Question Structures from A Movie in L2 English Learns' Writing Based on Government & Binding Theory: A Case Study of Business English Student, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University*

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Abstract

Asking and answering questions play important role in everyday life communication. Thai and English question structures are different in terms of first and second language learning. The aims of this study are to explore the students' ability on question writing through a movie in english learning and analyze those question structure types. This is a qualitative research. A purposively sampling group is 199 students majoring in Business English, Suan Sunadha Rajabhat University. Data collection instruments are two parts of question-answer reported forms. The movie was divided into nine parts; the students were assigned to make three questions and answers after watching nine parts of the movie called "The Devil wears Prada" at least 27 sentences for each students. It is an outside the classroom activity for 15 weeks in English for Secretary and Advertising I, 2016-2017 academic year. The data were analyzed by Government & Binding Theory: transformational rules. The 190 ungrammatical sentences (from overall 3,176 wh-questions) were selected to be analyzed. The similar questions were excluded.

The results show that: from wh-question types: what, when, where, why, who, whom, which and how. The most who-questions students chosen and made mistakes are: why-structure (110), how (19) and what (17) are respectively. Considering the

transformational rules used are as "Why with VP negation" with Surface structure (SS): Why did Andrea not come to the company ahead of time to prepare for work for the first day? [$_{CP}$ why [$_C$ did [$_{IP}$ Andrea not come to the company ahead of time to prepare for work for the first day]]]. Transformational rules are used as: 1) Negation, 2) Subject –to-Subject raising, 3) Infinitival clause, 4) Wh-movement, 5) Do-insertion, and 6) Inversion. English writing process is more complex for english second learners (L2). Those are not getting familiar by Thai students. It reflects that Thai interference is one of the reasons for these types of syntactic errors.

Keywords: Learning English; movie; question structures; Business English Students

Introduction

English is the world's most widely learnt foreign language Graddol (2006). Learning English has always been a difficult task for foreign learners, especially when referring to the improvement of the listening and speaking skills Santacruz (2012). The capability on language skills is important for all societies. Anugkakul et al. (2016) reported that students agreed with various learning styles, therefore teachers should have a variety of teaching styles and learning activities based on students' different learning styles. Many films are chosen for practicing students' language skill. It is often claimed that watching subtitled films and series implicitly helps learning a second language. Watching films is an art form which is a way to fully mobilize the audiences' auditory and visual and make a good communication with their inner feelings. In modern life, watching film is both a method of entertainment and a way to broaden people's horizons and develop their skills. With the development of teaching tools, multimedia has entered the English class (Li, 2013). Many scholars have revealed that movies used in EFL classroom can become an important part of the curriculum. This is based on the fact that movies provide exposures to "real language," used in authentic settings and in the cultural context which the foreign language is spoken. They also have found that movies catch the learners' interest and it can positively affect their motivation to learn (Ismaili, 2013, Kusumarasdyati, 2004 & Luo, 2004).

However, not only affirmative sentences are used in everyday life, interrogative ones are also commonly communicated. Espressoenglish (Question in English, 2018) proposes "*An easy way to form any question in English*" with a formula called QUASM: QU= question word, A= auxiliary word, S=subject, and M=main verb as in the following verb tenses.

Table 1 QUASM structure

Simple present questions:

QUESTION WORD	AUXILIARY VERB	SUBJECT	MAIN VERB	
What	does	Martha	think	about the project?
How many kids	does	Bob	have?	

Present Perfect questions:

QUESTION WORD	AUXILIARY VERB	SUBJECT	MAIN VERB	
How much money	have	you	spent	on clothes this month?
What	have	they	been doing	all day?
How long	has	the client	been waiting	for their order?

Modal questions:

QUESTION WORD	AUXILIARY VERB	SUBJECT	MAIN VERB	
Who	would	you	do	if you had a million dollars?
How	could	we	improve	our English?
Where	should	I	go	on my next vacation?

Principles and parameters

It is an approach to the question of how children acquire language. The ideas started shaping since the early days of modern generative grammar (1980s). It does not mean to be a specific theoretical system. The main concept is from children's learning language is easily, despite that languages are highly complex. Thus, the common properties of language are innate, only variations need to be learned. It can be defined as the set of Principles that are common to all languages and the initial state of language knowledge for human beings including parameters which represent settings that may vary from language to language

Syntactically, question structures presented in terms of english constituent question. The interrogatively begins with a question word. NP C' C IP does NP VP What Anna VP V offer PP who NP C' C IP does NP VP What Anna VP V offer PP. It shows in position of tree diagrams below: What does Anna offer Lily? (mycock, 2005).
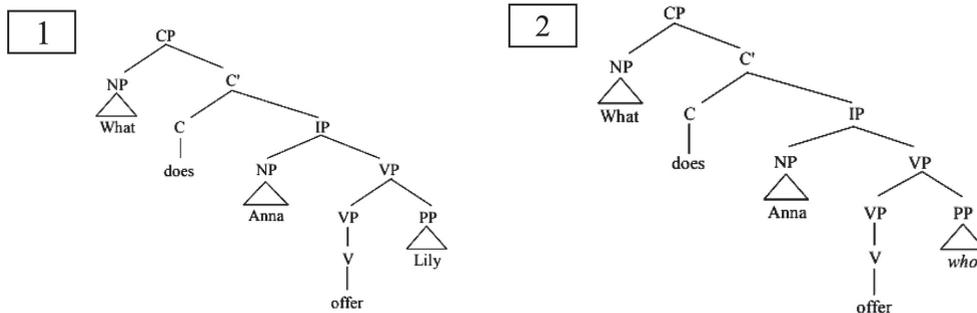

Figure 1. Position of question word in tree diagrams 1-2

Government and Binding theory (GB)

Government and Binding theory or GB is a theory of syntax and a phrase structure grammar in the traditional grammar proposed by Noam Chomsky in the 1980s. Leonard & Loeb (1988) mentioned that GB is the dominant theory of grammar in present-day linguistics and is receiving increasing attention from investigators of normal and disordered language behavior. It refers to two sub-theories: government-it is an abstract syntactic relation applicable, among other things, to the assignment of case; and binding-it is mainly about with the relationships between pronouns and the expressions with that they are co-referential. It followed from Extended Standard Theory in transformational grammar focusing on principles rather than rules: they are-1) X Theory , 2) ⁻θ Theory 3) Case Theory, 4) Binding Theory, 5) Bounding Theory, 6) Control Theory and 7) Government Theory.

GB is a part of universal grammar (UG) containing 2 main parts: levels of representation and a system of constraints. They affect different levels of language (d-structure, and s-structure of LF)
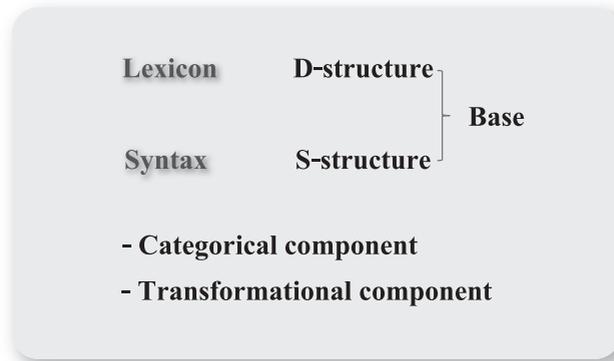
Figure 2. Universal Grammar Components

The language model of GB, also called the T-model because of its shape of a reversed T, looks as follows:
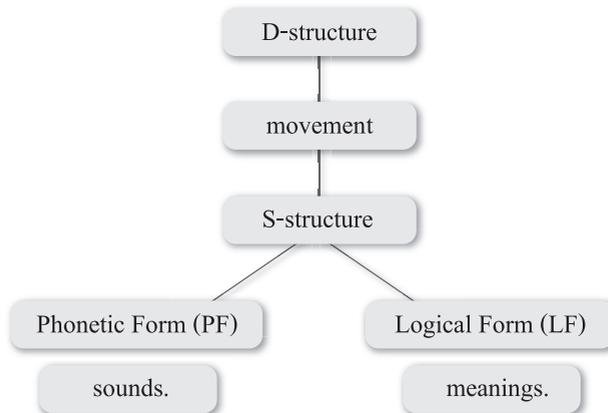
Figure 3 T-model

Deep structure generated by the Phrase Structure Rules with the sub-categorization properties of the heads. Surface structure results from the application of transformation rules. Wh-movement is the sentence with question words starting with wh-as what, when, where, why, which, who, how. Who and what are treated as nouns for example: What will Jack do?

DS: Jack will do what

SS: What will Jack do?

Wh-movement is : the *wh* phrase moves into the Specifier position under CP.

Phrase structure and transformational rules can be explained in the form of t-rules with four major classes of rules as deep structure forms and surface structure forms. The main types of transformational rules are merge, move, insert and delete. It can write as [$_{CP}$ what [$_C$ will [$_{IP}$ Jack do]]] or as a diagram illustrating the same concepts as tree.

Objective

1) explore the students' ability on question writing.
2) analyze the students' ability on wh-question types.

Methodology

This is a qualitative research. A purposively sampling group is 199 sophomore students majoring in Business English, Suan Sunadha Rajabhat University. They are 2016-2017 academic year with 78 and 121 students respectively. Data are collected from students' writing with making question-answer forms after watching the movie – The Devil wears Prada. Nine parts of the movie were divided for students to make at least three questions and answers for each part outside the classroom for 15 weeks in *English for Secretary 1*. The 190 ungrammatical sentences (from overall 3,176 wh-questions) were selected to be analyzed by using Government and Binding theory. The similar questions were excluded.

Results

The main results are students' ability on question writing and

1. Students' ability on question writing through a movie in learning English

1.1 Students' ability on question Wh-question

The total number of their writing is 4,390 sentences: they are affirmative, true-false, yes-no questions, what, when, where, why, who, whom, whose, and how including Thai questions. All in English were classified into 2 groups with 3,177 grammatical and 189 ungrammatical types. The latter ones were selected to be analyzed by using Government and Binding theory.

Table 2 Number of Students' question writing

Students 'writing	Number of sentences
Grammatical wh-questions	3,176
Ungrammatical wh-questions	190*
Not wh-question and same sentences	1,024
Total	4,390

1.2 Students' ability classified by wh-question types

From wh-question types: what, when, where, why, who, whom, which and how. They can be analyzed as follows. Why-structure (110) is the most students chosen by the students. How (19) and what (17) are the second, the third ones, respectively.

Table 3 Overall of wh-question structure types

Overall of wh-question structure types

	What	when	where	why	who	whom	which	how	Total
Number of wh-questions	17	3	15	110	13	12	1	19	190
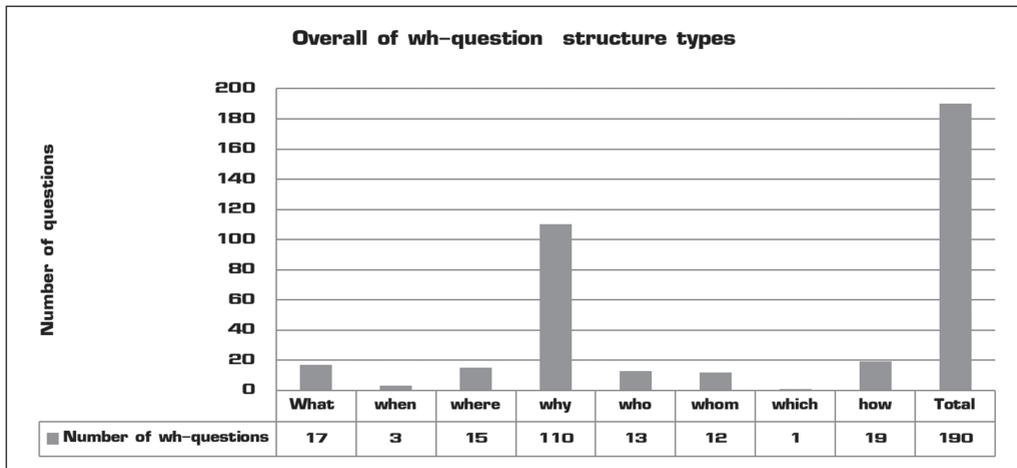
2. Why-question structures analyzed by GB: transformational rules

For this paper Why-question is selected to describe. From students' writing, there are 110 why-question structures with 11 forms. The most forms are found as why with VP (31), why with VP+PP (20) and why with VP + infinitive (18).

Table 4 Why-question structures from students' writing

No	Why-question structures from students' writing	Numbers of sentences
1	why with VP	31*
2	why with VP + ADV	3
3	why with VP + ADV + PP	2
4	why with VP + PP	20*
5	why with VP + PP + ADV	1
6	why with VP + PP + ADV + infinitive	1
7	why with VP + infinitive	14
8	why with VP modal	5
9	why with VP negation	5
10	why with VP passive voice	10
11	why with VP +clause	18*
	Total	110

2. Why-structure is chosen to explain here by Government and Binding theory; Transformational rules as below.

    2.1 Why with VP

    2.1a *Why did Miranda angry?

        DS: Miranda is angry why

        SS: Why is Miranda angry?

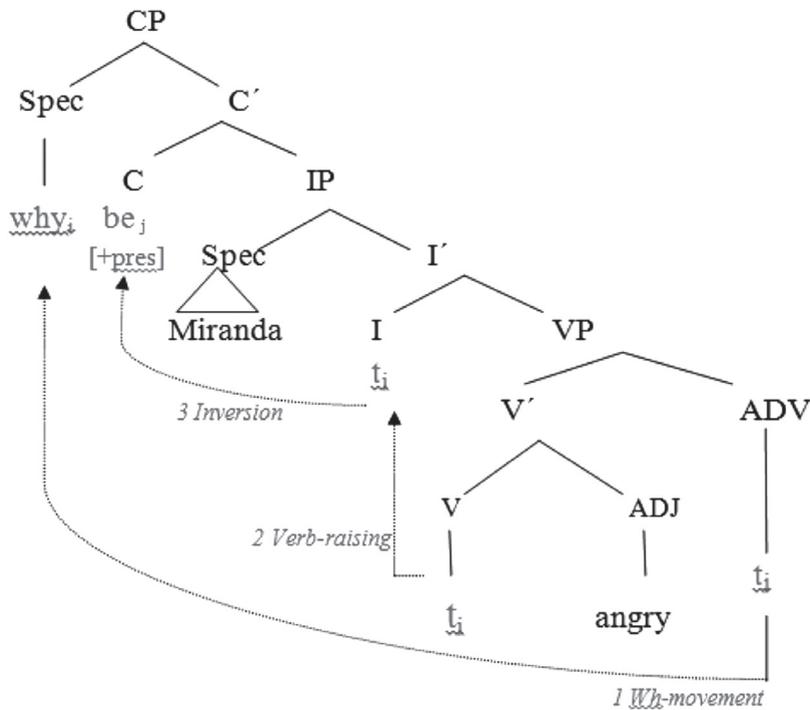   [$_{CP}$ why [$_C$ is [$_{IP}$ Miranda angry]]]

Figure 4 Why with VP structure

The transformational rules are:

1) Wh-movement : move *why* to Spec of CP and leave t_i at ADV.

2) Verb-raising: move *be [+pres]* from V of V´to I of I´.

3) Inversion :move *be [+pres]* to C of C´ and leave t_j at I of I´.

2.2   Why with VP + PP

2.2a *Why Andrea walked away instead follow Miranda?

DS: Andrea walked away instead follow Miranda why

SS: Why did Andrea walk away instead of following Miranda?

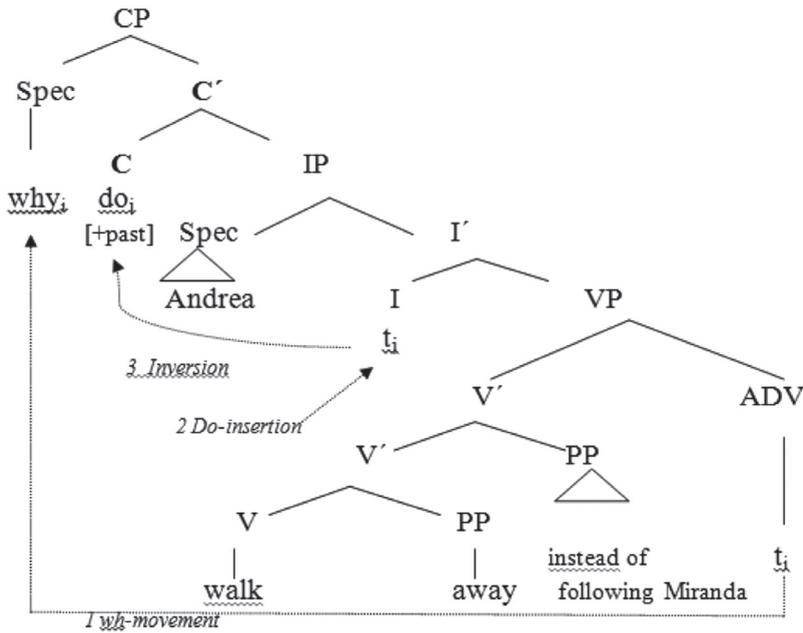[$_{CP}$ why [$_C$did [$_{IP}$ Andrea walk away instead of following Miranda]]]

Figure 5 Why with VP + PP

The transformational rules are:

1) Wh-movement : move *why* to Spec of CP and leave t_i at ADV

2) Do-insertion : insert *do [+past]* at I of I´

3) Inversion : move to C of C´ and leave t$_j$ at I of I´

2.3a *Why are Andy at the desk all the time to answer the call?

DS: Andy is at the desk all the time to answer the call why

SS: Why is Andy at the desk all the time to answer the call?

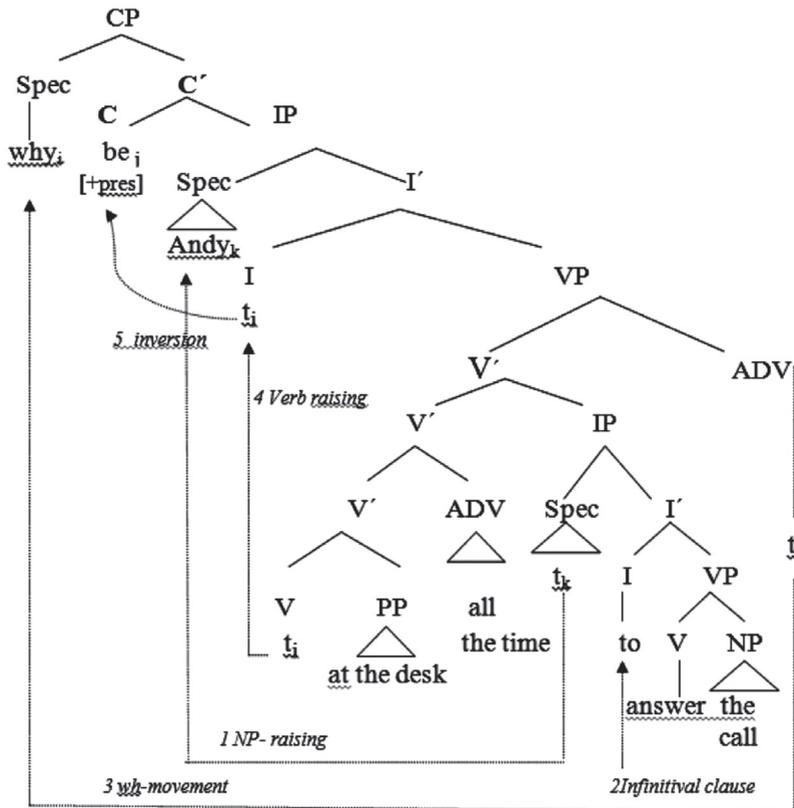[$_{CP}$ why [$_C$ is [$_{IP1}$ Andy at the desk all the time [$_{IP2}$to answer the call]]]]

Figure 6 Why with VP + PP+ ADV + infinitive

The transformational rules :

1) NP-raising : move *Andy* to Spec of CP and leave t_k at ADV

2) Infinitival clause : add *to* at I of I′

3) Wh-movement : move *why* and leave t_i at ADV

4) Verb-raising : move *be [+pres]* from V of V to I of I′

5) Inversion : move *be [+pres]* to C of C′ and leave t_j at I of I′

2.4　Why with VP + infinitive

2.4a　*Why she attempts to warm Miranda?

DS: She attempts to warm Miranda why

SS: Why does she attempt to warm Miranda?
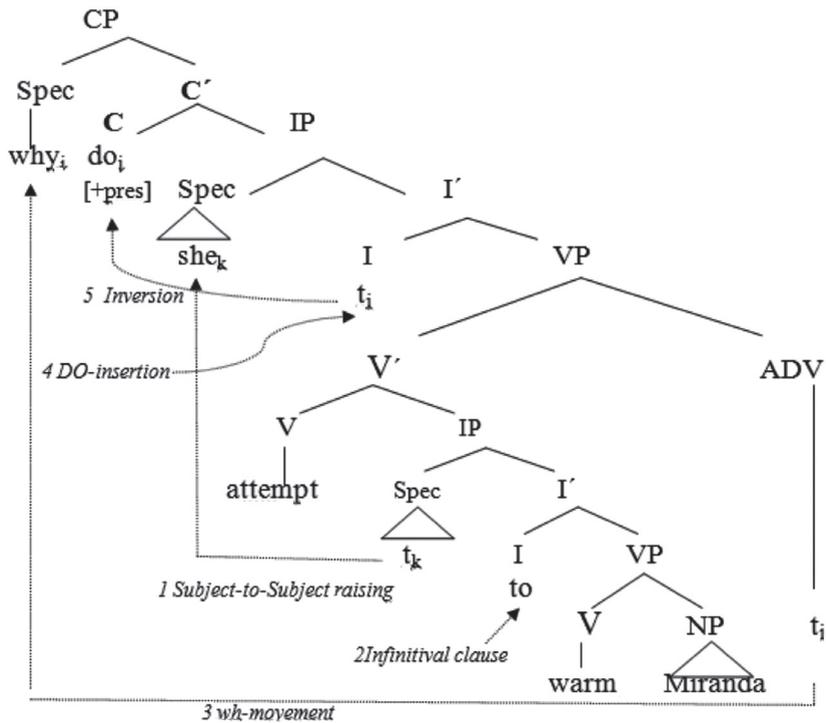
[CP why [C does [IP1 she attempt [IP2 to warm Miranda]]]

Figure 7 Why with VP + infinitive

The transformational rules are:

1) Subject –to-Subject raising : move *she* and move t_k at Spec of IP2 to Spec of IP1

2) Infinitival clause : add *to* at I of I′

3) Wh-movement : move *why* to Spec of CP and leave t_i at ADV

4) Do-insertion : add *do[+pres]* at I of I′

5) Inversion : move *do [+pres]* from I of I′ and leave t_j at I of I'

2.5   Why with VP negation

2.5a *Why Andrea not come to the company ahead of time to prepare for work the first day?

DS: e not come the company ahead of time to prepare for work the first day why

SS: Why did Andrea not come to the company ahead of time to prepare for work for the first day?

$[_{CP}$ why $[_C$ did $[_{IP}$ Andrea not come to the company ahead of time to prepare for work for the first day]]]
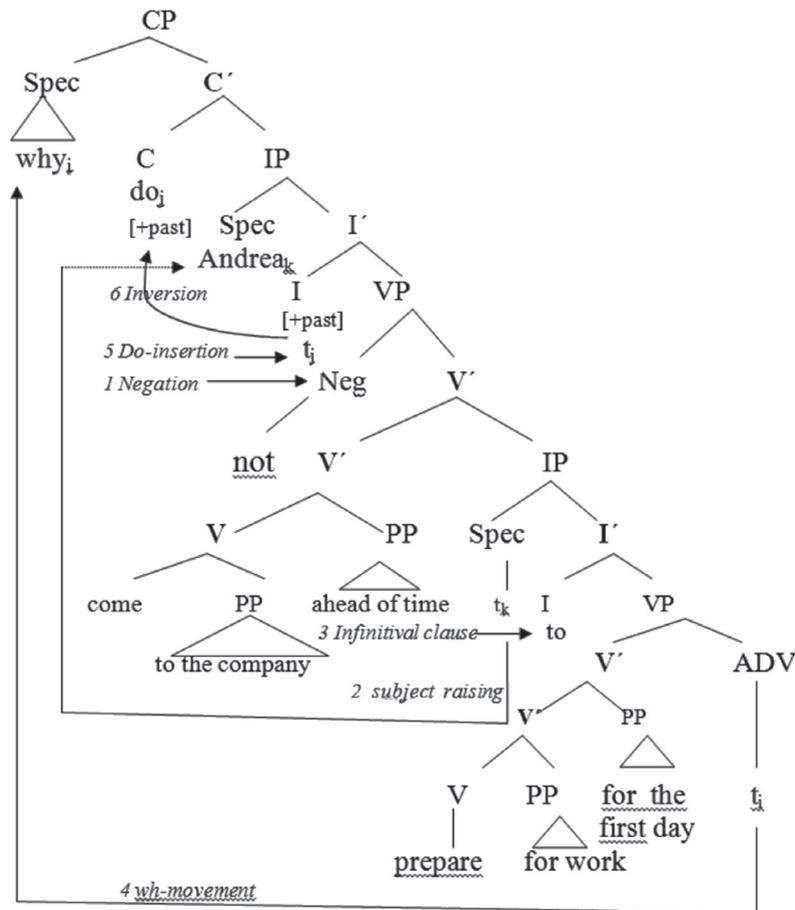

Figure 8 Why with VP negation

The transformational rules are:

1) Negation: Add negation at VP of I´
2) Subject –to-Subject raising: move *Andrea* to Spec of IP1 and leave t_k at Spec of IP2
3) Infinitival clause : add *to* at I of I´
4) Wh-movement: move *why* to Spec of CP and leave t_i at ADV
5) Do-insertion: add *do[+past]* at I of I´.
6) Inversion: move *do [+past]* from I of I´ and leave t_j .

2.6 Why with VP passive

2.6 a *Why Emily was hit by a car?

    DS: the car hit Emily why

    SS: Why was Emily hit by a car?

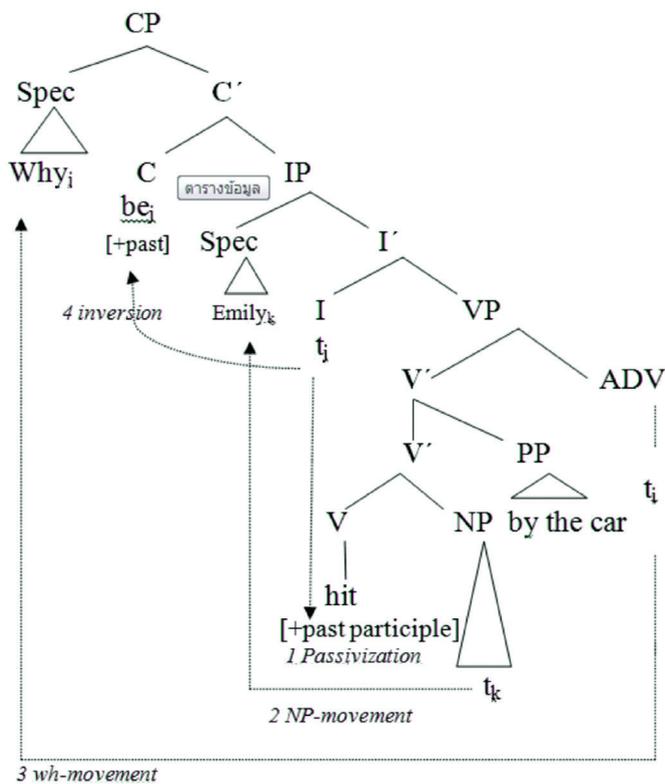[$_{CP}$ why [$_C$ was [$_{IP}$ Emily hit by a car]]]

Figure 9 Why with VP passive

The transformational rules are:

1) Passivization: Add passivization at I of I'.

2) Np- raising: move *Emily* to Spec of IP and leave $t_{k..}$

3) Wh-movement: move *why* to Spec of CP and leave *ti* at ADV.

4) Inversion: move *be [+past]* C of C' and leave t_j .

2.7 Why with VP + clause

2.7a **Why Andrea laughed when someone talking about 2 belts?

DS: Andrea laughed when someone talking about 2 belts why

SS: Why did Andrea laugh when someone were talking about 2 belts?

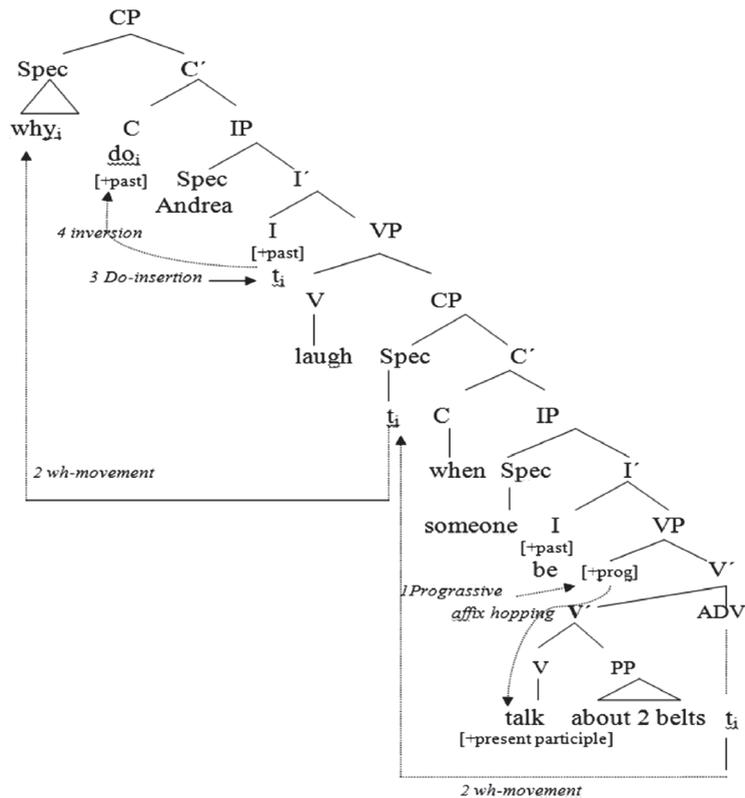[CP why [C did [IP1 Andrea laugh [IP2when someone were talking about 2 belts?]]]

Figure 10 Why with VP + clause

The transformational rules are:

1) Progressive: Add progressive at the first branching Node of VP and do affix hopping with *talk[+present participle]* .

2) Wh-movement: move *why* to Spec of CP2 and move again to to Spec of CP1 leave ti at ADV.

3) Do-insertion: add do *[+past]* at I of I′.

4) Inversion: move do *[+past]* from I of I′ and leave tj to Cat C′.

Conclusion

It can conclude that the students' ability on question writing through a movie in learning English are as follow: the most frequency wh-questions that the students used and made mistake are *"why, how and what"*. Considering the transformational rules used are as for 2.5 Why with VP negation -2.5a SS: Why did Andrea not come to the company ahead of time to prepare for work for the first day? [$_{CP}$ why [$_C$ did [$_{IP}$ Andrea not come to the company ahead of time to prepare for work for the first day]]]. Transformational rules are used as: 1) Negation, 2) Subject –to-Subject raising, 3) Infinitival clause, 4) Wh-movement, 5) Do-insertion, and 6) Inversion. Those are not getting familiar by Thai students. These examples show that the mother tongue interference was a main source of committing errors. This finding reflects that Thai interference may be one of the reasons for these types of errors. In case that English is an inflectional language whiles the students are second language learner and no verb- inflection. An inflectional language or the concept of a changing process is difficult for Thai students. They are not familiar with the different environment of inflected nouns, verbs and adjectives because there is no inflection occurring in the Thai language: there is no plural form of nouns, varied verb form in present/past participle, or a comparative and superlative of adjective form in the Thai language (Yordchim, 2014). Including transformational rules show that there are more complex syntactical process in English language for L2 learners. For further study, it is better to enhance the students to practice more on english question structures for non-native English speakers and to study how to remedial them and improve their problems. In addition, Harmer mentions that "partly because of the nature of the writing process and also because of the need for accuracy in writing,

the mental processes that a student goes through when writing differ significantly from the way they approach discussion or other kinds of spoken communication" (Harmer, 2004) in Brenes Brenes (2017). There are no evidences in this study that how the movie improves students' English ability, it should study further how the movie affects the students' learning ability and language development. Teaching English through a movie is benefit to the students according to Yordchim (2016) reported that teaching method also integrate learning on 21st century student outcome describing student knowledge development through core academic subject, language skills to succeed in work and life. It uses the concept of 21st century learning framework: critical thinking skill, creativity, communication, collaboration and college and career readiness.

Acknowledgements

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