

THAI *cà?*: WHERE
TAM MEET

PRANG THIENGBURANATHUM

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PREVIOUS STUDIES

- There is no agreement among the previous studies.
- absolute future tense marker (Scovel 1970, Supanvanich 1973)
- relative future tense marker (Kanchanawan 1978)
- prospective aspect (Boonyapatipark 1983)
- challengeability marker - i.e., the degree of acceptability as a fact (Iwasaki and Ingkaphirom 2005)
- modal marker (Srioutai 2006)

SEPARATE BOUNDARIES?

- Previous studies tend to analyze the Thai language based on Euro-centric frameworks.
- Thai is unlike English in terms of temporal conceptualization. We cannot simply adopt TAM notions uncritically.
- Aspect, together with tense and modality, may not present themselves as separate and neatly delineated categories (Dahl and Velupillai 2005: 266).

EVENT RELATION

- Events cannot be fully understood without the concept of “**relation**”.
- The word *cà?* conveys **the relation of e1 causing or automatically resulting in e2.**



Figure 1: Relation of contingency

- The emergence of e2 is contingent on the existence of e1. The dotted arrow represents the potential.
- By this definition, it is not necessary for e2 to actually take place.

CONTINGENCY RELATION

- (1) Ref: *The Happiness of Kati* (2007: 36)

<i>p^hii</i>	<i>T^həŋ</i>	<i>mii</i>	<i>samùt</i>	<i>k^hâu</i>	<i>kaaj</i>	
older sibling	Thong	have	notebook	be paired with	body	

<i>p^həə</i>	<i>hě̃n</i>	<i>nók</i>		<i>kôə</i>	<i>cà?</i>	<i>râaŋ</i>	<i>pen</i>	<i>p^hâap</i>	<i>wáj</i>
when	see	bird		CONJ	BE TO	sketch	COP	picture	keep

'Brother Thong had a drawing notebook with him all the time. Everytime (he) saw birds, he would sketch them to keep.'



e1: see birds



e2: sketch pictures

PAST HABITUAL?

- (2) Ref: *Women to Women TV Show* (6 June 2008)

wan	t ^h ammadaa	t̃in	tii		hâa	kwàa		
day	normal	wake up	o'clock (morning)		five	than		
cà?	tèŋ tua	hâj	lûuksăaw		sòŋ	k ^l în	róttâu	paj rooŋrian
BE TO	dress	give	daughter		send	descend	bus	go school

cèt	moon		kôo	cà?	paj	sòŋ	lûuk ^h aaj	t ^l îi	rooŋrian
seven	o'clock		CONJ	BE TO	go	send	son	at	school

'Weekdays, (I) wake up around fiveish. (I) will dress (my) daughter, send her to the van to school. At 7 o'clock, (I) will take my son to school.'

e1: wake up around 5

e2: dress my daughter,
send her to school van

e1: At 7 a.m.

e2: take my son to school

CONTINGENCY RELATION

I propose that *cà?* expresses an effect of contingency relation ($e1 \text{----} > e2$), which has developed into different uses:


- 1. condition**
- 2. temporal relation**
- 3. reality-irreality.**

1. CONDITION

- It is found that the condition usage of *cà?* is preferred in the following constructions.

ADV clause + (NP) *cà?* VP (ex. (1)-(2))

ADV phrase + (NP) *cà?* VP (ex (2))



adv of freq.
(e.g. 'every day')
repetition
(e.g. 'Saturday')

COMPARE

- (3a) Ref: *The Happiness of Kati* (2007: 63)

<i>p^həð</i>	<i>rian</i>	<i>còp</i>		<i>mêɛ</i>	<i>kôð</i>	<i>ráp</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>pen</i>	<i>p^húuc^huâj</i>
when	study	end		mother	CONJ	take	come	COP	assistant

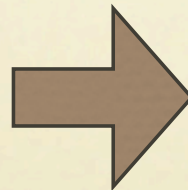
'When (Aunt Ta) graduated, mom (I) then took (her) as an assistant.'

- (3b)

<i>p^həð</i>	<i>rian</i>	<i>còp</i>		<i>mêɛ</i>	<i>kôð</i>	<i>cà?</i>	<i>ráp</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>pen</i>	<i>p^húuc^huâj</i>
when	study	end		mother	CONJ	BE TO	take	come	COP	assistant

'When (Aunt Ta) graduates, mom (I) will take her as an assistant.'

condition use of cà?



if-clause

- (4a) *cʰǎn càʔ ʔðək kamləŋ kaaj tʰúk wan*
 1S BE TO do exercise every day
 'I will do exercise every day.'
- (4b) *tʰúk wan cʰǎn càʔ ʔðək kamləŋ kaaj*
 every day 1S BE TO do exercise
 'Everyday, I will do exercise.'

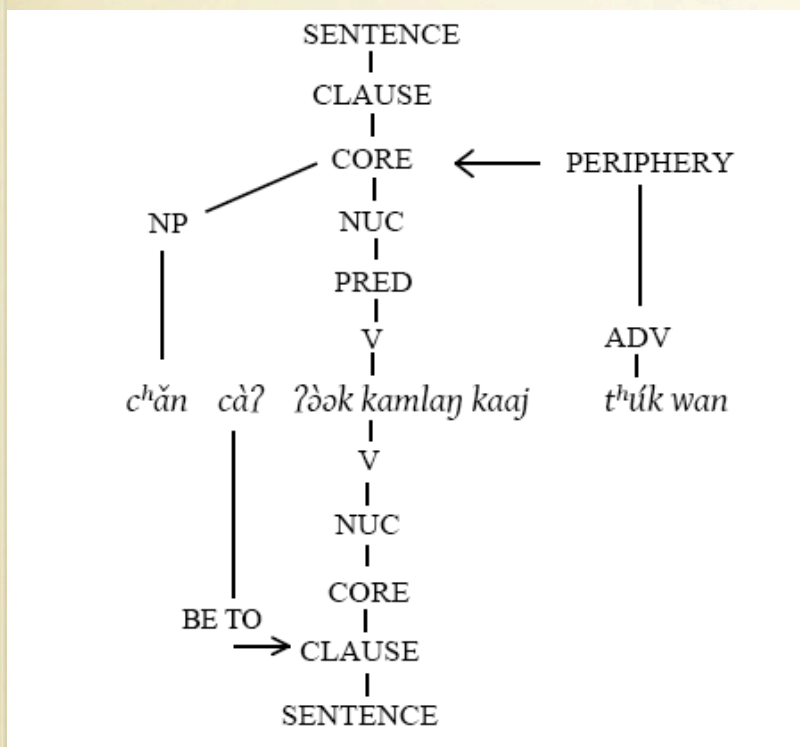


Figure 2: The syntactic structure of (4a)
 (future reading)

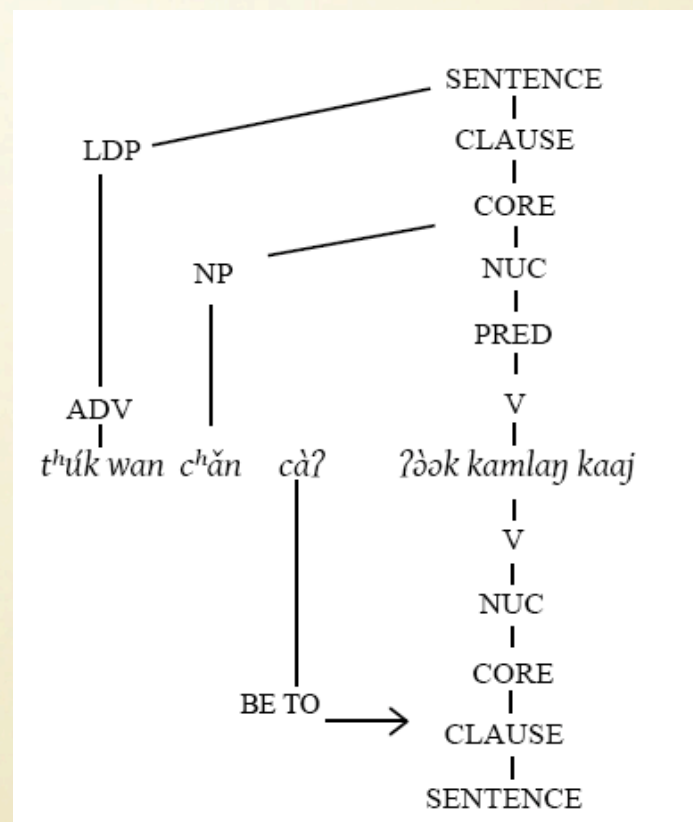


Figure 3: The syntactic structure of (4b)
 (condition reading)

2. TEMPORAL RELATION

- The relation of contingency can be defined in terms of temporal relation.
- Thai, although, is tenseless, it requires the notion of temporal location or **reference time**.
- Locating a situation in time involves **three times** and **two relations** (Reichenbach 1947, reprinted in 2003; Klein 2004)
- The times are **time of situation** (T-SIT), **time of utterance** (TU), and **topic time** (TT).

TOPIC TIME (TT)

- The TT is the time under discussion (Klein 2004).
- In conversation, it is typically the TU, but it is not necessary. The TT can be linguistically explicit, but it is usually implicit and inferred from the context. To illustrate:

TT is explicit

- (i) At 5 p.m., my mother was cooking. (TT = 5 p.m.)
- (ii) What did you notice when you looked into the room? (TT = the time of witness)

TT is implicit

- (i) I didn't turn off the headlights! (TT = the time before getting off the car)
- (ii) (I smell food) Were you eating? (TT = the time within the recent past)

TEMPORAL RELATION (CONT.)

- T-SIT is temporally subsequent to TT.

e1----->e2

TT-----> T-SIT = (TT_T-SIT)

- (5) Ref: *News (CU Thai Concordance)*

man jêek k^hiâw p^hróom sòŋ siǎŋ k^hùu k^hamraam jàaŋ nâaklua
3S separate teeth and send sound threat roar fiercely

kðəŋ cà? wîŋ taam p^hákp^húak loŋ paj naj pàa p^hàj
before BE TO run follow group descend go in forest bamboo
'He bared his teeth and roared fiercely before following his herd down to the bamboo forest.'

TT (bared /roared) -----> T-SIT (followed his herd)

NO IMPLICATION OF FUTURITY

- There is no implication of futurity in the past (no event falls outside the narrative sequence).
- When the relation between TT_T-SIT and TU is not established, the temporal relation of *cà?* can be employed in conjoining two events [NP_i VP1 + *kòon* (NP_i) *cà?* VP2].
- It simply indicates that **one event precedes the other** – i.e., e1 ---> e2 (TT_T-SIT).

IMPLICATION OF FUTURITY

- In Thai, a futurity meaning arises when *cà?* is grounded with respect to the speech event or TU. Since the relation between TT_T-SIT and TU is not inherently encoded in *cà?*, *cà?* can occur not only in the time frame of future, but also in the non-future.
- This is distinct from the English *will* which denotes the temporal relation between TU and TT (TU_ TT) - *I will go to Chiang Mai tomorrow*).

DIFFERENT TEMPORAL REPRESENTATIONS OF *cà?*

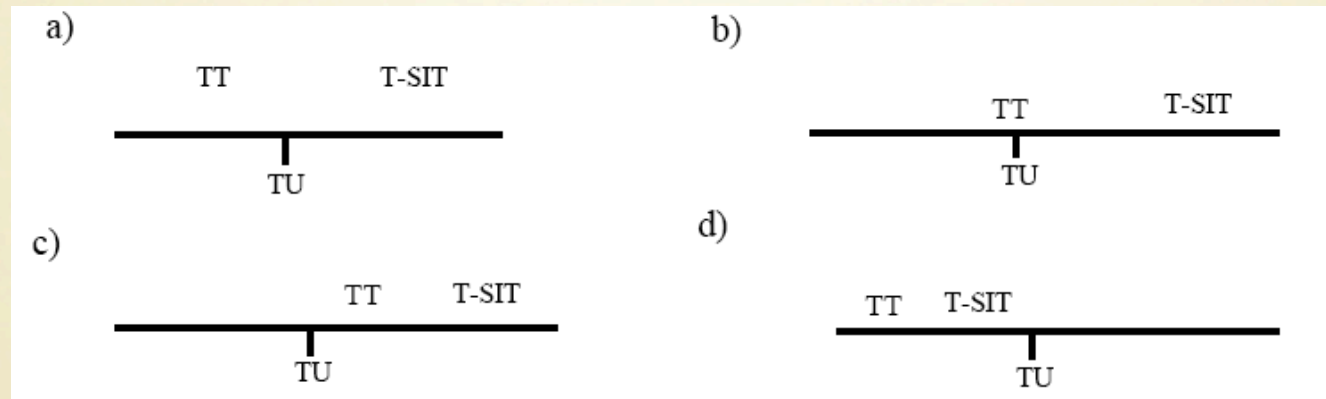


Figure 4: Temporal representations of *cà?*

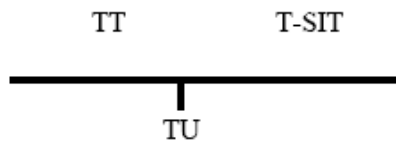
Figure 4a-c illustrate futurity in the future, Figure 4d futurity in the non-future. Notice that TT (of *cà?*) is not necessarily located in the future.

- (6) Ref: *Nick and Pim* (2005: 104)

miâ waan siin *kεε* *sòŋ* *tʰooralêek* *maa* *tʰiŋ* ||
 the day before yesterday 3S send telegraph come reach

wâa cà? *maa* *ciŋ* | *ciŋ* | *wâa cà?* *ʔðək* *dəəntʰaaŋ* *pʰrûŋni* *lè?*
 say BE TO come real REDUP | say BE TO exit travel tomorrow Pt
 'The day before yesterday, she (Madam) sent a telegraph (to me). (She) says that she would come for real and that (she) would start the trip tomorrow.'

a)

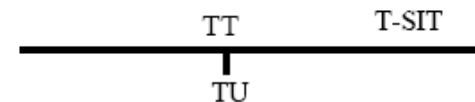


TT = time of telegraph - the day before yesterday

- (7) Ref: <http://topicstock.pantip.com>

càət *càət* *pʰǒm* *cà?* *loŋ*
 stop stop 1S.M BE TO descend
 'Stop, stop! I will get out (of the car).'

b)

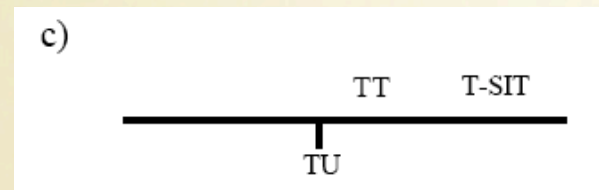


TT = TU

- (8) Ref: *Nick and Pim* (2005: 109)

ʔuá	tèŋ tua	sèt	kôo	càʔ	ʔðək	paj
1S	dress	finish	CONJ	BE TO	exit	go

‘(When) I finish getting dressed, I will go out.’



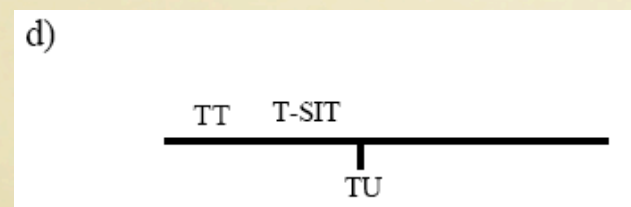
TT = T of finish getting dressed

- (9) Ref: *The Happiness of Kati* (2007: 67)

narrator	Kat ^h t	p ^h râm	krasɿp	wâa	Kat ^h t	jùu	troŋ nîi	jùu	kàp	mêe
	Kati	keep saying	whisper	COMP	Kati	stay	right here	stay	with	mom

Kati	léew	raw	sǎoŋ	k ^h on	càʔ	mâj	jêek	càak	kan	ʔik
	then	1P	two	CLF	BE TO	NEG	seperate	from	each other	again

‘Kati kept telling (mom) that Kati stayed right here, stayed with mom, and both of us would never be apart from each other again.’



TT = T of Kati's speech

- The future is obviously different from the past. The past is “immutable”. The future, in contrast, is uncertain in that any events anticipated to occur might not occur (Comrie 1985: 43).
- The future, in other words, is determined by our present actions. That is to say, future events cannot simply be uttered without any trigger.
- For example, in (6), the visit is anticipated to occur because the speaker has been informed by telegram. In (7), the speaker must have an intention to get out of the bus first before he expresses it.

3. REALITY VS IRREALITY

- Since temporal usage of *cà?* indicates that an event is expected, it is associated with the realis-irrealis notion.

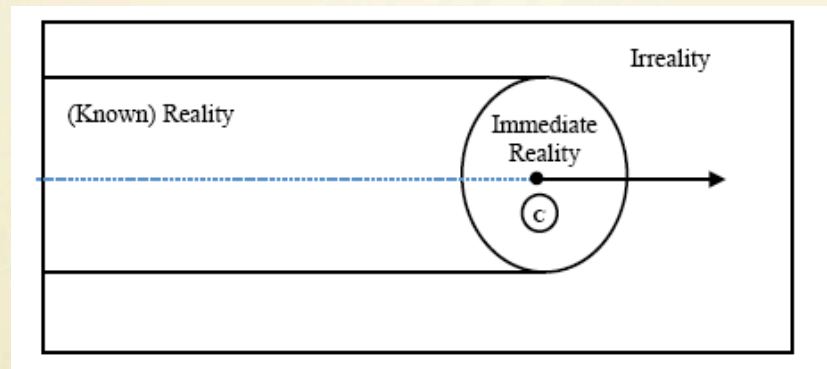


Figure 5: Basic epistemic model (Langacker 1991: 242)

- Based on the realis-irrealis contrast, events can be classified into two main types: **realized/actualized events** and **non-realized/non-actualized events**.

- As such, **e1** can be considered as a **realized event** (belonging to the actual world), and **e2** as a **nonrealized event** (belonging to a possible but planned world).
- The existence of e1 triggers the potentiality of e2 (i.e., e2 might occur). The function of this usage of *cà?* is thus to tie the two worlds together.
- (10) Ref: *The Happiness of Kati* (2007: 93)

<i>mêe</i>	<i>bòk</i>	<i>wâa</i>	<i>luŋ</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>jùu</i>	<i>duâj</i>	<i>dâaj</i>		
mother	say	COMP	uncle	come	stay	with	able		
e1						e2			
<i>sǎnjaa</i>	<i>tàaj</i>	<i>tàaj</i>	<i>naa</i>	<i>naa</i>	<i>wâa</i>	<i>cà?</i>	<i>p^haa</i>	<i>paj</i>	<i>t^hiâw</i>
promise	various				COMP	BE TO	take	go	travel

'(Your) mom told me (uncle) that I could come to stay with (her). (She) promised various things such as that (she) would take (me) out.'

- The actualized event has seeds of some non-actualized situation which might well be prevented from happening by intervening factors.

- (11) Ref: www.bloggang.com

	e1		e2					
p ^h əə	k ^h iǎn	cà?	sət	nət		lùt	sá	ɲán
when	write	BE TO	finish	Internet connection		disconnect	Pt	Pt

'When (I) had almost finished writing, the Internet connection was disconnected, just like that.'

- (12) Ref: nat-chi.exteen.com/20090728/j-cerry

	e1		e2				
Nikkîi	kin	cà?	mòt	caan	rêek	lá	
Nicky	eat	BE TO	empty	plate	first	Pt	

'Nicky almost finished her first plate.'

The key is e2 is not actualized at the topic time.

- The function of *cà?* does not simply indicate that the speaker construes the event as part of irreality, but also indicates a relation between known reality and irreality.
- Like most conceptual distinctions, the realis-irrealis distinction describes a continuum. That is to say, it is a matter of degree of actuality.
- I propose that the Thai basic ways of expressing epistemic distance as follows:

REALIS-IRREALIS CONTINUUM

- REALITY (zero form)
- NON-IMMEDIATE IRREALITY *cà?* 'BE TO'
- IMMEDIATE IRREALITY
- There are different ways to express immediate irreality.

e.g.	<i>kamlaj cà?</i>	'about to'
	<i>cuan cà?</i>	'about to'
	<i>klâj cà?</i>	'about to'
	<i>diăw cà?</i>	'in a moment'
	<i>chák cà?</i>	'begin to'
	<i>kiàp cà?</i>	'almost, nearly'

- (13) Ref: *Nick and Pim* (2005: 80)

taa	kiàp	cà?	bət	tʰáj	sǎŋ	kʰâaŋ
eye	almost	BE TO	blind	both	two	side

'Both of (his) eyes almost went blind.'

immediate irrealis vs. imminence of an occurrence

- (14) Ref: *Thai National Corpus*

duaŋ ʔaatʰít	kláj	cà?	láp	càak	kʰəpʰáa
sun	be close	BE TO	disappear	from	horizon

'The sun was close to disappearing from the horizon.'

- (15) Ref: *Thai Concordance*

man	kamlaŋ	cà?	taaj
3S	PROG	BE TO	die

'It is about to die.'

MODALITY ISSUES

- It is true that a *cà?* clause can indicate intention, predictability, willingness, and insistence. For example, it is quite clear that (16) involves the intention or desire of the speaker, while (17) indicates predictability.
- (16) Ref: *Four Reigns (CU Thai Concordance)*

<i>c^hǎn</i>	<i>cà?</i>	<i>tii</i>	<i>ranâat^hèek</i>
1S	BE TO	hit	alto xylophone

'I will play the alto xylophone.'

- (17) Ref: www.newsmit.com

<i>p^haajú</i>	<i>cà?</i>	<i>t^halòm</i>	<i>p^hâak tâaj</i>	<i>ʔik</i>	<i>râap</i>
storm	BE TO	collapse	the South	another	round

'The storm will hit the South one more time.'

- Modality is partly concerned with the opinion and attitude of the speaker. That is to say, modality is related to mental processes. Since e1 (e.g., (16)) involves the speaker's cognitive process, namely, intention, it sounds as if *cà?* functions as a modal marker.
- I suggest that the modal-like notions such as intention and predictability are not intrinsic to the meaning of *cà?*. The word *cà?* does not inherently contain these modality meanings. What it has is the **preliminary stage (e1)**. Its specification (e.g. intention, prediction) is pragmatically/linguistically derived.

- This primary stage (e1) can be expressed explicitly via verbs of cognition (e.g., ‘think’, ‘intend’, ‘decide’, ‘want’, ‘fear’), as exemplified below.
- (18) Ref: *Short stories (CU Thai Concordance)*

kʰǎw kʰít cǎʔ paj jaŋ pʰàp pàət màj jâan tʰanǒn tʰàtpaj
 3S think **BE TO** go to pub open new area road next
 ‘He thinks of going to a new pub on the next street.’

Historically, it appears that *cǎʔ* (or *cǎ*, an alternate pronunciation) is related to a verb *càk* ‘to know’.

- (19) Ref: *Short stories (CU Thai Concordance)*

<i>pʰǒm</i>	<i>tâŋcaj</i>	<i>càʔ</i>	<i>sǐi</i>	<i>tʰiɯi</i>	<i>sǐi</i>	<i>cəə</i>	<i>jàk</i>	<i>sàk</i>	<i>kʰriâŋ</i>
1S,M	intend	BE TO	buy	TV	colour	monitor	giant	just	CLF

'I intend to buy a big color TV.'

- (20) Ref: *Short stories (CU Thai Concordance)*

<i>Pʰannaraaj</i>	<i>kəə</i>	<i>tàtsǐncaj</i>	<i>càʔ</i>	<i>ruâm</i>	<i>hǎə</i>	<i>lɔŋ</i>	<i>roŋ</i>	<i>kàp</i>	<i>kʰǎw</i>
Phannaraaj	CONJ	decide	BE TO	get	married	to	3S		

'Phannaraaj thus decided to get married to him.'

- (21) Ref: *Nick and Pim (2005: 13)*

<i>kʰǎw</i>	<i>jàak</i>	<i>càʔ</i>	<i>jǐn</i>	<i>kʰəəj</i>	<i>tʰəə</i>	<i>jùu</i>	<i>tʰěew</i>	<i>nán</i>	<i>tèe</i>	<i>mâj</i>	<i>klâa</i>
3S	want	BE TO	stand	wait	3S	stay	area	that	but	NEG	dare

'He wanted to stand and wait for her in that area but did not dare to.'

- Syntactically, *cà?* behaves differently from the epistemic modals.
- Only *cà?* can precede the numeral phrase.

- (22) Ref: *Free conversation*

<i>p^hðə</i>	<i>rúucàk</i>	<i>k^hǎw</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>cà?</i>	<i>sǎamsɿp</i>	<i>píi</i>
father	know	3S	come	BE TO	thirty	year

'I (father) have known him for almost thirty years.'

- Only *cà?* can occur after *kamlaŋ*.

- (23) Ref: *Nick and Pim (2005: 46)*

<i>naaj</i>	<i>k^hǒŋ</i>	<i>chǎn</i>	<i>kamlaŋ</i>	<i>cà?/*ɿàat/*k^hoŋ</i>	<i>paj</i>	<i>t^hamjaan</i>
master	POSS	1S	PROG	BE TO	go	work

'My Master is about to go to work.'

CONCLUSIONS

- Thai *cà?* is a polysemous word, which appears to have evolved from the verb *càk* ‘to know’.
- I show that *cà?* expresses an effect of contingency relation ($e1 \text{ ---} > e2$), which has developed into different uses: condition, temporal relation, and reality-irreality.
- It is neither an aspect marker, future marker, nor a modal marker.