



University of Zurich

Benefactive Strategies in Thai

A Typological and Functional Overview

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Mathias Jenny

University of Zurich, Switzerland
and
INALCO, Paris, France

Organization of the presentation

I. The broad picture - theory and data

1. What is Benefactive? Formal and functional description

II. Benefactive in Thai

2. Different Benefactive strategies in Thai - form and function
3. Grammaticalization of Benefactives in Thai

Functions, types and forms of Benefactives

The Beneficiary is a usually human or highly animate entity which is not a direct participant of the event expressed by the predicate but in some way, usually positively, affected by the event.

While some languages have devices to encode the beneficiary as core argument (applicative verb forms), other languages use periphrastic devices to add a beneficiary to a clause.

Benefactive constructions may be taken as involving increased valency (additional argument). This is especially the case where the verb is morphologically marked in order to specify a beneficiary argument, less where the beneficiary is added as oblique.

Most authors agree on three basic types of Benefactives, e.g. Van Valin and LaPolla (1997)

Recipient Benefactive

“Action is carried out by the Actor with the intention that the beneficiary then has an object.” => **inherently purposive**

Deputative Benefactive

“Action which is carried out with the intention that beneficiary not do the action.” => **inherently purposive**

Plain Benefactive

“Action of the Actor which provides the beneficiary with amusement, enjoyment, or other kind of benefit.” => **inherently purposive**

Similar e.g. Kittilä (2005) and Song (2007), though different in some details.

Examples of Benefactive constructions

Mon

mì? ràn kɔ̃ kon kwɔ̃.

mother buy give child sweets

‘The mother bought her child sweets.’

English

Mary baked John a cake. ~ Mary baked a cake for John.

German

Paul kaufte seiner Freundin Blumen.

Paul buy.PT.3SG 3MS.POSS.FEM.DAT girlfriend flower.PL

‘Paul bought his girlfriend flowers.’

cf.

Paul stahl seiner Mutter ein Huhn.

‘Paul stole his mother a hen.’

default: Malef., possible: Benef.

Expressions of benefactive relations in Thai

a. V2 with inherent benefactive semantics

mêe sǔu khǎnǒm líaŋ lûuk.

mother buy sweets feed child

‘The mother bought sweets for her children (to eat).’

mêe sǔu khǎnǒm fàak lûuk.

mother buy sweets entrust child

‘The mother bought sweets for her children.’

mêe sǔu khǎnǒm phǔa lûuk.

mother buy sweets set.aside child

‘The mother bought sweets for her children.’

(besides buying some for herself)

khǎw pay təlàat theen phuân.

he go market replace friend

‘He goes to the market in his friend’s stead.’

nák.riən khǎn raay.ηaan sòη khruu.

student write report send teacher

‘The students write a report for the teacher.’

lûuk sòη còt.mǎay pay hǎa mêε.

child send letter go seek mother

‘The son sent his mother a letter.’

Characteristics of benefactive V2s:

- Low degree of grammaticalisation
 - Specific semantics retained
 - Restricted applicability

- BENEFICIARY is object of V2; may be dropped
- BENEFICIARY is not marked by preposition (DIRECT OBJECT)
- Two cores (BENEFICIARY argument only of V2)

b. Prepositions with benefactive and related meanings

i. *sămràp* ‘for’ (from Khmer *səmrap* ‘to use for’)

khăw cət năŋsũuu sảmràp khruu.

3_{HUM} arrange book for teacher

‘He is preparing the books for the teacher (to use).’

ii. *kàp / kèe > kàʔ / kə* ‘to, with’

khăw bə̀ək kàp mềe waa càʔ pay hăa phũən.

3_{HUM} tell to mother SAY PROSP go seek friend

‘He told his mother that he was going to see a friend.’

iii. *phũə* ‘for the benefit/sake of’ (older/dialectal meaning ‘because of’)

phôə tham ɲaan nàk phũə lũuk.

father do work heavy for child

‘The father works hard for (the sake of) his children.’

Summary of Prepositions

- *sǎmràp* is used as translation equivalent of English ‘for’ (formal)
 - lit. *kèε* ‘to’ merges with *kàp* ‘with’ to mark INDIRECT OBJECTS
 - *phûə* introduces a remote/indirect beneficiary to any situation
- **only *phûə* is inherently benefactive**

The grammatical uses of *hây* ‘give’

i. Purposive subordinator ‘in order to, so that’

khǎw khàp rôt rew hây thũn bân kòon thîəŋ.
3_{HUM} drive car fast GIVE arrive house before noon
‘He drives fast in order to be home before noon.’

ii. Indicator of different subject

khǎw yàak kin khənǒm.
3_{HUM} DES eat sweets
‘He wants to eat sweets.’

khǎw yàak hây (phǒm) kin khənǒm.
3_{HUM} DES GIVE (1_{SM}) eat sweets
‘He wants me to eat sweets.’

iii. Causative marker (permissive, jussive)

mêε hây dèk-dèk pay lên kan khâaη.nôɔk.

mother GIVE child-RDP go play PL outside

‘The mother lets/makes the children go to play outside.’

iv. Postverbal marker of “altruistic” act (benefactive)

chăn cə nâη klaaη hây.

1FAM PROSP sit middle GIVE

‘I’ll take the middle seat (so you can have the comfortable seats) .’

Overt beneficiary optionally marked as INDIRECT OBJECT
(regularly so in older texts, less in newer literary style)

mêe sùu nom hây (kàp) lûuk.
mother buy milk GIVE (to) child
'The mother bought milk for her child.'

mêe róoη phleeη hây (kàp) lûuk.
mother sing song GIVE (to) child
'The mother is singing a song for her child.'

Functions i. – iv. often combined in one sentence:

mêε *róωη* *phleen* ***hây*** (**kàp*) *lûuk* *faη*.
mother sing song GIVE (*to) child listen
‘The mother is singing a song for her child to listen.’

- hây* here
- i. PURPOSIVE (‘so that the child listens’)
 - ii. DIFFERENT SUBJECT (‘mother sings, child listens’)
 - iii. CAUSATIVE (‘makes the child listen’)
 - (iv. BENEFACTIVE (‘sings for the child’))

Extended use of postverbal *hây*

hây can replace other benefactive V2s (beneficiary not overtly expressed)

thâa khun mây wâaη phǒm cə sǎɔn hây.

if 2 NEG free 1SM PROSP teach GIVE

‘If you are not free, I will teach for you.’

***hây* = *thɛɛn* ‘replace’, DEPUTATIVE BENEFACTIVE**

thâa khun wâaη phǒm cə sǎɔn hây.

if 2 free 1SM PROSP teach GIVE

‘If you are free, I will teach you.’

***hây* = RECIPIENT BENEFACTIVE**

***hây* can be used to with intransitive verbs**

hàak cam.pen khâa cà? taay hây ?eη dây.
if necessary 1_{FAM} PROSP die GIVE 2_{FAM} GET
'If necessary I can/am ready to die for you.'

'in your place': DEPUTATIVE; 'for your sake': PURE BEN

Otherwise: *taay phiuə ?eη* 'die for you', i.e. to protect your life

***hây* is compatible with malefactive events (rare):**

khâa kuu thamma? kuu tham ?əray hây muη rǔu?
kill 1_{INT} why 1_{INT} do what GIVE 2_{INT} Q
'Why do you (want to) kill me? What have I done to you?'

Benefactive/malefactive reading is context dependent:

khǎw hǎn lǎŋ hây fɛɛn.
3_{HUM} turn.around back GIVE lover
‘He turned his back on his girlfriend.’

khǎw hǎn lǎŋ hây mǎɔ.
3_{HUM} turn.around back GIVE doctor.
‘He turned his back to the doctor.’

The semantics of *hây* depends on the semantics of whole construction:

lûuk sòŋ còt.mǎay hây mɛɛ.
child send letter GIVE mother
‘The child sent a letter for her mother.’

(DEPUTATIVE > RECIPIENT)

lûuk sòŋ ŋɣn hây mɛɛ.
child send money GIVE mother
‘The child sent money to her mother.’

(RECIPIENT > DEPUTATIVE)

lûuk sòn còt.măay pay hăa mêε.
child send letter go seek mother
'The child sent a letter to her mother.'

* *lûuk sòn ηxn pay hăa mêε.*
child send money go seek mother
intended: 'The child sent money to her mother.'

Presence of [X V *pay hăa* Y] with verbs of communication favours deputative reading of [X V *hây* Y] with these verbs.

thúk khon tōŋ thūm.thee chiiwít cì.cay hây kàp kaan.thəɔ.phâa.
every man must devote life heart GIVE DAT weaving
'Everyone must devote their lives and souls to weaving.'

Object of *hây kàp* inanimate; beneficiary?

khâa khəyàw kam.pân hây kàp sên.khòɔp.fáa
1FAM shake fist GIVE DAT horizon
'I shook my fist at the horizon.'

Object of *hây kàp* inanimate; interpretation as beneficiary hardly possible, rather simply goal of action.

Semantic and functional extensions of *hây* constructions

Stage	Description	Syntax
Stage I	Plain transfer of object (theme)	<i>hây</i> θ (<i>kə</i>) REC
Stage II	Transfer of object (theme)	V θ <i>hây</i> (<i>kə</i>) REC
Stage III	a. Transfer of result of action b. Transfer of action	V <i>hây</i> (<i>kə</i>) EXP V <i>hây</i> (<i>*kə</i>) DEP
Stage IV	Action directed toward AFFECTEE	V <i>hây</i> (<i>kə</i>) AFF
Stage IVa	Action directed toward GOAL	V <i>hây</i> (<i>kə</i>) GOAL
Stage V	Action directed toward situation (PURPOSIVE)	V <i>hây</i> S

Functions of *hây* and *phûø*

- *hây* marks the verb as benefactive
 - beneficiary may be dropped
 - beneficiary directly benefits from act expressed by verb
 - beneficiary may (but need not) be recipient

- *phûø* introduces beneficiary (must be expressed overtly)
 - beneficiary indirectly benefits from act expressed by verb
 - beneficiary may be (but usually is not) recipient

mêε r'óŋ phleen hây lûuk.

mother sing song GIVE child

‘The mother is singing a song for her child.’

(→ the child is listening)

lûuk r'óŋ phleen phûa mêε.

child sing song for mother

‘The children are singing for their mother.’

(→ to collect money for her, to celebrate her birthday)

mêε súuu nom hây lûuk.

mother buy milk GIVE child

‘The mother buys milk for her child.’ **(→ to give to her child)**

mêε tham khéek phûa lûuk.

mother make cake for child

‘The mother bakes a cake for her child.’

(→ to make him happy, possibly by giving it to him)

Summary of benefactive strategies in Thai

Different, mostly semantically full V2s with inherent benefactive semantics; restricted applicability; beneficiary = argument of V2

Extraction of beneficiary not possible (some exceptions):

* *lûuk lèʔ, (thîi) mêe sùuu nom maa líəŋ.*
child FOC REL mother buy milk come feed

Intended: ‘It’s her child that the mother bought milk for.’

also **líəŋ lûuk lèʔ, mêe sùuu nom maa.*

Extended use of **V2 GIVE** in different **BENEFACTIVE** functions (PURE, RECIPIENT, DEPUTATIVE), $VP+GIVE = VP_{BEN}$;

beneficiary = core argument (direct or oblique)

Extraction of beneficiary possible (but uncommon):

lûuk khon lék lèʔ, mêε rɔʔη phleeη hây.

child CL small FOC mother sing song GIVE

‘It’s for the youngest child that the mother is singing a song.’

but **hây lûuk lèʔ, mêε rɔʔη phleeη.*

Preposition *phûə* to mark INDIRECT (REMOTE) BENEFICIARY; beneficiary = peripheral participant

Extraction of beneficiary possible only together with preposition or with resumptive pronoun:

phûə lûuk lèʔ, (thîi) phôɔ tham ɲaan nàk..
for child FOC REL father do work heavy
'It's for his child that the father works hard.'

or *lûuk lèʔ, phôɔ tham ɲaan nàk phûə khǎw.*

Function	Concrete	Grammaticalized		
		DIRECT	INDIRECT	ADDITIONAL
CAUSE	<i>phróʔ</i>		<i>(phûə)</i>	
PLAIN BEN.	<i>sămràp</i>	<i>hây (kə)</i>	<i>phûə</i>	?
RECIPIENT BEN.	<i>hây, líəŋ, fàak</i>	<i>hây (kə)</i>	?	<i>phûə</i>
DEPUTATIVE BEN.	<i>thɛɛn</i>	<i>hây</i>	?	<i>phûə</i>

Benefactive types of Thai do not completely coincide with the typology established by other authors.

The difference between DIRECT AND INDIRECT BENEFACTIVE is not found in neighboring Mon and Burmese.

The additional benefactive is also found in Hakha Lai (Peterson 2007), but only marginally present in other languages of SEA (Burmese *ʔətweʔ pa* not really grammaticalized).

***hây* can replace the other benefactive markers if beneficiary is not overtly expressed, i.e. there is a neutralization of the different types.**

The use of *phûə*, originally ‘because of’ for INDIRECT and the transfer verb *hây* ‘give’ for DIRECT BENEFACTIVE is semantically transparent. The latter has undergone further grammaticalization in different directions.

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