	kh <u>uəj</u> 1 ha:m1 funeral master's assistant	→	mi:2 si:3 kon2 læ:w6 have four CLF ASP: pfv
51.2	kɔ:5 mi:2 CONJ exist/have	↙	mɔ:1 su:3khwan1 ni:6 naʔ4 master calling life-soul this particle
52	su:3 khwan1 call life-soul back	↘	kh <u>uəj</u> 1 funeral master's assistant
53.1	k <u>uəj</u> 1 ha:m1 funeral master's assistant	→	s <u>ua</u> 3 sua5hi:2 wear Tai Dam traditional shirt

‘... there are four funeral master’s assistants, they must be male. There are four funeral master’s assistants, there is a ritual master to perform the step of calling moral back. Call their life-soul back. They wear Tai Dam traditional shirt...’

As shown in the given example, the initial utterances start with the constant thematic progression; clauses 50.4 – 51.1 share the same Theme, khuəj1 ha:m1 ‘funeral master’s assistant’. In the course of text development, it is followed by a simple linear thematic progression pattern. The existential verb mi:2 ‘have’ in the Rheme of clause 51.1 becomes the next Theme of clause 51.2, and then the Rheme of this clause, su:3khwan1 ‘calling life-soul’, becomes the next Theme of clause 52. Again, the Rheme of this clause, khuəj1 ‘funeral master’s assistant’, becomes the next Theme of the following clause.

(3) constant Theme + simple linear Theme + constant Theme (9.3%).

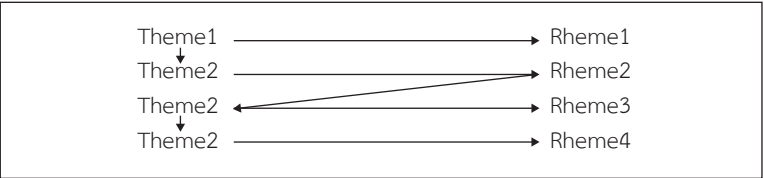


Figure 3.7 combined pattern: constant Theme + simple linear Theme + constant Theme

In this type, three patterns are combined. The first two clauses are developed by a constant thematic progression pattern, and the following clauses are developed by a simple linear thematic progression pattern. Later it is developed again by a constant thematic progression pattern (see figure 3.7). An example is given below.

Example 3.15:

	Theme		Rheme
50.2	thi:4 saw2	→	jok4 pa:n1ph <u>uan</u> 1 læ:w6
	REL they		carry food container ASP:pfv
50.3	saw2 kɔ:5	↓	tɔ:ŋ5 ha <u>u</u> 5 jok4 pa:n1ph <u>uan</u> 1 ma:2
	they CONJ		must give carry food container come
51.1	jok4	→	pa:n1ph <u>uan</u> læ:w6
	carry		food container ASP:pfv
51.2	kɔ:5 ha <u>u</u> 5 jok4 kh <u>u</u> n5	→	—
	CONJ give carry up		

‘...that they have already carried food container, then they have to carry it, carry it, then carry it up!’

As the given example indicates, the initial utterances share the same pronoun Theme, saw2 ‘they’; the process Rheme jok4 ‘carry’ becomes a new Theme of clause 51.1, and it is selected as the Theme again in clause 51.2 in order to start the next step.

4. Discussion

This study found all three patterns of thematic progression (i.e. constant thematic progression, simple linear thematic progression and split Rheme pattern). The most selected thematic progression pattern was constant Theme progression pattern (70.6%), while the simple linear Thematic progression pattern was less frequently found (29.2%), and the split Rheme was found with the lowest frequency (0.2%). Additionally, combined patterns are also found (i.e. simple linear Theme + constant Theme (63.7%), (2) constant Theme + simple linear Theme (27%) and (3) constant Theme + simple linear Theme + constant Theme (9.3%)).

The constant Theme pattern, realized by lexical verbs in imperative clauses and existential verbs in existential clauses, is the most frequently selected thematic progression pattern. It is typical that Tai Dam ritual procedural texts mainly consist of lexical verbs in imperative clauses. This is because the selected texts are procedural monologic texts. The speakers describe how a ritual is conducted through a sequence of steps. The steps of performance are expressed by series of action verbs. Therefore, the lexical verbs picked up as unmarked topical Themes in constant Theme patterns are motivated and make sense. Besides, the constant Theme pattern, which is realized by an existential verb *mi:2* ‘exist/have’, can be found when the speaker describes the offerings used for performing the ritual, and it is often found at the initial stage of texts. In addition, the choice of Subject Theme found was used in declarative clauses when the speaker wanted to provide a clearer picture of who did it. Moreover, combined patterns were also found. The combined patterns of simple linear and constant Themes were selected the most, in 63.7% of cases. This is because some steps needed to be extended to offer more details; therefore, using combined patterns was a choice for the speaker to describe something.

Based on the nature of procedural discourse given by Longacre (1974), a typical procedural text is normally goal oriented. It is not oriented around a specific person. Tai Dam ritual procedural texts are also goal oriented and expressed by a series of imperative clauses. However, this study also found a number of declarative clauses having an unmarked Subject Theme (see the system of Theme in Tai Dam, in Sirinda 2013). The declarative clause is mostly found in the shift pattern—shift from imperative clause to declarative clause. Martin (2008, p. 187) found that shifts from imperative pattern to declarative pattern can be found in procedural discourse. This is because the declarative pattern is needed when the ritual master wants to clarify and evaluate the sequences of activity. Therefore, it is typical in procedural text that an imperative pattern can shift to a declarative pattern in order to clarify the process of activity. Like the nature of Tai Dam rituals, the steps of performance are very complicated. There are many steps to perform and each step is directly related to Tai Dam culture and belief. Therefore, when the ritual masters tell a listener each step, he/she always elaborates with more information related to Tai Dam culture, which is expressed by declarative clauses.

While some features of Tai Dam language given in this paper, it is more interesting to compare the linguistic features found in Tai Dam with those in Thai. Tai Dam and Thai have the same thematic structure, in which Theme is defined by the position in a sequence. In general, both Tai Dam and Thai share a similarity of syntactic structure, that is, they both have SVO word order. However, there are some differences between their lexica and phonological systems. Although Tai Dam shares a lot of vocabulary with Thai, there are some particular vocabularies which are used only in Tai Dam, such as vocabularies related with ritual. As for phonological systems, Tai Dam's has been influenced by those in Thailand and Laos (Burusphat, 2012, p. 46). However, this study is based on only nine Tai Dam ritual procedural texts. More texts must be analyzed in order to make a clearer picture of Tai Dam procedural texts, and more works on other text types are needed for investigation and comparison.

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