

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION: SENTENCE CONSTRUCTIONS

5.1 Introduction

Sentences can be described as “grammatically complete units capable of standing on their own semantically independent” (Finch, 2000). In both Thai and English languages, sentences consist of two main components which are subject and predicate. To identify types of sentence constructions, predicate units are generally considered. Thai and English are described as having SVO (Subject-Verb-Object) construction. Sentences in English seem to follow this pattern strictly, while in Thai sometimes the order can be changed without any violation of grammar (see Chapter 2). However, the difference in this point is not problematic for Thai competent users to produce English sentences.

Based on English grammar (Finegan, 1999), sentences can be classified into four types which are simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence, and compound-complex sentence. The four types of sentence constructions are treated equally in terms of their importance and use, in both Thai and English language. In other words, there is no suggestion of which type should be used more than the other. The use of each sentence type depends on the information conveyed in that sentence.

The findings from the previous study of Chutisilp (1984) on Thai English state that the use of long sentences is one of the characteristics of Thai English. Moreover, from general observation, it seems that the ways Thais present meaning through English sentences are rather different from English native speakers. Thus, it is hypothesized in this study that each type of sentences may occur in Thai English and British English in distinctive frequencies. Since long sentences are a characteristic of Thai English, it can be expected that Thai English may contain higher numbers of compound, complex, and compound complex sentences than British English does.

Thus, this chapter aims to present findings obtained from a comparison of sentence constructions in Thai English articles and British English articles. The presentation is divided into three main sections, starting from the frequencies of

occurrence of sentence types in TEA and BEA. Then, findings on the use and construction of each sentence type obtained from the detailed analysis in TEA and BEA are discussed. And last, a conclusion is provided.

5.2 Occurrence of sentence types

This section presents overall quantitative results from the comparison on the use of sentence constructions in TEA and BEA. The raw frequencies of each type of sentences are counted and then converted into percentage in order to get the overview of the preference for the use of sentences of Thai and British writers.

The following table shows details on frequency of occurrence and percentages of each sentence type.

Table 5.1 Quantitative results on the use of sentence constructions in TEA and BEA

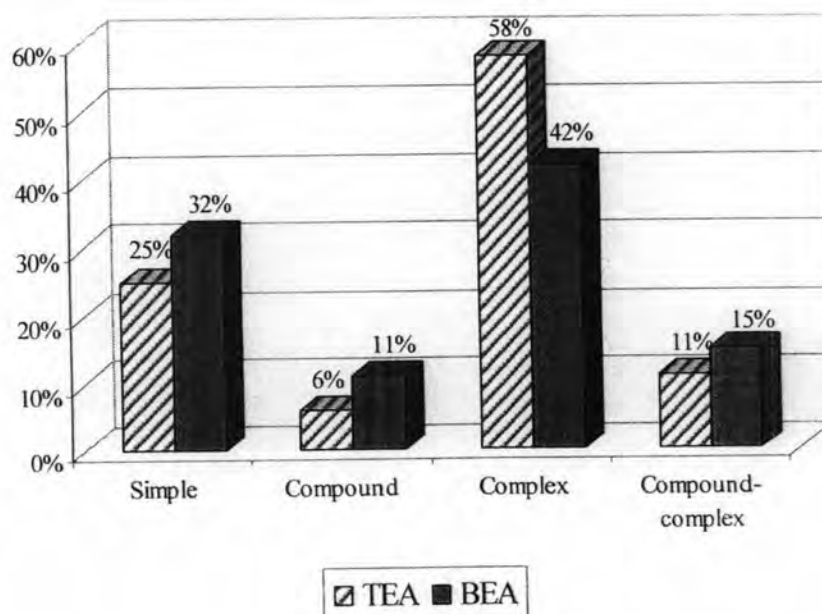
Sentence Types	TEA		BEA	
	f	%	f	%
Simple	546	25	824	32
Compound	137	6	274	11
Complex	1237	58	1093	42
Compound-complex	230	11	390	15
Total	2150	100	2581	100

To test whether the overall use of all sentence types in TEA and BEA is significantly different, chi-square method is applied. As mentioned in Chapter III (pp. 96-98), this set of data is two-way classification. Thus, the comparison between TEA and BEA has to be done with the whole set to see whether the frequencies of occurrence of all sentences types state the significant difference.

The statistical test gives the chi-square value of 113.45. This value can be interpreted that the occurrences of different sentence types in TEA and BEA are significantly different at the probability value (p) of less than 0.001 (at $p < 0.001$ and degree of freedom = 3, the cut-off chi-square value = 16.27).

To understand how each type of sentence constructions occurs in TEA and BEA, the percentages and proportion should be considered. The following figure illustrates the distribution of sentence constructions used in TEA and BEA.

Figure 5.1 Distribution of sentence constructions in TEA and BEA



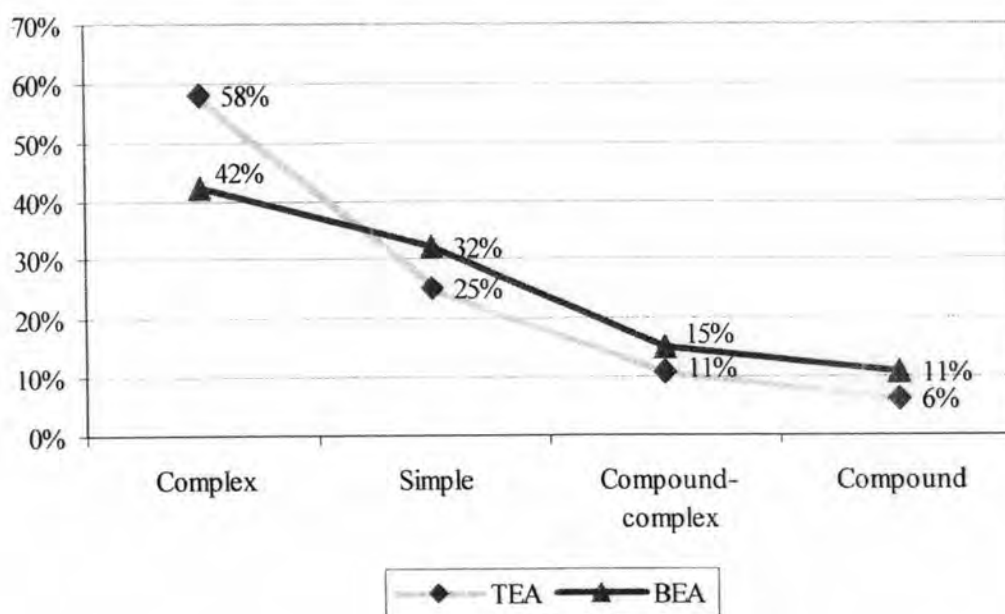
The figure shows that, in general, the patterns of distribution of sentence types used in TEA and BEA are similar. Among all types of sentences, complex sentences occur most often. Simple sentences are the second common type, followed by compound-complex sentences and compound sentences respectively.

However, by comparison between TEA and BEA, it can be seen obviously that the proportions of each type of sentence construction of the two groups are dissimilar. The proportions of simple sentences, compound sentences, and compound-complex sentences are noticeably higher in BEA than in TEA. Complex sentences are the only type which is proportionally higher in TEA than in BEA.

The occurrences of simple sentences in BEA and TEA show great differences, 7% higher in BEA than in TEA. Occurrence of compound sentences used in BEA is about 5% greater than in TEA, but it is nearly twice as high. Occurrences of compound-complex sentences exhibit 4% higher in BEA than in TEA. And last, but very interesting, Thai writers' use of complex sentences is extremely higher than British writers' at 16%.

Next, the within-group distribution of sentence types will be considered.

Figure 5.2 Distribution of sentence types within the groups of writers



From this figure, it can be seen that the distribution of the four sentence types in BEA is rather linear with gentle slope. This can be interpreted that even though the frequency of occurrence of each sentence type is not similar, they are just slightly different. On the contrary, the distribution of the four sentence types in TEA shows great dispersal. The occurrence of complex sentences seems to be a strong influence for this event. In comparison with other sentence types, the occurrence of complex sentences in TEA is absolutely high: about double higher than the occurrence of simple sentences, five times higher than the occurrence of compound-complex sentences, and ten times higher than the occurrence of compound sentences. This point suggests that, in Thai English, complex sentences can obviously be observed, while other constructions may be occasionally seen. Therefore, it can be claimed that one distinctive characteristic of Thai English is the frequent occurrence of complex sentences. Explanation for the high frequency of complex sentences in TEA will be discussed in the following section, where discussion of each sentence type is provided. Moreover, when considering the proportion taken by compound sentences among others in TEA, it can be seen that the share they take is very low (only 6%). It can be interpreted that compound sentences rarely occur in TEA.

To learn more about the use of sentences in TEA and BEA, further investigation on sentence constructions is conducted.

5.3 Sentence constructions

This section presents findings obtained from further investigation on sentence construction in TEA and BEA with an attempt to state those different features that appear in each type of sentences used by Thai and British writers. The discussion starts from the most common type of sentences to the least common one in both varieties.

5.3.1 Complex sentences

5.3.1.1 Length of complex sentences in TEA and BEA

This section provides information on the use of complex sentences in TEA and BEA in terms of the length. The following figures illustrate the distribution of the length of complex sentences in TEA and BEA.

Figure 5.3 Length of complex sentences in TEA

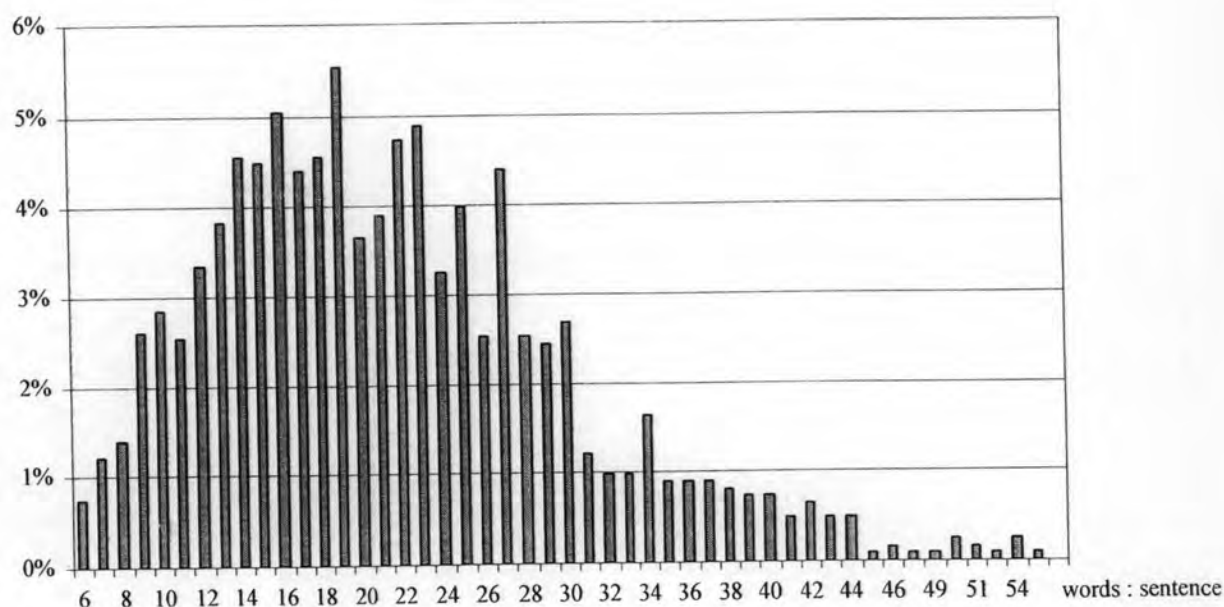


Figure 5.4 Length of complex sentences in BEA

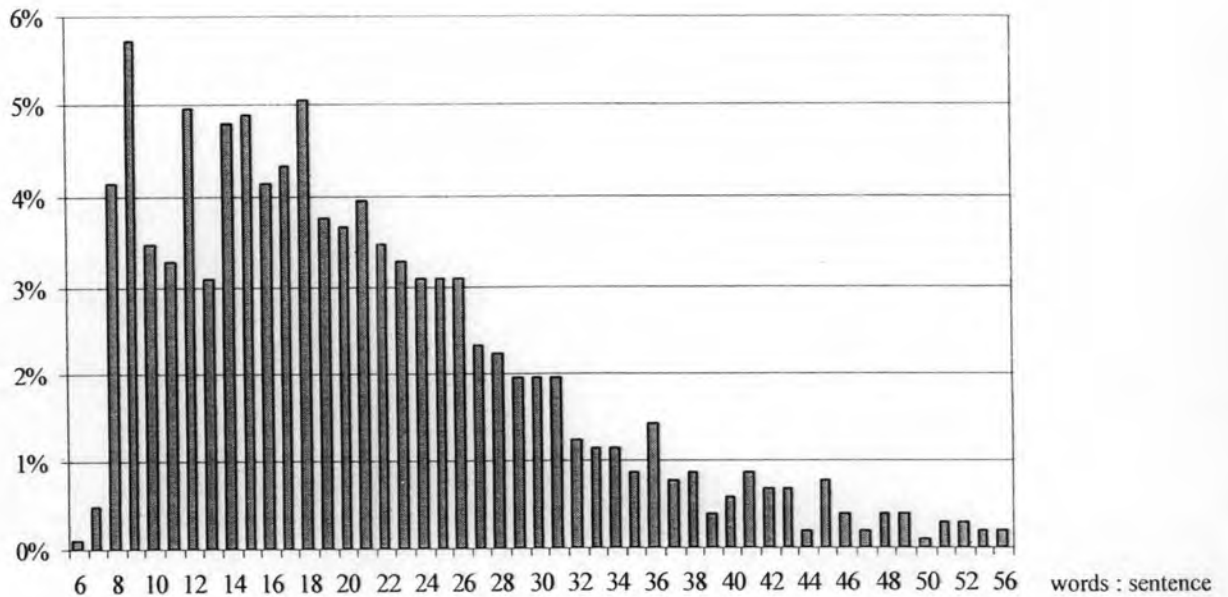
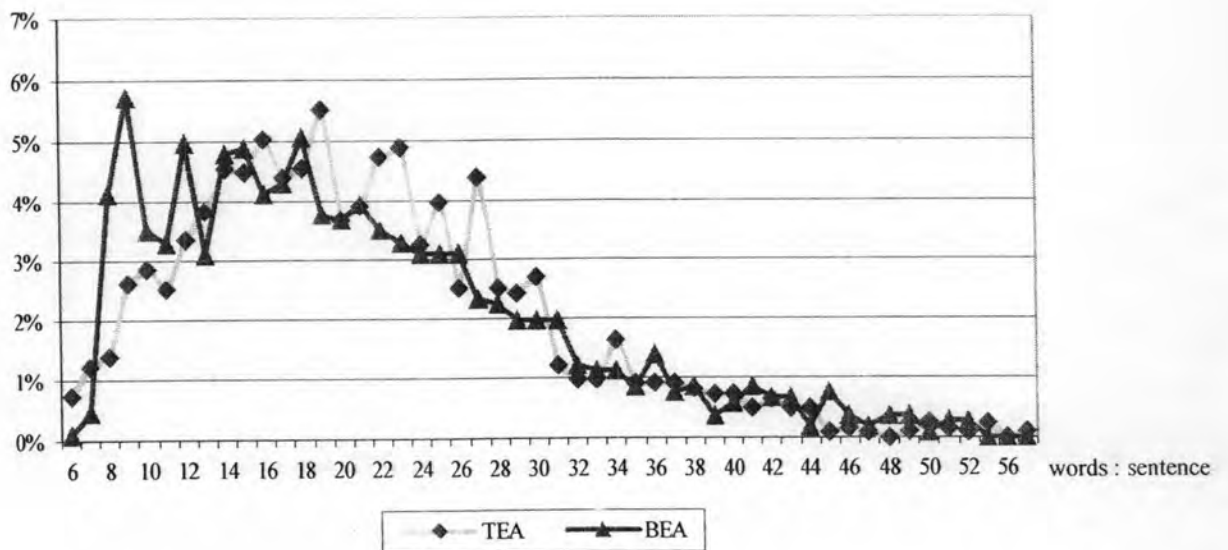


Figure 5.5 Comparison of length of complex sentences in TEA and BEA



From the figures, it can be seen that the distributions of the length of complex sentences in TEA and BEA state some differences. The distribution of BEA skews towards the left more than that of TEA. It can be interpreted that the majority of complex sentences in BEA tends to be shorter than those in TEA.

To be more specific, the average frequency should be determined. Since the distribution is not a normal one (skewed distribution) and the focus of the discussion for the common length should be placed on the majority of the data, the average should be considered in terms of mode (rather than mean or median).¹ According to these two sets of data, the mode found from TEA is 19 while from BEA is 8, which mean the majority of complex sentences in TEA is 19 words long and in BEA is 8 words long. To be more certain, the first five highest frequencies of the distribution in TEA and BEA are compared.

Table 5.2 The first five highest frequencies in the distribution of the length (words per sentence) of complex sentences in TEA and BEA

Rank	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
TEA	19	16	23	22	14 and 18
BEA	8	18	12	15	14

The data presented in Table 5.2 shows that in all the five most common frequencies except the second one, the length of complex sentences in TEA is longer than in BEA. Therefore, it can be confidently concluded that the majority of complex sentences in TEA are longer than in BEA.

5.3.1.2 Constructions of complex sentences in TEA and BEA

From the comparison among all types of sentences across TEA and BEA, it is clear that the occurrence of complex sentences is extremely high in TEA. According to the description, complex sentences occur when a main clause of the sentence contains some dependent clause(s). Thus, in order to explain the construction of complex sentences, dependent clauses seem to be an important element to be examined.

In Chapter IV, it is clear that clauses as noun postmodifiers (i.e. relative clauses, past participle clauses, and infinitive clauses) occur significantly more often in TEA than in BEA. When a clausal postmodifier is added to a head noun, it acts as a dependent clause of the sentence and the sentence becomes a complex sentence. According to this point, it can be concluded that high use of clausal postmodifiers is a factor affecting the high frequency of complex sentences in TEA.

Apart from dependent clauses functioning as noun postmodifiers, there are two other main types of dependent clauses that can make complex sentences: complement clauses and adverbial clauses. To test whether these two can also be claimed as a cause of a high number of complex sentences in TEA, chi square test is applied. The result of the test is shown in the following table.

Table 5.3 Quantitative results on the use of sentence constructions in TEA and BEA

Types	TEA S = 2150 f	BEA S = 2581 f	Et	Eb	χ^2
Complement clauses	784	667	659.41	791.59	42.81 *
Adverbial clauses	566	448	460.91	553.31	43.58 *

$p < 0.05$

S = total number of sentences

f = frequency of occurrence

Et = expected frequency of occurrence in Thai English articles

Eb = expected frequency of occurrence in British English articles

χ^2 = chi square value

* = significant at $P < 0.05$, cut off point $\chi^2 = 3.84$

Chi square values in table 5.2 strongly indicate that complement clauses and adverbial clauses are used significantly more often in TEA than in BEA. Therefore, these two types of dependent clauses can be concluded as another cause of the high number of complex sentences in TEA. In short, higher use of all types of embedded clauses in TEA leads to higher frequency of complex sentences.

Apart from the frequencies, findings concerning the use and construction of these two types of dependent clauses are provided as follows.

5.3.1.2.1 Complement clauses

Complement clauses are used to complete the meanings of other entities in the matrix clauses. Complement clauses can be finite or non-finite. According to Biber et al. (1999), finite complement clauses are that-clauses and wh-clauses, and non-finite complement clauses are to-clauses and ing-clauses. All of them are only different in forms but they can serve the same functions to the main clauses.

e.g. **Subject:**
*Reflecting on thus and related matters took him past his stop
 and almost into Dinedor itself.*

Object:
You know what I called my mom.

Subject complement:
*One of the reasons could be that some of the people are
 socially and economically deprived.*

Verb complement:
France has decided to cut off aid to the Comoros Islands.

Adjective complement:
It's good to see them in the bath.

(Biber et al., 1999)

Followings are findings and discussions on the use of complement clauses in this study.

Finite complement clauses

According to the observation from TEA and BEA, it is found that even though finite dependent clauses with 'that' subordinator can be used as the subject of complex sentences, this construction never occurs in both TEA and BEA. Meanwhile, they are common for the functions as object or complement of complex sentences.

All finite complement clauses as object or complement of sentences are found in the final position of sentences. However, in TEA and BEA, complement clauses with 'that' subordinator are more common than those with 'wh' subordinator. In addition, it is common that with some verbs such as 'think', 'believe', 'hope' and so on, 'that' subordinator can be dropped.

An investigation of that-clauses in TEA and BEA points out that it is common for that-clauses to contain other two to three embedded clauses within them. That-clauses with more than three embedded clauses occur less in BEA than in TEA. However, it does not occur frequently enough in TEA to be claimed as a difference in the construction of that-clauses between TEA and BEA. In addition, it is found that, in common, subjects of complex sentences which take that-complement clauses in the final position are short and simple. In other words, the subject head nouns are usually pronouns or simple noun phrases (head nouns that do not take many or complex modifiers, especially those clausal postmodifiers). This is because with this sentence construction, the focus of the sentence shifts from theme to rheme.

e.g. *She tells me that she left Saigon when she was five and this is her first trip back to visit her family.*

(BEA02)

I insisted that we postpone our visit to the Hermitage in order to buy our own supplies.

(BEA01)

The assumption is that the character of the Bodhisatava statue, which resembles a Brahman god, helped save this carving from being destroyed.

(TEA14)

It is possible that Toyota will apply and develop the I-unit for the personal car market in the near future.

(TEA12)

With this information, it can be concluded that the construction of finite that-clauses in complex sentences does not exhibit any major difference between TEA and BEA. However, the higher frequency in TEA than in BEA helps confirm the assumption that Thai writers tend to delay the main point. Since finite that-clauses suit this purpose, they are frequently used by Thai writers.

Non-finite complement clauses

Non-finite complement clauses placed in subject and object slots in complex sentences are found to be rare in both TEA and BEA. Far more common, they usually function as verb or adjective complement. According to English grammar rule, verb or adjective complements are usually placed lastly in sentences. Thus, there is certainly no difference in terms of position of non-finite complement clauses between TEA and BEA. However, when looking into the construction of the complement clauses, it is found that non-finite complement clauses in TEA seem to be more complicated than those in BEA. This is because most of non-finite complement clauses in TEA normally contain other several embedded clauses within them, while non-finite complement clauses in BEA are mostly constructed with simple units.

e.g. *It was easy to imagine Hoi An as the commercial hub.*

(BEA02)

Although in BEA embedded clauses can sometimes be found in the non-finite complement clauses, they are usually short and very simple.

It was amazing to watch concrete walls [exploding].

(BEA14)

Every day, people usually come out to sit in front of their house [[to breathe fresh air] and [let the warm sunlight [chase away the chill] and [strengthen their physiques]]].

(TEA01)

We were a little surprised to learn [that it would take two or three hours [to hike up to the peak from the campground]].

(TEA15)

According to the information presented earlier, it is interesting to see that for finite complement clauses, complicated construction (clauses containing layers of embedded clauses) can be observed in both TEA and BEA. But, for non-finite complement clauses complicated construction are found only in TEA. The explanation for this point can be given as follows. According to Quirk et al. (1972), it is mentioned that non-finite clauses are less explicit than those finite clauses therefore, by themselves, they require more interpretation. To avoid confusion, British writers do not add other embedded clauses into them. On the contrary, Thai writers do not seem to be aware of this point. This may be because in the Thai language, there is no distinction between finite and non-finite clauses. And in Thai, implicit construction is very common such as omission of many sentence elements which are assumed to be obtained from context. Thus, for Thai writers, it does not matter whether the clauses are finite or non-finite, they can add other embedded clauses if they prefer. This does not cause any confusion in a Thais' perspective. In fact, this feature is rather preferable as embellishment in their writing.

5.3.1.2.2 Adverbial clauses

Adverbials are common elements in English sentences. They can appear in forms of single words, phrases, or clauses. However, in this section, the presentation only emphasises adverbial clause since it is a factor effecting numbers of complex sentences. Similar to other kinds of clauses, adverbial clauses can be finite or non-finite. According to the observation, there is no particular preference for each of them both in TEA and BEA. In other words, both of these two types of clausal adverbials are common in TEA and BEA.

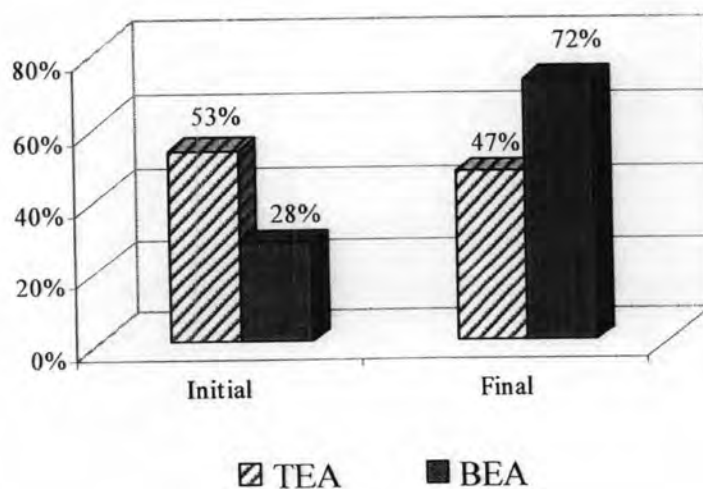
Both types of adverbial clauses mainly occur in two positions in relation to the main clause: initial and final position. Thus in the discussions of adverbial clauses, their position should be considered. The following presents findings from detailed analysis of finite and non-finite adverbial clauses concerning their positions and constructions.

Finite adverbial clauses

Finite adverbial clauses can occur both in initial and final positions. According to Biber et al., preferences for different positions vary according to different registers (written or spoken) and functions of adverbial clauses (e.g. adverbial clauses of condition, time, reason, etc.). However, in the overall picture, finite adverbial clauses occur more frequently in the final position than in the initial position.

From the analysis of TEA and BEA, it is found that preference for positions of finite adverbial clauses in TEA and BEA tends to be different. For BEA, the findings agree with those of Biber et al. but for TEA, they do not. The proportions for the positions of finite adverbial clauses, in TEA and BEA, can be illustrated as in the following figure.

Figure 5.6 Proportions of finite adverbial clauses for initial and final position



In BEA, 28% of all finite adverbial clauses are placed in the initial position, while other 72% is in final position. Therefore, it indicates that British writers strongly prefer to place finite adverbial clauses in the final position rather than in the initial position. In TEA, finite adverbial clauses are frequently found in both positions: initial and final. Finite adverbial clauses in the initial position take 53%, while finite adverbial clauses in the final position take 47%. Hence, it can be noted that Thai writers slightly prefer the initial position for finite adverbial clauses rather than the final position.

According to the study of Biber et al. (1999) on English native speakers' corpora, finite adverbial clauses rarely occur in the initial position because they are used only in two limited conditions. Otherwise, they mostly occur in the final position. The two conditions are first, the adverbial clauses in the initial position provide cohesion between sentences since the adverbial clauses present old information mentioned in preceding sentences and the main clauses present new information. Second, they help set up a frame for several subsequent clauses or sentences.

Finite adverbial clauses in BEA, in the initial position are found to agree with both conditions suggested by Biber et al. But in TEA, the first condition may not be strictly followed.

Condition 1: cohesion between old and new information

In BEA, Adverbial clauses are usually placed in the initial position to provide a link between sentences by representing old information.

e.g. For authentic Cantonese food (this is the world capital), go north to Causeway Bay For everything else (Beijing, Shanghai, Szechuan, Thai and international cuisines), duck into the Wan Chai district, ... or hop eastwards to the ultra-trendy SoHo and Lan Kwai Fong areas,... . ***If you skip the wining and dining, you can spend an evening shopping in Kowloon.***

(BEA05)

From the above example, the topic of the discussion in the preceding sentences is about dining. It can be seen that before changing to new topic, as in the main clause of the last sentence, the bold adverbial clause mentioning old information in the preceding sentences is placed initially.

In contrast to the findings from BEA, finite adverbial clauses in the initial position in TEA do not always show agreement with this condition. In other words, it is not necessary for finite adverbial clauses in the initial position to present old information so as to provide a link between previous sentences and the main clause.

e.g. She took me to more than 30 countries to study with different masters. I believe I am lucky. ***Because I am a choosy one, I only choose teachers I appreciate.***

(TEA25)

In this example, it can be clearly seen that the bold adverbial clause does not really mention old information in the preceding sentences. The preceding sentences are a discussion about a person's experience in studying with different teachers. Then the adverbial clause mentions the person's personality before coming back to the topic concerning teachers (the way the person chooses teachers).

Condition 2: framing subsequent activities

This second condition can generally be observed in both TEA and BEA. The writers place finite adverbial clauses in the initial position when they want to set a frame for the following activities mentioned in the main clauses or later sentences.

In BEA, most of the finite adverbial clauses that agree with this condition usually show agreement with the first condition as well.

e.g. ***When the pair finished restoring all the fort-palace's original rooms, they added a new wing with a long, slim swimming pool, Ayurvedic health centre, conference centre and amphitheatre, using local builders who applied ancient techniques to the stone.***

(BEA03)

Sentences before this one discuss the method of restoring the palace. Thus, this sentence can also show that the adverbial clause in the initial position creates cohesion in the text. More than that, the adverbial clause, in this example, also helps set a time frame for the subsequent actions. Therefore, it can be seen that usage of finite adverbial clause in BEA can meet both conditions at one time.

In TEA, even though finite adverbial clauses in the initial position match the second condition, they do not serve the first condition as those in BEA usually do.

- e.g. In fact, I was not that sad about my grandmother's death because she had lived as long as the average human life span. Yet, I was mournful that I had never had a chance to visit her before and to see how she lived in a simple way in beautiful Patiu. *When I arrived at Thung Wua Lan Beach, it was during the weekend so there were many people there.*

(TEA07)

In this example, the writer set up a frame by placing the adverbial clause in the initial position. However, the clause does not provide any link for preceding sentences (old information) and the main clause (new information).

However, Biber et al. mention that if finite adverbial clauses are lengthy, although they match the two conditions, only the final position is recommended. This is because lengthy adverbial clauses in the initial position may make the sentences perceived awkward in the sense of English native speakers.

- e.g. *Ben [the deputy manager] and I were in the office when we got a radio message from one of our hotel boats saying they'd sailed over some huge waves.*

(BEA14)

In the preceding sentences of the above example, the discussion is on the huge waves, 'Tsunami', attacking the place. Thus, the adverbial clause in the example seems to refer to the old information while the main clause presents new information (condition 1). However, since the adverbial clause is long and rather complicated, it is placed in the final position instead.

Contrastively, in TEA, when adverbial clauses are long and sometimes rather complicated (containing several modifying units), they still occur in the initial position.

- e.g. *Although you might think [it would be difficult [to see all the details [of the archeological sites] [in the dimness]]], believe it or not, the darkness outside can help us use our unlimited imaginations to amplify the majestic appearance of the ancient capital city in our minds.*

(TEA05)

In TEA, not only finite adverbial clauses in initial position that can be long and complicated, but also those in final position show the same manner. In fact, adverbial clauses in the final position produced by Thai writers can be lengthier and more complicated than those in initial position.

- e.g. *I can attest to that because [[that night], [when I went [to attend the recital of prayers for my grandmother's wake]]], [there was, [at the same time], a celebration [for ordaining a new monk] [right next to the hall [where my grandmother's ceremony was held]]].*

(TEA07)

Contrastively, in BEA, even though it is mentioned that long finite adverbial clauses should be placed in the final position, the clauses are not as long and complicated as those in TEA.

- e.g. *Danang, the main city on central Vietnam's coastal stretch, appeared on the international map when the US Army set up one of its main bases here.*

(BEA02)

Another difference observed from TEA and BEA is the number of finite adverbial clauses added to a sentence. In BEA, a sentence usually contains only one finite adverbial clause. But in TEA, it does not matter. Two finite adverbial clauses can occur in one sentence.

e.g. *Every time we made an adventurous trip to a waterfall in Nakorn Nayok, we had to pass "Wangtakrai", a watercourse where I really loved to swim, even though you couldn't identify the area because everywhere was overgrown with grass.*

(TEA10)

According to the above discussion, it can be concluded that a frequent occurrence of finite adverbial clauses in an initial position and their lengthy and complicated structure are characteristics of Thai English. Preference for position can be associated to style of writing: direct or indirect. For a direct style, a prominent topic should be discussed earlier before those adding information. And for an indirect style, information goes the opposite way. The high preference for finite adverbial clauses in the final position found from BEA indicates a direct style of writing. On the contrary, whenever possible, Thai writers prefer placing finite adverbial clauses in the initial position. Thai writers usually provide information, both necessary and unnecessary for the topic of discussion, before getting to the main point. Due to this information, the indirect style by writing of Thai writers can be interpreted. In addition, lengthy and complicated finite adverbial clauses, both in initial and final position are usually observed in TEA. This can confirm that, for Thais, provision of lots of information is very preferable. Thai writers do not limit the length of their sentences. Also they do not feel that adding lots of information or using complicated modifying structures may cause difficulties for readers to understand the texts.

Non-finite adverbial clauses

Biber et al. (1999) point out that non-finite adverbial clauses typically occur in final position because of their syntactic forms and semantic categories.

e.g. *I borrowed a portable phone **to ring Waterloo.*** (Biber et al.)

However, the initial position is possible but far less common. Non-finite adverbial clauses occur in the initial position when writers aim to set up a frame of an activity in the main clause.

e.g. *To succeed again they will have to improve their fitness and concentration.*

(Biber et al.)

Non-finite adverbial clauses placed in medial position are also possible but they are seldom observed.

e.g. *A man who, if necessary, can make certain Evan Kendrick is given the truth.*

(Biber et al.)

According to the observations from TEA and BEA in this study, the positions of non-finite adverbial clauses are similar to those suggested by Biber et al. Mostly, non-finite adverbial clauses are placed at the final position. And those in the initial position are also found but of a fewer number, in comparison to those in the final position. Non-finite adverbial clauses in a medial position never occur in TEA and BEA.

e.g. Final position

Beyond A Coruna, the edge of Galicia runs westwards before turning south towards its rocky apotheosis, the Cabo Fisterra.

(BEA06)

I was temporarily mute while thinking that some day [in the future, sooner or later, Koh Yao will be swallowed by modern development].

(TEA06)



Initial position

Restored by the late John Stuart, a glamorous Russian-art dealer, it was described as the loveliest place you could stay in the city.

(BEA01)

To reach Phu Soi Dao you have to hike for six hours to reach the top of the mountain and get close to the wonderful flower fields above the clouds.

(TEA15)

For non-finite adverbial clauses, it can be said that preferences for positions of non-finite adverbial clauses in TEA and BEA are similar. Non-finite adverbial clauses appear mostly in the final position. However, those in the initial position can also be observed.

In terms of constructions, non-finite adverbial clauses in TEA and BEA seem to be different. As well as all those dependent clauses described earlier, in TEA, it is common to find non-finite adverbial clauses containing other clauses within them. The embedding clauses function as units that provide more information to some element(s) in the adverbial clauses or to the whole adverbial clause. But, in BEA, this complicated construction is rarely observed.

e.g. *I spent as long as I could at Angkor Wat before taking a ride for another four kilometer [to see another wonder of Siem Reap [called Angkor Thom, [meaning "big city"]]].*

(TEA01)

But after taking the time [to go sightseeing [around Ubon Ratchathani] [on a tricycle]], I became convinced that you should not overlook this charming city.

(TEA08)

The difference between TEA and BEA in the construction of non-finite adverbial clauses, here, conforms to other types of non-finite clauses (i.e. *ed*-clauses as noun postmodifiers and non-finite complement clauses). It is common for non-finite clauses in TEA to be long and complicated, while this characteristic tends to be avoided in BEA. As well as other non-finite clauses, lengthy and complicated non-finite adverbial clause could be firmly mentioned as being influenced from Thai language and communication norms.

In conclusion to the section of complex sentences, the higher number of complex sentences in TEA than in BEA can be associated to a higher preference for clauses as units that provide additional information: both as noun modifiers and sentence modifiers. In TEA, complicated structure of complex sentences is common. In one complex sentence, a number of dependent clauses can be added and this is very common for Thai English. Moreover, dependent clauses in TEA, in their own unit, can generally have complicated structure. They usually contain many other modifying units.

According to this characteristic, it can be interpreted that Thai writers' intention to provide additional information is very strong. They try to add information to all element levels, ranging from words to clauses. Furthermore, according to Quirk et al. (1985) and Biber et al. (1999), among all types of noun modifiers and modifying units, clauses are mentioned as the clearest one because they explicitly mention full information - including tense and aspect - that cannot be found in other types. Therefore, since Thai writers highly prefer clauses as units providing additional information, it can be interpreted that in a Thai writers' perception, clarity of information is important. As a result, complex sentences occur more often in TEA.

5.3.2 Simple sentences

Simple sentences are the second common types used in both TEA and BEA. However, the findings present that they are used sharply less in TEA than in BEA. And in comparison to complex sentences, it is found that even though simple sentences are the second common type in TEA, simple sentences are far less preferable than complex sentences.

Further investigation of simple sentences in TEA and BEA suggests that not only in terms of the frequency, but also construction of simple sentences in TEA and BEA also affirms differences.

The first thing that can obviously be observed is the length of the sentences. Most simple sentences in BEA are short, while most simple sentences in TEA are relatively longer than those in BEA. The following figures illustrate the frequency distribution of simple sentences with different lengths in TEA and BEA.

Figure 5.7 Length of simple sentences in TEA

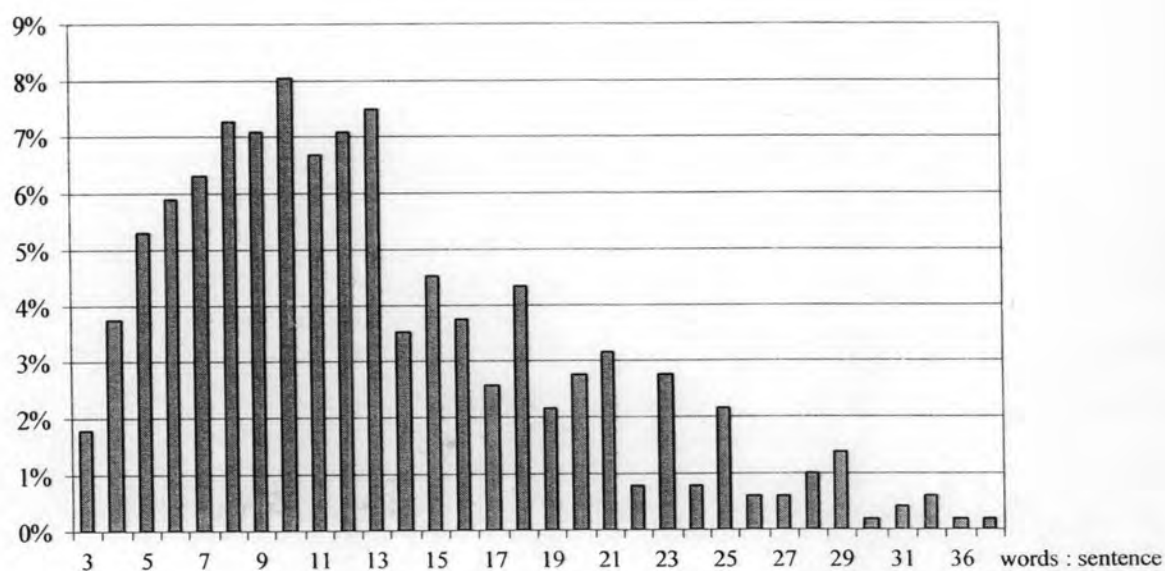


Figure 5.8 Length of simple sentences in BEA

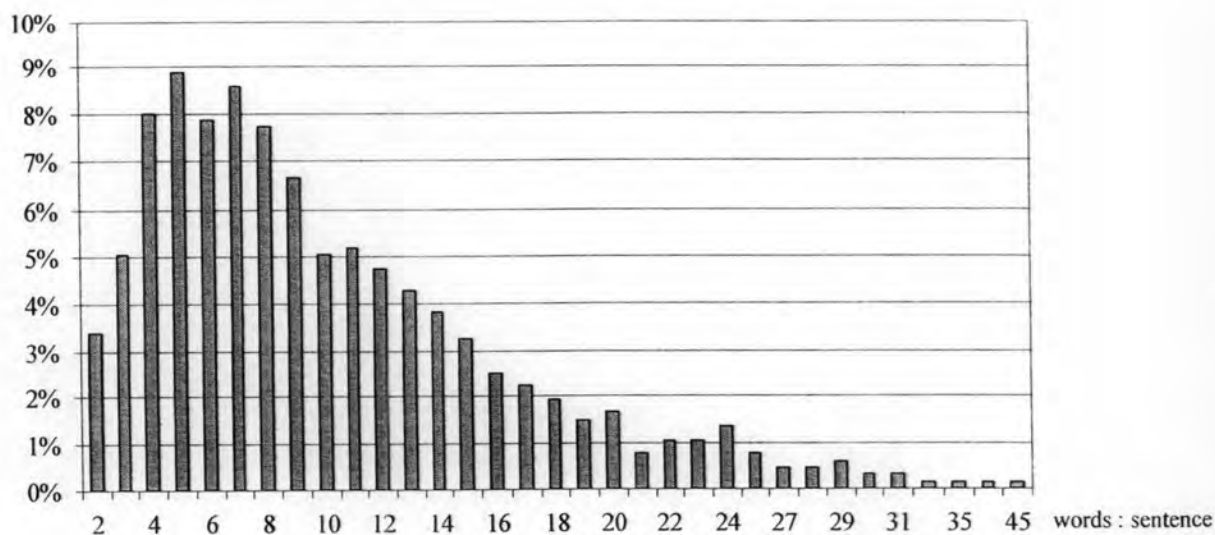
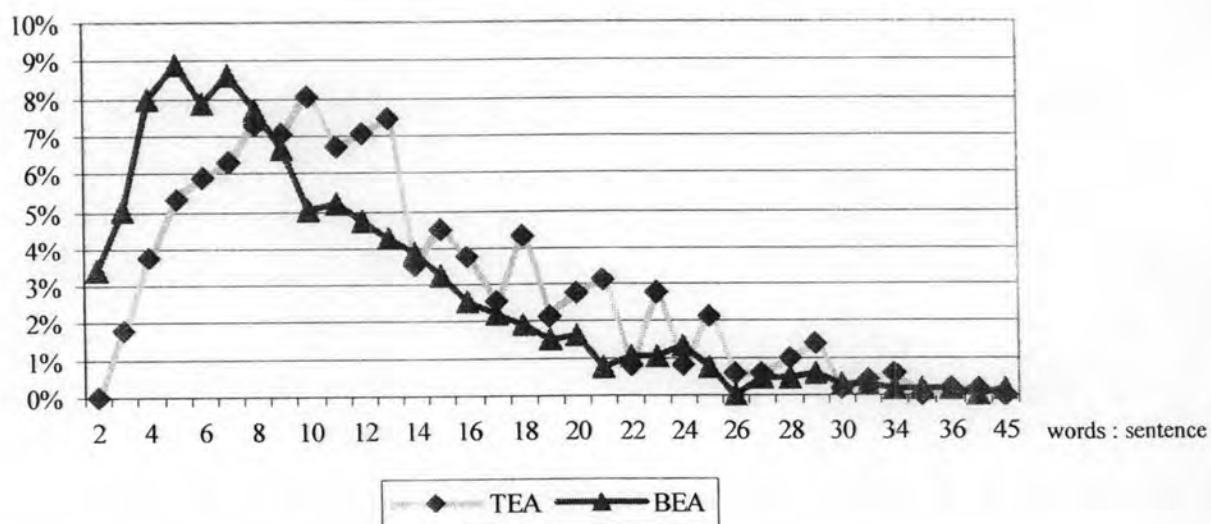


Figure 5.9 Comparison of length of simple sentences in TEA and BEA



According to the above figures, it can be seen that the frequency distributions of simple sentence length in TEA and BEA are rather dissimilar. The distribution of BEA leans towards the left side more than the distribution of TEA. Therefore, it denotes that most of simple sentences in BEA are shorter than those in TEA. When considering the mode, it is found that the length of 5 words per sentence is the most frequent length of simple sentence in BEA, while 10 words per sentence in

TEA. Also, to ensure the point, the five most common lengths of simple sentences in TEA and BEA are considered.

Table 5.4 The first five highest frequencies in the distribution of the length (words per sentence) of simple sentences in TEA and BEA

Rank	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
TEA	10	13	8	9 and 12	9 and 12
BEA	5	7	4	6	8

The information in table 5.3 strongly confirms that most of simple sentences in TEA are longer than most of them in BEA. The average length of simple sentences in TEA can be said as ranging from eight to thirteen words, while in BEA the average length ranges from four to eight words.

In terms of construction, short simple sentences in BEA generally consist of only the basic elements of a clause: Subject Verb (Object) (Complement). Sometimes, a short adverbial like word can be added and it does not make that sentence much longer. Subjects and objects of simple sentences are in forms of pronouns, proper nouns, or simple noun phrase mostly without open-system modifiers.

e.g. *Only one man survived.* (BEA09)

Today the sea was quiet. (BEA14)

New Mexico really is something else. (BEA12)

Naturally, the old-timers are unhappy. (BEA11)

In contrast, in TEA, short simple sentences, as in BEA, are occasionally observed. There are two general cases that short simple sentences are used in TEA.

First, they are used when descriptive information of the topic discussed in the short simple sentence has already been provided in the preceding sentence(s).

e.g. Despite the crowds, I walked quietly until I saw something glowing in the fading sunlight. *It was Tokyo Tower.*

(TEA11)

From the ancient times, there has been one particular city on the vast mainland of China that all people, from emperors, aristocrats, and philosophers, down to common folks wish to visit at least once in their life time. *Hangzhou is its name.*

(TEA04)

In TEA, it seems like when writers aim to introduce a new thing; they have to provide some clues before getting to the point. The clues are usually presented in preceding complex sentence(s) containing clausal modifiers. After clues are available, the point of focus is captured in a short simple sentence. This manner of Thai writers can be interpreted as an indirect style of writing in Thai English.

Second, short simple sentences are used when they provide real facts in which further decorating information should not be added.

e.g. *At present, the main tower is 5 stories high.* (TEA11)

Doi Pa Hom Pok is 2,285 metres above sea level. (TEA03)

Apart from short simple sentences, simple sentences longer than the above examples can also be found in BEA. Still they are not complicated. The factors that make those sentences longer are the use of compound nouns, nouns with modifiers, phrasal adverbials or all these three elements together.

e.g. *Firewood, maid service and all the facilities of Walkersons are provided.*

(BEA05)

And at the local supermarket, we found a charming fishmonger with impeccable English.

(BEA01)

It had a dressing room with a daybed, a walk-in wardrobe and two bathrooms.

(BEA12)

This construction of simple sentences seems to be rather common in TEA.

e.g. *An official from Mae Fang National Park (Mr. Khun) and his truck were waiting for us at the Fang market.*

(TEA03)

And at the end of the shopping street, you will find the temple's main building and a 5-storey pagoda.

(TEA12)

After a while I had had my fill of visiting Osaka in the rain.

(TEA13)

Simple sentences in TEA still maintain the feature of having lots of added information. Modifying units can be used in order to add further information to the whole sentence, some particular elements of the sentence, or even smaller parts of those elements. Moreover, it can be observed that noun phrases with many and/or long modifiers and long adverbials are preferable. According to this feature, it is common to find long simple sentences in TEA.

e.g. *Playing in the water with inner tubes has been one of the major sources of excitement and zest at Wangtakrai since the generation of our parents.*

(TEA10)

The first activity during the remaining half-day of a daylong drizzle was an excursion on Koh Yao Noi Island for a geographical overview.

(TEA06)

On the way to campsite, we were stunned by a vast area of purple flowers along both sides of the path with pine trees as the beautiful backdrop.

(TEA15)

In TEA, simple sentences may contain many long units within a sentence. Also, it seems that long units can occur in any position of the sentence. Contrastively, in BEA, simple sentences with this length can only sometimes be observed. In BEA, long simple sentences usually contain only one lengthy unit. Moreover, that long unit always occurs lastly in the sentence and mostly it is non-restrictive.

e.g. *Even greater vistas are found at **Plover Cove Country Park in the north-east of the Territories, one of the most sparsely populated and unspoilt areas in all Hong Kong.***

(BEA05)

*Hoteliers and local tour operators have been slow off the mark in organizing trips to **areas of natural beauty such as the pristine cloud forest along the slopes of the dormant volcano Mombacho, the idyllic island clusters in the middle of Lake Nicaragua and the perfectly circular crater lake at Apoyo.***

(BEA04)

In conclusion, besides the difference in preference for simple sentences in TEA and BEA, it can be stated that the ways simple sentences are constructed are also different. Most of simple sentences in BEA are rather short. On the contrary, in

TEA, most of simple sentences are noticeably long. Still, with simple sentences, Thai writers keep showing their preference in providing lots of additional information.

5.3.3 Compound and compound-complex sentences

These two types of sentence constructions are put together for discussion in this section because they seem to share some characteristics. First in terms of preference, these two constructions occur less frequently in both TEA and BEA. Second in terms of constructions, compound and compound-complex sentences comprise more than one main clause.

By comparison between TEA and BEA, it can be seen that compound and compound-complex sentences are used more often in BEA. Furthermore, in BEA, these two types take larger shares among all types than in TEA. It can be perceived that although Thai writers prefer to provide lots of information within sentences, having more than one main topic in a sentence is not their favourable method. Rather, Thai writers usually discuss one main focus in one sentence and add more details. Therefore, higher frequency of complex sentences and lengthy simple sentences in TEA than in BEA can be observed, rather than compound and compound-complex sentences.

In terms of the length, compound and compound-complex sentences do not seem to be much different. For compound sentences in TEA, the average length ranges from 13 to 19 words per sentence with the mode of 13 words per sentence. Meanwhile, in BEA, the average length ranges from 13 to 19 with the mode of 14 words per sentence. For compound-complex sentences in TEA, the average length ranges from 19 to 26 words per sentence with the mode of 23 words per sentence. And in BEA, the average length ranges from 20 to 27 with the mode of 20 words per sentence.

Further examination on constructions of compound and compound-complex sentences in TEA and BEA shows that there is no exact distinction. It is interesting that compound and compound-complex sentences in TEA do not display a higher number of modifying units than in BEA, as can be generally observed in complex and simple sentences.

5.3.3.1 Compound sentences

An explanation to compound sentences might be that generally when two or more main clauses are combined, they usually have some shared features, such as subject, verb, or some elements in the clauses. Thus, elements in the following clause which are similar to those in the preceding main clause are normally replaced by pronouns or eliminated. This characteristic of compound main clauses may reduce opportunity for modifying units to be added.

e.g. *The boat not only moved slowly to its destination but also reached beatitude.*

(TEA04)

The temple was restored in the reign of the King Boromma Tri Lokanat and again in the reign of King Boromma Gosa.

(TEA05)

Monkeys sit in tree, eat cashew nuts and throw them to friends.

(BEA14)

After a sweaty half-hour, I unshouldered my bag, took off my clothes and stepped into the water.

(BEA03)

Furthermore, even in compound sentences where the combined main clauses do not share the same elements, most of the sentences in TEA tend to have few modifying units. The construction is just like when two short simple sentences are combined.

e.g. *Railey Beach is still beautiful with soft sand while the limestone mountains are the perfect backdrop behind.*

(TEA02)

The Tone Le Sab cover a large area of Cambodia's five provinces and its huge size can be seen in the world map too.

(TEA01)

Moreover, in terms of the information combined in a compound sentence, it is found that in both TEA and BEA additive compound sentences ('and' compounding) occur much more often than contrastive compound sentences ('but' compounding).² When comparing across the two corpora, the data states only some slight difference.

Table 5.5 Proportion of additive and contrastive compound sentences in TEA and BEA

	TEA	BEA	Difference
Additive	84%	78%	6%
Contrastive	16%	22%	6%

The proportion of additive and contrastive compound sentences in TEA and BEA exhibits only 6 percent difference. Therefore, it can be concluded that occurrences of additive and contrastive compound sentences in TEA and BEA are similar.

5.3.3.2 Compound-complex sentences

Findings from the analysis of compound-complex sentences in TEA and BEA are rather interesting. Compound-complex sentences are the only type that British writers show complicated construction as Thai writers do in complex and simple sentences. Therefore, even though in TEA compound-complex sentences are lengthy and complicated, as usual, their constructions are not different from those in BEA.

e.g. *Actually the temple was originally used as the royal residence in the reign of King Ramathibodi I, but later, in the reign of King Boromma Tri Lokanat, the royal residence was rebuilt in another area and a temple was founded on the old royal residence site [to perform important rituals].*

(TEA05)

So despite the language barrier, I had a good time [chatting with local people] and I learned [that the community I was visiting had settled there for more than 150 years].

(TEA01)

[Almost everywhere you go], you'll find bicycles for rent for around £5 a day, and even the most velophobic visitors will enjoy [pedalling from one beach to the next along pine-shaded paths and through fields of poppies and sunflowers].

(BEA12)

At dusk, [after fresh fish curry from the dining hall, and a beer from the only bar in the islands], we sat out on the beach in wicker armchairs [watching the swathe of the Milky Way grow bright as European moonlight]; and it became clear [that, in a good way, I had fallen among fanatics, among a small cult of Lakshadweep devotees].

(BEA06)

Moreover, when two or more main clauses are combined, still Thai writers prefer to add some dependent clauses as modifying units. Therefore, the sentences become compound-complex. This may be a cause that makes the proportion of compound-complex sentences about twice as high as that of compound sentences (11% and 6% respectively).

By comparison between TEA and BEA in terms of occurrences, both compound sentences and compound-complex sentences occur less in TEA than in

BEA (5% less for compound and 4% less for compound-complex sentences). However, in terms of construction, the two types of sentences in TEA and BEA do not exhibit any noticeable difference.

According to the detailed analysis, it is found that the construction of compound sentences in TEA and in BEA is similar in that they are quite simple. They seldom contain long noun phrases with words and phrases as modifiers, long modifying units, or many modifying units. It should be noted that compound sentences are the only sentence type in TEA that rarely have complex construction.

On the contrary, compound-complex sentences are the only type in BEA that commonly shows complicated construction. Thus, this point makes their construction similar to those in TEA. Compound-complex sentences are found to be used in BEA when the writers want to give descriptive narration of activities and/or settings and finish that topic within one time. This finding shows that even though in general British writers do not prefer complicated structure or lengthy sentences; it does not mean that they do not use them at all. In fact, it depends on purposes of the writers. However, the number of complicated sentence construction in BEA (i.e. compound-complex sentences) is not high enough; it takes less proportion than those showing simple construction. Hence, it cannot be recognized as characteristic of British English.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter provides discussion on findings of sentence constructions obtained from TEA and BEA, together with their examples and explanation.

In the first section, information on frequency of occurrence is presented. It is noted that the occurrences of each type of sentences in TEA and BEA are significantly different. In TEA, the occurrence of complex sentences is extremely high, both by comparison among other types in TEA and with the occurrence of complex sentences in BEA.

High occurrence of complex sentences can be accounted for high preference for clausal modifying units: noun modifiers, complement clauses, and adverbial clauses. Moreover, it is found that modifying clauses in sentences in TEA commonly contain layers of other modifiers. Thus, complex sentences in Thai

English can be claimed to have complicated construction and they are usually long. Complicated structures are also common in simple sentences and compound-complex sentences in TEA, but uncommon in compound sentences.

For BEA, sentences of most types do not possess complicated structures, except compound-complex sentences. Therefore, in general, the construction of compound-complex sentences in BEA is not quite different from those in TEA.

In conclusion, it can be claimed that using the large number of complex sentences is another distinctive characteristic of Thai English. In addition, sentences with a lot of descriptive information can also be acknowledged as property of Thai English sentences.

Furthermore, the findings also point out that the Thai writers' indirect style of writing can be shown at the sentence level. Therefore, this can be regarded as potential evidence to prove that Thai English is different from British English in terms of writing styles.

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Note:

1. The three most commonly used averages in statistics are the mode, the median, and the mean. The mode is the most frequent value in a distribution. The median is the exact midpoint of the distribution. The mean is an average value determined by adding up all the values and then dividing the sum by the total number of samples. (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2000)

In this study, mode is applied because the aim is to discuss the most frequent values occur in the data. The common average, mean, is not selected because the distribution is skewed, the mean is then influenced by the extreme values.

2. 'and' and 'but' compounding are the major types of compound sentences. In this study, 'or' compounding seldom occurs and it takes less than 1% share of all. Thus, it is not included in the discussion.