

Functional Extension of the Verb for ‘to like’ in Thai to a Frequentative Aspectual Marker

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Received: February 12, 2024

Revised: July 11, 2024

Accepted: September 30, 2024

Abstract

The Thai verb *cʰɔ̌:p*, denoting ‘to like,’ as prescribed in Thai dictionaries, signifies the subject’s psychological affinity towards something or the enjoyment of doing something. The usage of *cʰɔ̌:p* as indicative of ‘liking’ poses a challenge for Thai language speakers when they encounter it in contexts where expressing enjoyment would be considered inappropriate. Drawing upon authentic language data from X (formerly Twitter), this investigation scrutinized the functional extension of the Thai verb *cʰɔ̌:p* to assume the role of a frequentative aspect marker. It posits a four-stage chain of functional extension for the aspect marker *cʰɔ̌:p*, encompassing the initial stage, the bridging context, the switch context, and the conventionalization. The emergence of the frequentative aspect of the term *cʰɔ̌:p* is argued to be pragmatically derived via pragmatic inferencing. By delineating the function of the term *cʰɔ̌:p* as a frequentative aspectual marker, it becomes possible to elucidate its usage in adverse circumstances. This analysis contributes to the comprehensive establishment of the aspectual marker *cʰɔ̌:p* within the framework of Thai grammar.

Keywords: functional extension, frequentative aspect, pragmatic inferencing, pragmatic strengthening, model of extension

Introduction

Upon scrutiny of linguistic categories such as *tense*, *aspect*, *modality*, and *evidentiality* (TAME), the domain of the frequentative

emerges as an area that has garnered significantly less scholarly attention and investigation. For example, a comprehensive linguistic resource like the *World Atlas of Language Structures* (WALS) lacks a distinct section or thorough analysis devoted to the frequentative category. Dahl and Velupillai (2013) exemplified this relative neglect through their omission of the frequentative aspect, prioritizing other grammatical types instead. Among the omitted categories are habituais, iteratives, frequentatives, dedicated narrative forms, resultatives, and experientials. Each category possesses appealing linguistic attributes and demonstrates distinct geographical distributions, underscoring its importance in examining language diversity. Despite their limited representation in the linguistic literature, these grammatical nuances constitute a valuable source of linguistic variation deserving of exploration and analysis.

A distinct grammatical category for expressing frequentative meanings is notably absent in the linguistic framework of an isolating language like Thai. Instead, such nuances are conveyed semantically through lexical items. Among these, the most prominent is the Thai term *mák*, which serves dual roles as both a main verb and a preverbal auxiliary. The Royal Institute (2013: 895) delineates two distinct functions for this lexical entity: primarily as a verb denoting ‘liking’ and secondarily as an adverb indicating ‘frequent occurrence.’ While the grammatical roles and semantic import of the verb *mák* are firmly established, another intriguing verb, *cʰɔ̌:p*, remains subject to debate regarding its functions and meanings. The Royal Institute (2013: 364) defines the verb *cʰɔ̌:p*, meaning ‘to like,’ in its latest Thai dictionary as ‘feeling satisfied and doing frequently.’ This verb solely functions as a verb and appears to carry exclusively positive connotations.

The prescriptive meaning associated with *cʰɔ̌:p*, nonetheless, diverges from the actual usage by Thai speakers in everyday discourse. Empirical data clearly demonstrate that, beyond positive contexts, it also manifests in unfavorable scenarios.

In such instances, the verb deviates from its prototypical portrayal of enjoyment in performing an action and instead emphasizes the aspectual meaning of frequency. Thus, the term *c^hô:p* not only functions as the main verb within a clause but also serves as a preverbal auxiliary for the expression of the frequentative marker. Through the lens of a functional extension chain, a sequential progression of the verb *c^hô:p* across various stages in the development from a lexical verb to a frequentative aspectual marker can be systematically delineated. This chain provides compelling evidence for a novel analysis of the emergence of a frequentative marker within Thai. Consequently, the identification of a hitherto unacknowledged preverbal auxiliary function of the verb *c^hô:p* holds significance within Thai grammar.

Objective

The study aims to investigate the functional extension of the Thai verb *c^hô:p*, which means 'to like,' toward assuming the role of a frequentative aspect marker. This investigation is conducted within the framework of the *functional extension chain*, which aligns with the *grammaticalization chain* and a *model of extension* proposed by Bernd Heine and colleagues (Heine, 1992; Heine, 1993; Heine and Kuteva, 2007).

Literature Review

Habitual and frequentative aspects refer to situations customarily repeated on different occasions (Bybee et al., 1994: 127). They differ from each other in that the former refers to a more general aspectual interpretation that "describe(s) a situation which is characteristic of an extended period, so extended in fact that the situation referred to is viewed not as an incidental property of the moment but, precisely, as a characteristic feature of a whole period" (Comrie, 1976: 27-28). The latter involves, to a certain extent, a judgment of the speaker as defined by Carlson (2012: 830) as

"a subclass of habitual, namely, habitual where the activity must occur with judged high frequency, and we will so regard them."

It has been observed typologically as well as diachronically that lexical sources of habitual and frequentative markers are the verbs meaning 'to know,' 'to sit,' 'to be,' 'to go,' 'to live,' 'to see,' and 'to be used to' (Bybee et al., 1994: 154). However, Thai exhibits another lexical source: the verb meaning 'to like,' namely, *c^hô:p*. The verb *c^hô:p* originally denotes a psychological state of the subject liking something or liking doing something, e.g., *c^hán c^hô:p krāpǎw bāj ní:* (I-like-bag-CLF-this) 'I like this bag' and *c^hán c^hô:p t^hām ǎ:hǎ:n* (I-like-cook-food) 'I like cooking.'

Interestingly, when the verb *c^hô:p* is followed by a verb phrase, as in the second example, it is ambiguous in that it can express a psychological state of the subject or it can portray events repeated in different situations. The second meaning corresponds to the frequentative aspectual meaning. Thus, the second example, *c^hán c^hô:p t^hām ǎ:hǎ:n* 'I-like-cook-food,' can have two interpretations: 'I like cooking' and 'I often cook.' The frequentative meaning is more salient in the construction whose subject is an inanimate participant as in *fōn c^hô:p tòk tō:n jēnjēn* (rain-like-fall-at evening) 'It often rains in the evening.' In this case, *c^hô:p* does not function as a main verb but as a grammatical marker expressing frequentative aspect.

Jaroenkitboworn (2009) investigated the polysemous nature of the term *c^hô:p*, examining its semantic scope to encompass fondness, affection, and enjoyment. The study concluded that such positive sentiments frequently prompt repeated engagement, leading to the emergence of characteristic behaviors. The iterative involvement with preferred activities enriches the term with additional connotations, notably 'often,' as evidenced in habitual usage patterns. The research suggested that pragmatic functions are pivotal in the evolutionary trajectory of this lexical item. It proposed that speaker attitude and contextual factors are the primary motivators driving the grammaticalization process.

However, the grammatical status of the aspectual aspect of the term *c^hɔ̌:p* remains unaddressed. This paper seeks to fill this gap by examining the functional extension of its aspectual meaning within Thai discourse, drawing upon synchronic corpus data. In particular, it says that the aspectual meaning of the term *c^hɔ̌:p* changes through functional extension and pragmatic strengthening, which is how Heine and Kuteva (2007) thought about extension. This model delineates four sequential stages—initial stage, bridging context, switch context, and conventionalization—each characterized by distinct contextual nuances, resulting meanings, and inferential processes, as shown in the following table.

Table 1 Functional extension chain/A model of extension (adapted from Heine and Kuteva, 2007: 37)

Stage	Context	Resulting meaning	Type of inference
I Initial stage	Unconstrained	Source meaning	—
II Bridging context	There is a new context triggering a new meaning	Target meaning foregrounded	Invited (cancellable)
III Switch context	There is a new context which is incompatible with the source meaning	Source meaning backgrounded	Usual (typically non-cancellable)
IV Conventionalization	The target meaning no longer needs to be supported by the context that gave rise to it; it may be used in new contexts	Target meaning only	—

At the heart of this investigation lies a novel proposition in which the aspectual meaning of the term *c^hɔ̌:p* underwent a process

of functional extension propelled by pragmatic considerations and contextual reinterpretation. By scrutinizing the contextual nuances and inferential processes embedded within the synchronic corpus data, this study sheds light on the mechanisms driving the functional extension of the term *c^hɔ̌:p*. In doing so, it aims to offer deeper insights into the intricate interplay between language structure and usage dynamics, thereby enriching our understanding of the aspectual dimensions inherent in Thai linguistic discourse.

Methods

The present study analyzed data sourced from general posts on X, formerly known as Twitter, constituting the corpus subjected to linguistic analysis. The objective was to capture linguistic manifestations representative of the everyday natural discourse patterns prevalent among Thai speakers. Initially, a corpus consisting of 1,000 instances containing the verb *c^hɔ̌:p* from April 2022 to March 2023 was randomly compiled for analytical purposes. Subsequently, researchers investigated to delineate the semantic attributes of animacy, distinguishing between animate and inanimate entities. Finally, a comprehensive semantic analysis of the entire predicate within each clause was undertaken to assess whether the contexts associated with the verb *c^hɔ̌:p* were characterized as neutral, favorable, or unfavorable.

Results and Discussion

c^hɔ̌:p as an Aspectual Gram

As mentioned earlier, the form *c^hɔ̌:p* is originally a lexical verb meaning ‘to like something’ or ‘to like doing something.’ This verb can take either a noun phrase or a verb phrase as its complement. Taking a noun phrase as its complement, the verb *c^hɔ̌:p* denotes the situation of the subject liking something, as in (1a). However, when followed by a verb phrase, the form shows semantic and structural ambiguities, as in (1b).

(1)

- a. ^hán ^hô:p nǎŋsǔ: lêm ní:
1SG LIKE book CLF this
'I like this book.'
- b. ^hán ^hô:p ʔà:n nǎŋsǔ: lêm ní:
1SG LIKE read book CLF this
'I like reading this book.' / 'I often read this book.'
- c. ^hán ^hô:p ʔà:n nǎŋsǔ: lêm ní: mâ:k
1SG LIKE read book CLF this much
'I like reading this book very much.'
- d. ^hán ^hô:p ʔà:n nǎŋsǔ: lêm ní: bəjbəj
1SG LIKE read book CLF this often
'I often read this book.'

The sentence (1b) can have two interpretations. The first is the situation of the subject, ^hán 'I,' liking doing the action of reading named by the following verb phrase, ʔà:n nǎŋsǔ: lêm ní: (henceforth, 'like' reading). The second interpretation, on the other hand, is the situation of the subject reading this book that occurs repeatedly on different occasions (henceforth, 'frequentative' reading). The psychological state reading becomes salient when the sentence is modified by degree modifiers, e.g., mâ:k 'much,' as in (1c). However, when the sentence is modified by temporal modifiers, e.g., bəjbəj 'often,' the frequentative reading becomes more salient.

In addition to the semantic ambiguity, the sentence (1b) shows two possible syntactic structures. For the psychological state reading, the term ^hô:p functions as a main verb, complementing a following verb phrase. The structure can be schematically represented as [main verb + verb phrase complement]. The frequentative reading suggests that the form under discussion has lost some essential properties of a full-fledged verb. It no longer denotes a propositional meaning, i.e., the 'enjoyment' meaning. Instead, it denotes a non-propositional meaning, the frequentative aspectual aspect. The aspectual ^hô:p no longer assigns semantic

roles to its argument(s). The subject of a sentence containing the aspectual ^hô:p carries the role of an agent assigned by the verb ʔà:n 'to read.' Notice that the main verb of the sentence with the aspectual ^hô:p is ʔà:n 'to read' because it constitutes the semantic core and assigns semantic roles to its arguments. The verb phrase, ʔà:n nǎŋsǔ: lêm ní:, is no longer a complement of the verb ^hô:p. The term ^hô:p, in this case, functions as a grammatical marker of frequentative aspect, which is immediately followed by a main verb.

The structural differences between these two interpretations suggest that the aspectual ^hô:p may have undergone a functional extension process in the sense of Harris and Campbell (1995), which refers to the process whereby an existing linguistic element can be used in a new context where it could not be used previously. In this case, the aspectual ^hô:p can be analyzed as functionally extended from a lexical verb to a grammatical marker, which occurs preverbally to denote an aspectual meaning. The grammatical marker ^hô:p is called an aspectual *gram* in the sense of Bybee and Dahl (1989).

According to Bybee and Dahl (1989), the term "gram" is used to refer to a linguistic expression of gram-type, which, in turn, refers to a cross-linguistically similar group of grammatical meanings identified by "their semantic foci and are associated with typical means of expression" (Bybee and Dahl, 1989: 52). Cross-linguistically, frequentative and habitual aspects are gram-types roughly referring to the aspectual meanings of events repeatedly occurring on different occasions. The habitual aspect differs from the frequentative one in that the former is used, in a more general sense, to refer to "a situation that is customarily repeated on different occasions" (Bybee et al., 1994: 127). Habitual sentences "refer to some regular, repeated activity or event" (Carlson, 2012: 829).

A habitual situation is regarded as "a situation which is characteristic of an extended period, so extended in fact that the situation referred to is viewed not as an incidental property of the moment but, precisely, as a characteristic feature of a whole period" (Comrie, 1976: 27-28). More importantly, the habitual aspect "may

refer not to a sequence of situations recurring at intervals, but rather to a habit, a characteristic situation that holds at all times” (Comrie, 1976: 27). For example, the English habitual gram indicates that a situation occurred repeatedly in the past, e.g., *He used to drive home*. On the other hand, the frequentative aspect refers to “a subclass of habitual, namely, habitual where the activity must occur with judged high frequency, and we will so regard them” (Carlson, 2012: 830).

The frequentative aspect is used when the speaker wants to emphasize the relatively high frequency of the repeated situation judged by the speaker. In English, frequency adverbs, e.g., *often*, *usually*, or *frequently*, are generally examples of frequentative meaning. In Thai, the preverbal gram *cʰô:p* is usually used in the context where the speaker wants to emphasize the high frequency of the situation being talked about, which can be glossed by *often*, *usually*, or *frequently*.

The Functional Extension Chain of *cʰô:p*

The following examples illustrate the possible functional extension of the term *cʰô:p*.

(2)

- a. *cʰán cʰô:p nǎŋsǔ: lêm ní:*
1SG LIKE book CLF this
'I like this book.'
- b. *cʰán cʰô:p tʰām ?ā:hǎ:n*
1SG LIKE do food
'I like cooking food.' / 'I often cook.'
- c. *cʰán cʰô:p pēn wàt*
1SG LIKE be cold
'I frequently catch a cold.' / '? I like catching a cold.'
- d. *cʰán cʰô:p dō:n phûan klê:ŋ*
1SG LIKE PASS friend bully
'I am often bullied by friends' / '? I like being bullied by friends'

- e. *fǒn cʰô:p tòk tō:n jēn*
rain LIKE fall part evening
'It often rains in the evening.'

These examples can be conceptualized as successive stages along the functional extension chain. The term “functional extension chain” in this paper corresponds to the term *grammaticalization chain* and *a model of extension* postulated by Bernd Heine and his associates, which refers to a series of successive stages in the development of grammatical category from lexical category. These successive stages are linked in a chaining structure. The stages in the chain correspond to immediate links of the lexical-to-grammatical development of linguistic entities (Heine, 1992; Heine, 1993; Heine and Kuteva, 2007).

The functional extension chain of the term *cʰô:p* starts with the lexical verb use and ends with its use as a frequentative gram. Each of the intermediate steps in the chain involves some primary and secondary meaning facets of the semantic structure of the lexical verb *cʰô:p*. Movement along the chain involves these senses' appearance, disappearance, and secondary-to-primary shift.

The initial stage of the chain is represented by sentence (2a), where *cʰô:p* functions as a full-fledged verb taking the following noun phrase as its complement, schematically represented as [subject + *cʰô:p* + NP complement]. It conveys the psychological state of an experiencer enjoying something or regarding something favorably. Sentence (2a) refers to the situation of the subject, I, being fond of *nǎŋsǔ: lêm ní:* 'this book.' There is no 'frequentative' meaning present in this construction yet. Other examples are as follows.

- f. *cʰán cʰô:p nǎŋ rák*
1SG LIKE film love
'I like romance movies.'
- g. *cʰán cʰô:p kī:lā: klā:ŋcʰê:ŋ*
1SG LIKE sport outdoor
'I like outdoor sports.'

- h. *chán cȟ:p phǎnlāmá:j rôt prīaw*
1SG LIKE fruit flavor sour
'I like sour fruits.'
- i. *chán cȟ:p phû:chā:j wîŋ kèn*
1SG LIKE man run good.at
'I like men who are good at running.'

The next stage on the chain is represented by sentence (2b), where the term *cȟ:p* is followed by a verb phrase that denotes either a neutral or favorable situation, e.g., *thām ʔā:hǎ:n* 'cook food' in (2b) or *ʔà:n nǎŋsǔ:* 'read a book' in (1b). The constructions containing the term *cȟ:p* in this sense can be schematically represented as [subject + *cȟ:p* + VP_{neutral/favorable situation}]. In this construction, as mentioned earlier, the term *cȟ:p* is ambiguous between the 'like' and 'frequentative' meanings. The degree modifier can modify the sentence (2b), *mā:k* 'much,' and the temporal modifier, *thúk wān* 'every day' as shown in the sentences (3a-3b.).

(3)

- a. *chán cȟ:p thām ʔā:hǎ:n mā:k*
1SG LIKE do food much
'I like cooking very much.'
- b. *chán cȟ:p thām ʔā:hǎ:n thúk wān*
1SG LIKE do food every day
'I cook every day.'
- c. *chán cȟ:p thām ʔā:hǎ:n tē: thām māj bōj*
1SG LIKE do food but do NEG often
'I like cooking, but I do not do it often.'

Even though the enjoyment and the frequentative meanings coexist at this stage, the enjoyment meaning is more salient. The frequentative meaning is less salient because it is a new meaning that has emerged as a pragmatic inference that can be derived from the enjoyment meaning. In other words, when someone says that he or she likes or enjoys doing something, the listener could infer that

the speaker is likely to do it often. In this case, the frequentative reading is not a coded or conventional meaning of the word, but just a pragmatic inference because it is cancelable, as in (3c).

This construction can be conceptualized as a bridging context, as in Heine (2002) or a locus for change, as in Kuteva (2001) for the functional extension of the verb *cȟ:p*. The terms "bridging context" or "locus for change" refer to the specific, local context where the original meaning or source meaning gives rise to a new meaning or a target meaning via the inferencing process (Heine, 2002: 86). These terms are tied to the basic assumption that developing a lexical item into a grammatical item or a grammatical item into a more grammatical item involves an entire construction in which the form occurs, rather than the form alone (Heine, 1993; Kuteva, 2001). The bridging context is usually the construction where the original and newly acquired meanings are available. In this case, the construction, [subject + *cȟ:p* + VP_{neutral/favorable situation}], can be taken as the bridging context because it is the very construction where the frequentative meaning first emerged and coexists side-by-side with the enjoyment meaning. It should be noted that the term *cȟ:p* in this construction functions primarily as a main verb conveying the enjoyment meaning, but can also function secondarily as a grammatical marker denoting the frequentative meaning. The former is the primary meaning, and the latter is the secondary one.

The next stage is the construction where the term *cȟ:p* is followed by a verb phrase denoting an unfavorable or adversative situation, e.g., *pēn wāt* 'catch a cold' in (4a) or *dō:n pȟuā:n klē:ŋ* 'be bullied by friends' in (5a) which can be schematically represented as [subject + *cȟ:p* + VP_{unfavorable/adversative situation}]. In this construction, the enjoyment and frequentative meanings co-exist, but the frequentative meaning is, to a large extent, more salient. The enjoyment meaning is less salient or even absent because it is pragmatically odd that a situation of enjoying doing something is semantically incompatible or in conflict with an unfavorable or

adversative situation. In other words, the verb for 'like' generally means to enjoy doing something, to get pleasure from doing something, or to regard favorably doing something. Therefore, the situation that the subject of the sentence can enjoy is likely to be a situation that is favorable or at least neutral, not unfavorable or adversative.

The context strengthens the frequentative meaning in this construction and seems to be the only possible interpretation. Therefore, it can be said that the term *c^hô:p* in this construction primarily functions as an aspectual gram expressing the frequentative meaning. The enjoyment meaning of the lexical verb *c^hô:p* is taken as secondary or even absent. Compared with the previous stage, it can be stated that the erstwhile secondary sense of the lexical verb *c^hô:p* is promoted to the primary one. In other words, the frequentative aspect of the term *c^hô:p* becomes more or less established at this stage, and the enjoyment meaning becomes less salient. Consequently, decategorization occurs, resulting in the term *c^hô:p* at this stage being the frequentative gram, an aspectual marker. This stage corresponds to what Heine (2002) called the *switch context* or the specific context where the original meaning is absent or contradictory, and the target meaning becomes the only interpretation.

In examples (4) and (5), the frequentative meaning is more salient because it is the more likely possible interpretation. It is not cancelable, as indicated by the marginality of the enjoyment meaning in sentences (4b) and (5b) and the unacceptability of sentences (4d) and (5d), where the frequentative meaning is canceled. More importantly, the enjoyment meaning of this construction can be canceled out as indicated by sentences (4e) and (5e).

(4)

- a. *chán c^hô:p pēn wàt*
1sg like be cold
'I frequently catch a cold.' / ? 'I like catching a cold.'

- b. *chán c^hô:p pēn wàt mâ:k*
1sg like be cold much
'I like catching a cold very much.'
- c. *chán c^hô:p pēn wàt bôjbòj*
1sg like be cold often
'I frequently catch a cold.'
- d. *chán c^hô:p pēn wàt tē: māj dāj pēn bôj*
1sg like be cold but neg get be often
'I like catching a cold but do not catch it often.'
* 'I often catch a cold, but I do not catch it often.'
- e. *chán c^hô:p pēn wàt māj c^hô:p l̃:j hă:jcāj lāmbà:k*
1sg like be cold neg like at all breathe difficult
'I frequently catch a cold. I do not like it as I have difficulty breathing.'

(5)

- a. *chán c^hô:p dō:n p^hûa:n klê:ŋ*
1SG LIKE PASS friend bully
'I am often bullied by friends.' / ? 'I like being bullied by friends.'
- b. *chán c^hô:p dō:n p^hûa:n klê:ŋ mâ:k*
1SG LIKE PASS friend bully much
'I like being bullied by friends very much.'
- c. *chán c^hô:p dō:n p^hûa:n klê:ŋ bôjbòj*
1SG LIKE PASS friend bully often
'I am often bullied by friends.'
- d. *chán c^hô:p dō:n p^hûa:n klê:ŋ tē: māj dā:j dō:n bôj*
1SG LIKE PASS friend bully but NEG get PASS often
'I like being bullied by friends, but I am not bullied often.'
* 'I am often bullied by friends, but I am not bullied often.'
- e. *chán c^hô:p dō:n p^hûa:n klê:ŋ māj c^hô:p l̃:j*
1SG LIKE PASS friend bully NEG LIKE at all
'I am often bullied by friends, but I do not like it at all.'

The next stage is the rightmost step of the chain, where $c^h\hat{o}:p$ functions only as a grammatical marker. This stage is illustrated by sentence (2e), where $c^h\hat{o}:p$ appears in the construction whose subject is an inanimate participant which cannot carry the role of an experiencer of enjoyment, e.g., *fõn* 'rain.' The structure can be schematically represented as [subject_{inanimate} + $c^h\hat{o}:p$ + verb phrase]. The term $c^h\hat{o}:p$ in this construction expresses the frequentative aspectual meaning. The $c^h\hat{o}:p$ -marked situation is presented as occurring repeatedly on different occasions. This stage roughly corresponds to what Heine (2002) calls *conventionalization*, or the stage where the form can be used in new contexts other than bridging and switching contexts. Besides the frequentative meaning, this construction also conveys an unfavorable situation. In other words, this construction is almost always found in unfavorable contexts according to the speaker's point of view. Examples are as follows:

- (6)
- a. *nâ:fõn fāj c^hô:p dâp*
rainy season light LIKE go out
'Lights often go off in the rainy season.'
- b. *nâ:rõ:n ?ē: c^hô:p sǎ*
summer air-conditioner LIKE break down
'Air-conditioners often break down in summer.'
- c. *wép c^hô:p lôm tō:n klā:ŋk^hũ:n*
website LIKE fail part night
'The website often crashes at night.'
- d. *wānsùk jēn rôt c^hô:p tīt*
Friday evening car LIKE get stuck
'The traffic often gets more congested on Friday evening.'

The functional extension of $c^h\hat{o}:p$ can be summarized in the following table.

Table 2 Successive stages along the functional extension chain of the verb $c^h\hat{o}:p$

Stage	Context	Meaning
I. Initial Stage	[SUBJ _{animate} + $c^h\hat{o}:p$ + NP]	enjoyment
II. Bridging Context	[SUBJ _{animate} + $c^h\hat{o}:p$ + VP _{neutral/favorable SIT}]	enjoyment +> frequentative
III. Switch Context	[SUBJ _{animate} + $c^h\hat{o}:p$ + VP _{unfavorable/adversative SIT}]	frequentative > enjoyment
IV. Conventionalization	[SUBJ _{inanimate} + $c^h\hat{o}:p$ + VP]	frequentative

Table 2 clearly depicts the four successive stages along the functional extension chain of the term $c^h\hat{o}:p$. At the initial stage, where solely the enjoyment interpretation is viable, specific conditions include using only animate subjects with the verb $c^h\hat{o}:p$, immediately followed by noun phrases. Shifting to the bridging context, alongside the reading of enjoyment, one can observe that a nuanced frequentative meaning emerges, characterized by the employment of animate subjects with the verb $c^h\hat{o}:p$, followed by verb phrases denoting neutral and favorable situations. The addition symbol (+) in this stage signifies the incorporation of the frequentative reading alongside the enjoyment reading, while the greater than symbol (>) denotes the continued dominance of the reading of enjoyment over the reading of frequentative. Conversely, in the switch context, the usage of animate subjects with the verb $c^h\hat{o}:p$, followed by verb phrases indicating unfavorable or adversative situations, leads to a shift towards the reading of frequentative rather than the reading of enjoyment. In this stage, as indicated by the greater than symbol (>), the reading of frequentative overtakes the original reading of enjoyment. Finally, in the conventionalization stage, the complete frequentative reading emerges exclusively, with no residual enjoyment interpretation, under the condition of utilizing only inanimate subjects with the aspectual marker $c^h\hat{o}:p$, followed immediately by verb phrases.

The findings of this study thereby contribute significantly to the existing literature by providing sound evidence that the term *c^hô:p* functions as a preverbal auxiliary or an adverb, specifically categorized as an aspectual marker. This assertion extends beyond previous understandings of *c^hô:p* as a polysemous word and underscores its nuanced grammatical role in Thai. Additionally, the investigation delineates the various phases of extension that the term *c^hô:p* has gone through by identifying successive stages within a functional extension chain.

Conclusion

This paper examines the functional extension of the Thai verb *c^hô:p*, meaning 'to like,' towards assuming the role of a frequentative aspect marker. It posits that the functional extension chain of *c^hô:p* encompasses four stages: the initial stage, the bridging context, the switch context, and conventionalization. The argument asserts that the frequentative aspect of the term *c^hô:p* is pragmatically derived. Future research may explore whether the functional extension of the term *c^hô:p* outlined in this study aligns with the grammaticalization of this verb from a diachronic perspective. Furthermore, investigating both the synchronic functional extension and the diachronic grammaticalization of the verb 'to like' across languages holds significance. Cross-linguistic studies focusing on verbs with similar meanings may offer insights into human cognitive processing.

List of abbreviations and symbols (modified from the Leipzig Glossing Rules)

CLF = classifier, NEG = negator, NP = noun phrase, PASS = passive, SG = singular, SIT = situation, SUBJ = subject, VP = verb phrase, 1 = first person

The asterisk (*) marks the sentence as ungrammatical.

The question mark (?) marks the sentence as unacceptable.

The Standard Thai has five tones as follows (Tingsabadh & Abramson, 1993.)

high	as in	khá: 'to engage in trade'
mid	as in	khā: 'to get stuck'
low	as in	khà: 'galangal'
rising	as in	khǎ: 'leg'
falling	as in	khâ: 'I'

Acknowledgments

The authors extend their heartfelt gratitude for the generous support and partial funding received for this research paper, which forms an integral part of the broader research project titled, "kràap, wâaj, buuchaa (chaabuu): Exploring the relationship between language and culture in contemporary Thai society," spearheaded by the corresponding author. The Grants for Development of New Faculty Staff from the Ratchadaphiseksomphot Endowment Fund at Chulalongkorn University played a significant role in facilitating the successful completion of this study, particularly in the construction of the language corpus. The authors sincerely value and acknowledge their invaluable support, which has dramatically enhanced scholarly inquiry in this field.

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