

## ALLATIVE PREPOSITION IN THAI

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### 1. Introduction

ALLATIVE case expresses motion *to* or *toward* the referent of the noun phrase it marks, which is a ‘schematic vector’ of the path of motion (cf. Talmy 2000: 53-57). The concept ALLATIVE roughly refers to a dynamic spatial relation where a moving entity moves to a reference point. This concept of ALLATIVE entails the whole kinetic PATH schema consisting of SOURCE, PATH and GOAL (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 32-34). A language may have a number of ALLATIVE markers with different nuances. For example, the English language has several ALLATIVE prepositions: **toward** (GOAL noun phrase), **to** (GOAL noun phrase), **onto** (GOAL noun phrase), and **into** (GOAL noun phrase).

- (1) He walked **toward** the shop. (PATH-oriented, unbounded path)  
(2) He walked **to** the shop. (GOAL-oriented, bounded path)  
(3) He put the files **onto** a CD. (GOAL-specific, affected target entity)  
(4) He put the files **into** a box. (GOAL-specific, enclosed goal space)

The preposition **toward** in (1) represents directional or PATH-oriented ALLATIVE implying an unbounded path. The preposition **to** in (2) represents GOAL-oriented ALLATIVE implying a bounded path. The preposition **onto** in (3) represents GOAL-specific ALLATIVE implying an affected target entity. And the preposition **into** in (4) represents GOAL-specific ALLATIVE or ILLATIVE implying an enclosed goal space. Likewise, the Japanese language has two main ALLATIVE particles: (GOAL noun phrase)-**e** and (GOAL noun phrase)-**ni**.

- (5) kare            wa            arui-te            mise-e            mukat-ta.  
PRONOUN     TOPIC     walk-TE     shop-toward     go-PAST  
'He went toward the shop, walking.'  
(PATH-oriented)
- (6) kare            wa            arui-te            mise-ni            mukat-ta.  
PRONOUN     TOPIC     walk-TE     shop-to            go-PAST  
'He went to the shop, walking.'  
(GOAL-oriented)

The particle **-e** in (5) represents directional or PATH-oriented ALLATIVE and the particle **-ni** in (6) represents GOAL-oriented ALLATIVE.

By contrast, the Thai language, I claim, has only one ALLATIVE preposition proper, namely **yan**. This preposition is derived from a verb meaning ‘maintain,’ ‘sustain,’ ‘exist,’ or ‘bring about.’ In modern Thai the lexical item **yan** expresses two grammatical concepts, namely CONTINUOUS aspect and ALLATIVE case. When it precedes a verb phrase, as in (7), it represents CONTINUOUS aspect, that is, to

continue doing or being. When it precedes a noun phrase, as in (8), it represents ALLATIVE case, that is, *to* or *toward* a goal.

- (7) kháw            **yan**            dœən    r̩øp            ráan  
 PRONOUN    CONTINUOUS    walk    around    shop  
 ‘He was walking around the shop.’  
 (CONTINOUS aspect)

- (8) kháw            dœən    pay      **yan**            ráan  
 PRONOUN    walk    go      ALLATIVE    shop  
 ‘He walked to the shop.’  
 (ALLATIVE case)

This study focuses on the latter grammatical meaning of **yan**, namely ALLATIVE. The aim of this study is to attest to **yan**’s grammatical status as ALLATIVE preposition by examining actual tokens gathered from corpus data including published literary works, magazines and newspapers. [1]

This paper is organized in the following way. In Section 2, I will make some remarks on the nature of **yan** to which little attention has hitherto been given. In Section 3, I will point out some distinctive features lying between the ALLATIVE preposition proper **yan** and ARRIVAL verbs in order to show their different nature and use. And Section 4 provides concluding remarks.

## 2. The nature of ALLATIVE preposition **yan**

Let us start with outlining the nature of the Thai ALLATIVE preposition **yan**.

### 2.1. Non-obligatory ALLATIVE marker

**yan** is not an obligatory ALLATIVE marker. It is observed that motion expressions with the ALLATIVE preposition **yan** abound in literary works, but the expressions are seldom used in everyday conversation. This is partly because without the overt ALLATIVE marker, a default ALLATIVE sense of Thai motion expressions could emerge from serialization of a PATH verb (e.g. **pay** ‘go’) and a GOAL noun or prepositional phrase, as illustrated in (9) and (10).

- (9) kháw            dœən    khûn    pay      [yôot khåw]  
 PRONOUN    walk    ascend    go      mountaintop  
 [GOAL Noun Phrase]  
 ‘He walked up to the mountaintop.’

- (10) kháw            dœən    khûn    pay      [bon    yôot khåw]  
 PRONOUN    walk    ascend    go      on      mountaintop  
 [GOAL Prepositional Phrase]  
 ‘He walked up to the mountaintop.’

### 2.2. Specific ALLATIVE marker

The ALLATIVE preposition **yan** indicates the endpoint of an ‘axial motion’ which is forward motion of an entity along an axial path, as exemplified in (8) above. The

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prepositional phrase beginning with **thǔŋ** can indicate the endpoint of an axial motion as well, as in (11).

- (11) kháw dœn pay càak bâan **thǔŋ** roon rian  
 PRONOUN walk go from house to school  
 ‘He walked from his house to the school.’  
 (Axial motion)

The endpoint of a ‘horizontal or vertical motion’ which is the shift of the head of a line extending from a fixed point along a horizontal or vertical path, on the other hand, is marked by **hää**, as in (12), and **caròt**, **còt** or **thǔŋ**, as in (13).

- (12) kháw hän nâa khâw **hää** dèk  
 PRONOUN turn face enter to child  
 ‘He turned his face to the child.’  
 (Horizontal motion)

- (13) mœŋ kháw càak/ tâŋ tèε húa **caròt/ còt/ thǔŋ** tháw  
 look PRONOUN from head to foot  
 ‘(She) looked at him from head to toe.’  
 (Vertical motion)

At any rate, these lexical items (or ARRIVAL verbs) are not prepositions ‘proper’ but verbs that are capable of serving as prepositions in certain contexts. We shall return to this point in Section 3.4.

#### 2.3. Fully grammaticalized ALLATIVE marker

The grammatical concept ALLATIVE expressed by **yan** is distinct from the verbal concept ARRIVAL expressed by a variety of ARRIVAL verbs (e.g. **thǔŋ** ‘arrive,’ **khâw** ‘enter,’ **sày** ‘put in,’ **pathá?** ‘collide,’ **yùt** ‘halt,’ **thâap** ‘lay flat against,’ **súu** ‘arrive and share/stay,’ etc.). Consider a contrastive pair of examples in (14) and (15).

- (14) a. kháw dœn khûn pay **thǔŋ** yôt khâw  
 PRONOUN walk ascend go arrive mountaintop  
 ‘He walked up and arrived at the mountaintop.’  
 (Complex event)

- b. kháw dœn khûn pay (**yan**) yôt khâw  
 PRONOUN walk ascend go (to) mountaintop  
 ‘He walked up to the mountaintop.’  
 (Simplex event)

- (15) a. maa **yùt** thii ráan  
 come halt at shop  
 ‘(He) came and stopped at the shop.’  
 (Complex event)

- b. maa (yāŋ) thīi ráan  
 come (to) at shop  
 '(He) came to the location of the shop.'  
 (Simplex event)

(14a) and (15a) include an ARRIVAL verb (**thǔŋ** ‘arrive,’ **yùt** ‘halt’) while (14b) and (15b) do not. The former expressions have a complex event structure consisting of a motion and an arrival as a result, which I call ‘ARRIVAL event’ (cf. Takahashi, to appear), while the latter expressions have a simplex event structure consisting of a single motion to an endpoint. In this study the concept ARRIVAL is defined as an event of a moving entity’s reaching an endpoint as a result of its prior motion along a path toward the endpoint. The concept ARRIVAL may involve the characteristic of a goal entity and/or the type of effect resulting from the arrival. Whereas the concept ALLATIVE is highly schematic and purely directional, the concept ARRIVAL is fairly rich in the content of event. In other words, the former is grammatical and semantically bleached; the latter is lexical and contentful.

### 3. ALLATIVE preposition **yāŋ** vs. ARRIVAL verb **sùu**

To clarify the grammatical status of **yāŋ** as ALLATIVE preposition proper, in this study I will compare **yāŋ** with **sùu** as a representative of ARRIVAL verbs. The meaning of **sùu** is somewhat complex, namely ‘arrive and share/stay,’ as exemplified in (16).

- (16) kháw kěp man̄khút pay sùu phuān bâan  
 PRONOUN gather mangosteen go arrive and share/stay neighbours  
 ‘He harvested mangosteens and went to share them with his neighbors.’ (Tomita 1990: 1835)

In (17) **sùu** follows a series of locomotion verbs. In such a context, **sùu** is often considered as an ALLATIVE preposition.

- (17) lēn nǐi khâw pay sùu ?aaraam phrá?phútthacâw  
 run flee enter go arrive and share/stay temple  
 ‘(He) ran away and got to the temple and stayed in.’  
 > ‘(He) ran away into the temple.’

Indeed, **sùu** can function as a preposition. However, as will be discussed later, it is the case with some marked contexts such as when being in combination with another particular preposition (e.g. **càak kruñthêep sùu manila** ‘from Bangkok to Manila’) or when used in more abstract domains than the spatial domain (e.g. **sùu ?aanaakhót** ‘into the future’).

Based on my examination of corpus data including many tokens of **yāŋ** and **sùu**, I argue that **yāŋ** has undergone the process of grammaticalization much further than **sùu**. Noss (1964: 148), Kölver (1984: 16), Diller (2001: 165) among others regard both **yāŋ** and **sùu** as fully grammaticalized ALLATIVE prepositions. But I do not share this common view. I would claim that **yāŋ** has become an ALLATIVE preposition and lost its content meaning but **sùu** has not yet done so. **sùu** largely functions as an ARRIVAL verb. The following observations serve as a piece of evidence in favor of my claim.

### 3.1. Non-preposition-like behavior of **sùu**

First, while **yan** is always followed by a noun phrase, **sùu** can take place at the final position of serial verb constructions, as in (18).

- (18) nân khuuw thii râap lé? yôot khâw  
 that COPULA place flat and hilltop  
 sûñ phûak khâw praathanää cà?  
 RELATIVE PRONOUN people PRONOUN wish MODAL  
 hõon tua sùu  
 sway while hanging body arrive and share/stay  
 ‘That is a flat place and a hilltop, where they wish to lift themselves and get to and stay.’

In this regard, other ARRIVAL verbs behave in the same way. (19) to (21) give other examples ending up with an ARRIVAL verb, namely **sày** ‘put in,’ **hää** ‘seek’ and **thuñj** ‘arrive.’

- (19) yàa hây khii funlòn loŋ sày  
 don't CAUSATIVE dust fall descend put in  
 ‘Don't let dust fall down and go into (something).’

- (20) man lén pay hää  
 PRONOUN run go seek  
 ‘It ran away and approached (something).’

- (21) raw cà? bëek săñkhääñ sàpparañkhee nîi  
 PRONOUN MODAL carry body decrepit this  
 dænthañj pay thuñj  
 travel go arrive  
 ‘We will travel with these decrepit bodies of us and reach (some place).’

### 3.2. Linear order constraint on the combination of **sùu** and **yan**

Secondly, **yan** and **sùu** may co-occur. When they co-occur, as in (22), **sùu** as an ARRIVAL verb must precede **yan** as an ALLATIVE preposition. The same observation applies to (23) where **thuñj**, an ARRIVAL verb, precedes **yan**.

- (22) khâw pay sùu yan thii klây  
 enter go arrive and share/stay to place near  
 ‘(The sunlight) went inside, reached and stayed, (to) a near place.’

- (23) khabuan thahääñ dæen súan sanääam maa thuñj yan  
 marching line soldier move pass field come arrive to  
 ?anúsåawarii monument  
 ‘The soldiers marched across the field and reached the monument.’ (Intratrat 1996: 128)

This is due to syntactic principles of Thai grammar. Considering the fixed linear order of the constituents of a verb phrase, namely verbs are followed by a prepositional phrase, we can say that **sùu** and **thູນ** in the preceding position are more verb-like and **yan** in the following position is more preposition-like.

### 3.3. ARRIVAL event denoted by **sùu**

Thirdly, the usage of the ARRIVAL verb **sùu** always suggests a ‘stative’ and ‘resultative’ situation after a given arrival, as exemplified in (24) to (26).

- (24) kháw            klàp            **sùu**            bâan  
       PRONOUN     turn back     arrive and share/stay house  
       lăŋ            dəəm  
       CLASSIFIER originally  
       ‘He returned and got to the original house and stayed.’
- (25) phaa com loŋ            **sùu**            kōn samút  
       lead sink descend     arrive and share/stay bottomsea  
       ‘(It) led (something) down and got to the bottom of the sea and stayed.’
- (26) løy khoom khûn **sùu**            thøɔŋ fáa  
       float lantern ascend arrive and share/stay sky  
       ‘(They) sent up floating-lanterns which got to the sky and stayed.’

This implication of ‘stasis’ is essentially connected with the verb’s original meaning, that is, to get to some place and share something with someone, as mentioned before.

From the tokens of **sùu** I gathered, the following scenario of an ARRIVAL event can be generalized: After arrival, the moving entity in question settles in the arrival space; otherwise, the moving entity virtually fades into some space as it goes away from the observer or the moving entity is fused into the setting to the extent that its motion cannot be detected. This is the prototypical ARRIVAL event that **sùu** denotes.

### 3.4. Using **sùu** as ALLATIVE preposition in a limiting case

Actually, **sùu** can function as a preposition only when the prepositional phrase led by **sùu** is in combination with an ABLATIVE prepositional phrase (e.g. càak ... **sùu** ... ‘from ... to ...’), as in (27), or in adjacency to the ARRIVAL verb **khâw** ‘enter’ (i.e. **khâw sùu** ... ‘move into ...’), as in (28).

- (27) dəən thaŋ càak kruŋthéep **sùu** manilaa  
       travel            from Bangkok     to     Manila  
       ‘(They) traveled from Bangkok to Manila.’
- (28) sɛəŋ sathóon            klàp            maa **khâw** **sùu** taa khɔŋ  
       light            reflect     turn back     come enter to eye of  
       phûu mɔɔŋ  
       viewer  
       ‘The reflected light came into the eyes of the viewer.’

The serialization of the ARRIVAL verb **khâw** and the preposition **sùu** brings about an elaborated sense of the ALLATIVE, namely the concept of ILLATIVE or ‘motion into some place.’ Especially, the serialization of **khâw** and **sùu** denotes a special type of ILLATIVE that involves the notion of resultant stasis.

Additionally, uses of other ARRIVAL verbs as an ALLATIVE preposition are also subject to the collocational circumstances. That is, the prepositional phrase beginning with **hăa** must follow the arrival verb **khâw** ‘enter,’ as in (29)=(12), and the prepositional phrase beginning with **caròt**, **còt** or **thuñj** must be combined with an ABLATIVE prepositional phrase beginning with **càak** or **tân tèe** ‘from,’ as in (30)=(13) and (31)=(11).

- (29) khâw hăan nâa **khâw** **hăa** dèk  
PRONOUN turn face enter to child  
'He turned his face to the child.'

- (30) mɔɔŋ khâw càak/ Tân tèe húa **caròt/ còt/ thuñj** tháw  
look PRONOUN from head to foot  
'(She) looked at him from head to toe.'

- (31) khâw dəən pay càak bâan **thuñj** rooŋ rian  
PRONOUN walk go from house to school  
'He walked from his house to the school.'

In more abstract domains than the spatial domain, such as in the temporal domain, **sùu** as well as other ARRIVAL verbs can be used as a preposition, as in (32) and (33) below, but further investigation into usages of ARRIVAL verbs in such abstract domains is beyond the scope of this study.

- (32) sòŋ tò càak rûn nùŋ **sùu** ?iik  
send connect from generation one to another  
rûn nùŋ  
generation one  
'(They) sent (something) from one generation to another.'

- (33) mɔɔŋ fii kâaw nay sén thaan **sùu** ?aanaakhót  
look the action of taking a step in path to future  
'(He) looked at making steps along the path to the future.'

To summarize this section, my proposal is that whereas **yaj** has become an ALLATIVE preposition, **sùu** ‘arrive and share/stay’ and other ARRIVAL verbs largely function as a verb designating an ARRIVAL event. Specifically, **yaj** highlights an axial path toward an endpoint and **sùu** expresses an ARRIVAL event involving resultant stasis.

#### 4. Conclusion

The Thai language has a number of lexical items used as both a content word (e.g. verb)

and a function word (e.g. preposition). ARRIVAL verbs like **thǔŋ** ‘arrive’ and **sùu** ‘arrive and share/stay’ are also used as ALLATIVE markers. This study has shown, however, that in fact these ARRIVAL verbs mainly express quite a substantial event of ARRIVAL and they are allowed to function as an ALLATIVE marker in a limiting case. On the contrary, the lexical item **yan** no longer expresses a verbal (or contentful) meaning in present-day Thai, but exclusively represents a grammatical (or non-contentful) meaning, more precisely, a temporally or spatially schematic meaning, i.e., either CONTINUOUS aspect or ALLATIVE case. It should be concluded, from what has been discussed in this paper, that there is only one ALLATIVE marker proper in Thai, that is, **yan**.

In passing, Thai speakers employ ‘Accomplishment Constructions’ consisting of CAUSE and EFFECT components to delineate temporally bounded events with the latter EFFECT part highlighted (cf. Takahashi, in press), as illustrated in (34) to (36) below. In (34) someone’s action of lifting a bag (CAUSE) leads to its upward movement (EFFECT). In (35) someone’s stretching his line of sight away (CAUSE) brings about his visual perception of mountains (EFFECT). In (36) something’s falling off (CAUSE) results in its broken state (EFFECT). The speakers uttering these sentences should regard the posterior EFFECT sub-event as a natural consequence of the prior CAUSE sub-event and concern themselves with the realization of the EFFECT sub-event.

- (34) [yók krapăw] [khûn]  
 lift bag ascend  
 [CAUSE] [EFFECT]  
 ‘(He) lifted a bag and it moved upward.’

- (35) [mooŋ pay] [hĕn phuu khăw]  
 look go see mountain  
 [CAUSE] [EFFECT]  
 ‘(He) looked away and caught sight of mountains.’

- (36) [tòk] [tèɛk]  
 go down be broken  
 [CAUSE] [EFFECT]  
 ‘(It) fell off and was broken.’

My basic view regarding ARRIVAL expressions, as in (37) and (38) below (as well as (14a), (15a), (16) to (26) and (28) above), is that they are a kind of Accomplishment Construction and that an ARRIVAL verb in the following EFFECT component of the construction (**thǔŋ** ‘arrive’ in (37) and **sùu** ‘arrive and share/stay’ in (38)) denotes a substantial event of ARRIVAL that eventually arises from a prior locomotion event designated by PATH verb(s) in the preceding CAUSE component.

- (37) [dəən pay] [**thǔŋ** ráan]  
 walk go arrive shop  
 [CAUSE] [EFFECT]  
 ‘(He) walked away and reached the shop.’

- (38) [khuûn pay] [sùu chán bon]  
 ascend go arrive and share/stay upstairs  
 [CAUSE] [EFFECT]  
 '(He) went up and got to the upstairs and stayed.'

The speaker of (37), for instance, conceptualizes that the unexpressed mover's arrival at the shop occurs as a natural result of his walking away previous to the arrival. Crucially, the speaker's focus of attention is placed on the realization of the posterior EFFECT sub-event (his resultant arrival at the shop) rather than the prior CAUSE sub-event (his relocation toward the shop) which is a precondition for the realization.

In contrast, expressions for simplex locomotion event, as in (39) and (40) below (as well as (8) to (11), (14b), (15b), (27) and (31) above) which may or may not contain the ALLATIVE marker **yan**, make no clause-internal separation of CAUSE and EFFECT components.

- (39) dæən pay (**yan**) ráan  
 walk go (to) shop  
 '(He) walked to the shop.'

- (40) khuûn pay (**yan**) chán bon  
 ascend go (to) upstairs  
 '(He) went up to the upstairs.'

Although the physical state of affairs described by (37) and (39) may be identical, the speaker's conceptualization is different from each other. Unlike the speaker of (37), the speaker of (39) views the motion event in question as a simplex one: the unexpressed mover relocates on foot in the direction *to* or *toward* the shop and concurrently away from a certain reference point.

#### Note

I would like to thank Robert De Silva for helpful comments on the early version of this paper and stylistic suggestions. The remaining faults are all my own.

1. The data used for this study were collected mainly from a number of published literary works I randomly selected and partly from a computerized corpus of the Thai language that belong to the National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC), National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA), Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, Thailand.

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