

A Comparative Study of Syntactic Structure Between English and Burmese Languages

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Received March 12, 2022; **Revised** April 16, 2022; **Accepted** May 26, 2022

Abstract

This article aimed to study a comparative study of syntactic structure between English and Burmese languages. The objectives of the study were 1) to study the syntactic structure in English; 2) to study the syntactic structure in Burmese; and 3) to compare the syntactic structure in English and Burmese Languages. This study was a documentary as well as qualitative research in nature studying and comparing syntactic structures in English and Burmese languages. As a documentary and qualitative research, the research methods would be used from collecting data. The collected data which would be analyzed and categorized from the primary sources of books published and unpublished, thesis, and secondary sources of the articles, journals and online sources.

The results of the study were as follows:

A comparative study of syntactic structures in English and Burmese languages showed that the results of the studies illustrate the structure of sentences by using a syntactic approach. And they were mentioned to clearly comprehend about the study of syntactic structures by portraying tables and the tree diagrams for those who learn English and Burmese languages in comparison. As for the structure of the sentence in English contained in this thesis was divided into four sentences, namely (1) simple sentences, a simple sentence consists of a single independent clause with no dependent clause. (2) Compound sentences, a compound sentence consists of multiple independent clauses with no dependent clauses. These clauses are joined together by using coordinating conjunctions; for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so, punctuation or both. (3) Complex sentences, a complex sentence consists of one or more independent clause with at least one dependent clause. A dependent clause starts with a subordinating conjunction. Examples: that, because, although, where, since, as, if, as long as. And (4) Compound-complex sentences, compound-complex sentence consists of multiple independent clauses, at least one of which has at least one dependent clause.

The structure of the sentence in Burmese contained in this thesis was divided into two sentences, namely (1) simple sentences, a simple sentence consists of only one clause which is called independent or main clause. This independent syntactic entity intends to convey a complete thought or meanings of an idea. Complex sentences contained an independent



clause and at least one de-pendent clause. An independent clause had the ability to stand alone as sentence which always makes a complete thought. A dependent clause cannot stand alone even though it had a subject and a verb. Especially, the dependent clauses have postpositional makers, particles and conjunctions to join two or more sentences. Example: /*ḍi*, *ko*, *ḥo*, *lô*, *mɛ*, *a khā*, *ka*, *hu*, *ḥo kyauñ*, *ḥō lɛ*/ etc.

The results of the studies about syntactic structures showed similarities and differences in both languages. It was designed not only for foreign learners who wish to learn Burmese language but for those who want to improve their capabilities in English.

Keywords: Comparative study; Syntactic structure; Burmese languages.

Introduction

A sentence is a group of words which is usually a grammatically complete statement. A sentence is basically a group of words which are tied together and convey an idea, even or description. The words in an English sentence have a certain order and rules regarding ways to either expand or shorten it. The boundaries of a sentence are easily recognized, as it begins with a capital letter and ends with a terminal punctuation mark (period, question mark or exclamation point). Farlex (2009) defined that sentence structure is the grammatical arrangement of words. When discussing about sentence structure, it is explained more deeply in syntax because syntax is often equated with the study of sentence structure. In linguistics, syntax (from Ancient Greek *syn*-, “together”, and *taxis*, “arrangement”) is the study of the principles and rules for constructing sentences in natural languages. In addition to referring to the discipline, the term syntax is also used to refer directly to the rules and principles that govern the sentence structure of any individual language. We learn syntax because it enables human beings to compose complete message. (Yun Friska Inrene Ginting, 2009:8)

Noun phrase consist minimally of a noun or pronoun, which acts as the head of the noun phrase, the head may be accompanied by dependent elements before or after it. Noun phrase are referring expressions and are used to refer to particular instances or general classes of people and things. Noun phrases typically function in the clause as subjects, objects, complements, and occasionally as adjuncts. (Ronald Carter and Michael McCarthy, 2016:310)

An adjective phrase consists of a single adjective or an adjective which is modified of complement. Adjective can be followed by complements, most commonly in the form of a prepositional phrases (in bold), or also by that- clause (in bold). Different adjective require complementation patterns.

A verb phrase consists of a main verb, which is the head of the phrase, any preceding auxiliary verbs, and any following Nps, PPs, adjps, or adv Ps that may be present. A verb phrase is what has been traditionally referred to as the predicate in sentence. (Ron Cowan, 2008:20)

Myanmar Language is the official language of Myanmar. It is also the native language of the Myanmar and related sub-ethnic groups of the Myanmar, as well as that of some ethnic

minorities in Myanmar like Mon. Myanmar Language is spoken by 32 million people as the first language and as the second language by 10 million people, particularly ethnic minorities in Myanmar and those in neighboring countries. Myanmar language is a tonal and pitch-register, largely monosyllabic and analytic language, with a Subject Object Verb (SOV) word order. The language uses the Myanmar script, derived from the Old Mon script and ultimately from the Brahmi script. The language is classified into two categories. One is formal, used in literary works, official publications, radio broadcasts, and formal speeches. The other is colloquial, used in daily conversation and spoken. This is reflected in the Myanmar words for "language": /sā/ refers to written, literary language, and /sa kà/ refers to spoken language. Therefore, Myanmar language can mean either /Myanmar sā/ (written Myanmar language), or /Myanmar sa kà/ (spoke Myanmar language). Much of the differences between formal and colloquial Myanmar language occur in grammatical particles and lexical items. Different particles (to modify nouns and verbs) are used in the literary form from those used in the spoken form.

For example, the postposition after nouns is /hni?/ at in formal Myanmar language and /hmā/ at in colloquial Myanmar language. The proposed system focuses on written Myanmar language.

This study has found that colloquial Burmese is spoken in many ways by changing places and using many kinds of words, both in phrases and clauses. The structure of the main clause in Burmese is subject- object- verb. The verb is placed at the end of the clause, and followed by a verb suffix. The position of the subject and object can be alternated: besides, there are 8 peripheries that modify main clauses. They are location, temporal, manner, instruments, beneficiary, accompanying actor, accompanying recipients and final particle.

There are 10 Burmese clauses that can be classified by main verbs. They are transitive clause, intransitive clause, ditransitive clause, descriptive clause, equational clause, motion clause, ambient clause, quotative clause, existential clause, and propulsion clause.

Regarding the phrase level, there are 2 types: noun phrase and verb phrase. Noun phrases must occur before verb. Their functions are to be the subject, object, time indication, place indication, or noun modifier. Noun phrase structures are of two types: the type that puts the modifier before the head noun, possessive adjective, determiner, the identified color adjective, or the identified size adjective, and the type that come after the head noun; the identified size adjective, numeral, classifiers or enumerative, and moreover, the identified color adjective, which can change places with the head noun.

Objectives of the Study

This study research has three objectives. They are as the following.

1. To study the syntactic structure in English.
2. To study the syntactic structure in Burmese.
3. To compare the syntactic structure in English and Burmese.



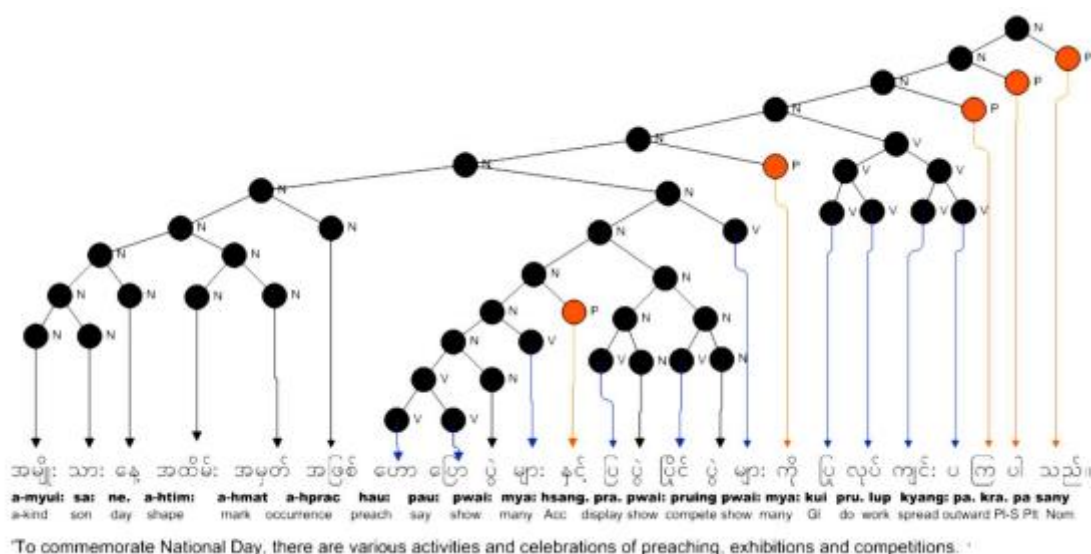
Literature Reviews

Comparative Study in Linguistics Nowadays, a comparative study can be applied to all fields of study and Linguistics is no exception. A study of more than one language in comparison or contrast with another has been common interest for sometimes particularly in the 18th century that they have led to the birth of fields like Comparative Linguistics. There are many bilingual researchers who come from one linguistic background and grow into another and are interested in comparative study of the languages they speak. This way, they seek to contribute to the linking points between them and, ultimately, between their speakers.

The analysis of two sample languages, such as English and Myanmar, from one or more aspects can lead to a better understanding of these languages. The outcome can be applied to translation and language teaching classes to facilitate their acquisition as a second or foreign language to the learners. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to demonstrate the syntactic features of English and Myanmar in comparison with regard to the similarities and differences in positions and arrangement based on linguistics.

Myanmar sentences used by native speakers in real situations are hardly the same basic and standard ones that are used in academic and formal environments such as language classes. In Myanmar, a real clause initiates with a massive combination of closely packed information embedded in bundles and chunks of additional words and particles through which the listener or reader is provided with clues and hints to come to maximum communicational possibility with the speaker or writer. This feature is spread and distributed, instead, throughout the whole sentence in English, in which the listener encounters each chunk with its specifically embedded information related to the role, meaning, and function of each component. But, there are some similarities and affiliations between English and Myanmar as two human languages although they belong to two different language families, Indo-European and Tibetan branches respectively.

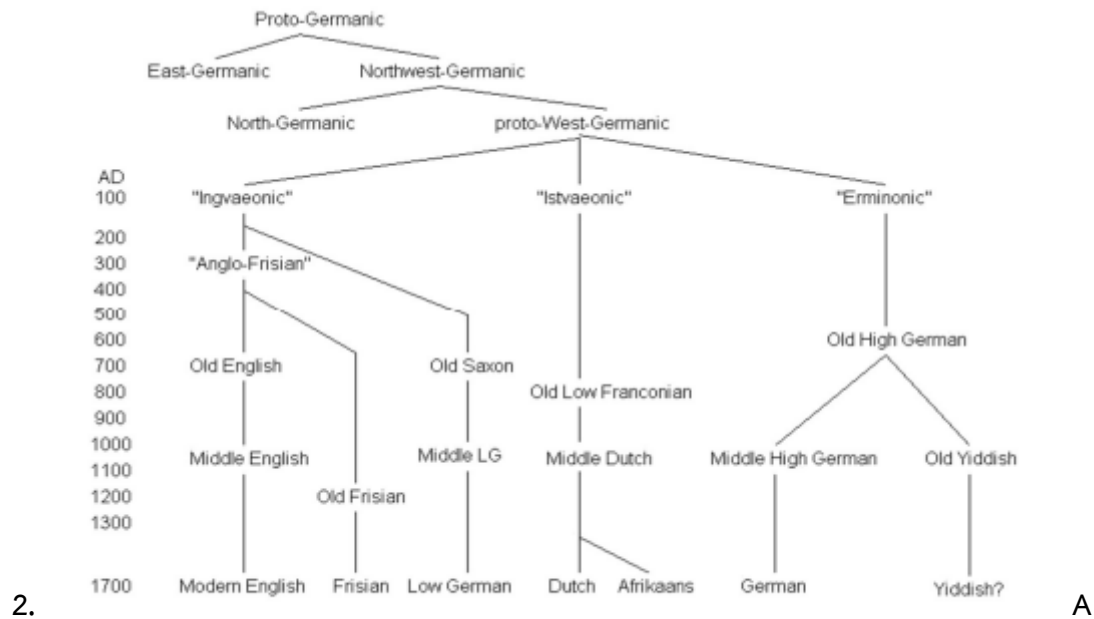
Constituency (Mya Tharaphi Wynn, 2012:15) structure of Myanmar in comparison with English is displayed in Figure 1



1. A Background of English Language

The history of English Language is a journey from its ancient origins to today's dynamic and powerful communication tool has been described by many books and journals. English is the official and primary language for major countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa and several other countries have citizens that the majority spoke English. So, where does the English come from? In fact, there are many books and journals have been written about this.

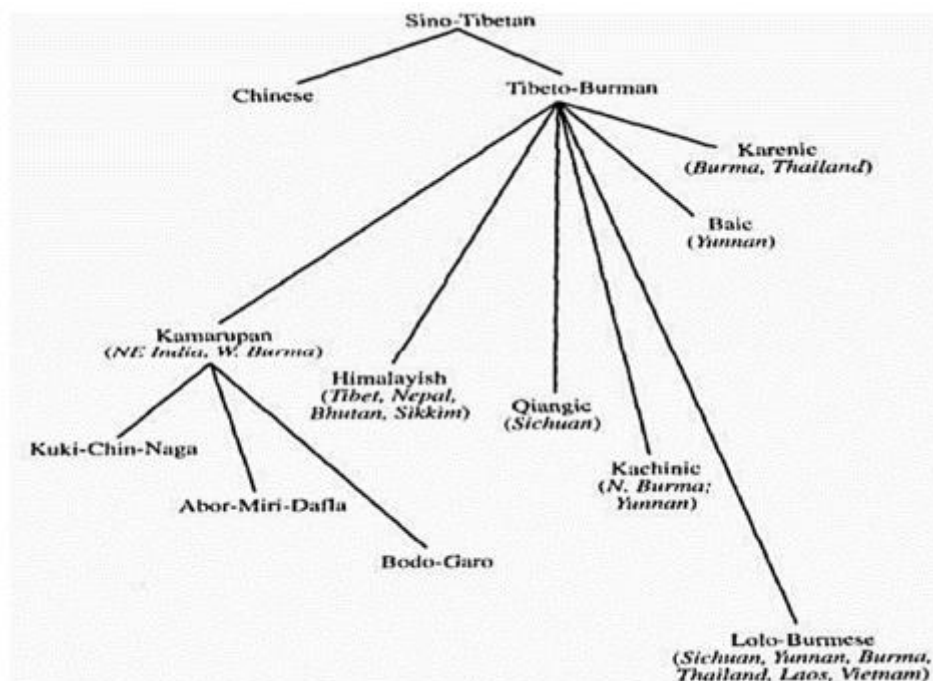
According to "The History of English" text book written by Ishtla Singh, the history of English divided into three periods called: Old English (Anglo-Saxon, 500– 1100), Middle English (1100 – 1500) and Modern English (1500 – nowadays). There were no traces of language during the old Stone Age, so, it was not known what language was being spoken during that time. Then, the Celtic was seen as the first language evidently used by early inhabitants in Britain. In the 55 B.C, with the arrival of Roman's Julius Caesar, Latin introduced. Unluckily, like the Celtic language, Latin. Julius Caesar, having completed the conquest of Gaul did not survive in Britain very long. When the Romans pulled out of Britain in 410 BC, the use of Latin began to decline and was completely lost several years after. In the summer of 55 B.C. Julius Caesar, having completed the conquest of Gaul, invaded Britain. Among other evidences of Romanization, was the use of the Latin language. A great number of inscriptions have been found, all of them in Latin. (So Bhita, 2018)



Background of Burmese Language

Myanmar or Burmese (pronounced ba-ma-sa in Myanmar) is the official language of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, formerly known as Burma. Myanmar is a natural language which belongs to the Sino-Tibetan family of languages, coming down from the same origin as modern Chinese and Tibetan. Myanmar is an Asian language from the Tibeto-Burman sub-branch like some of the local languages spoken in the past or present in the region. The typical structures of actual Myanmar clauses appear to be much more complicated and confusing than those of the standard Myanmar applied to educational and official environments.

In Myanmar language a real sentence or clause begins with a massive and compressed information within tiny and short words and particles to transmit the required data about the speaker, tense, emphasis, etc. to the listener simultaneously. (Mya Tharaphi Wynn, 2018: 17) The details of the family tree of Myanmar language is illustrated in Figure 2:



Conceptual Framework

This research studies a comparative study of syntactic structure between English and Burmese languages which is divided the conceptual framework as following:

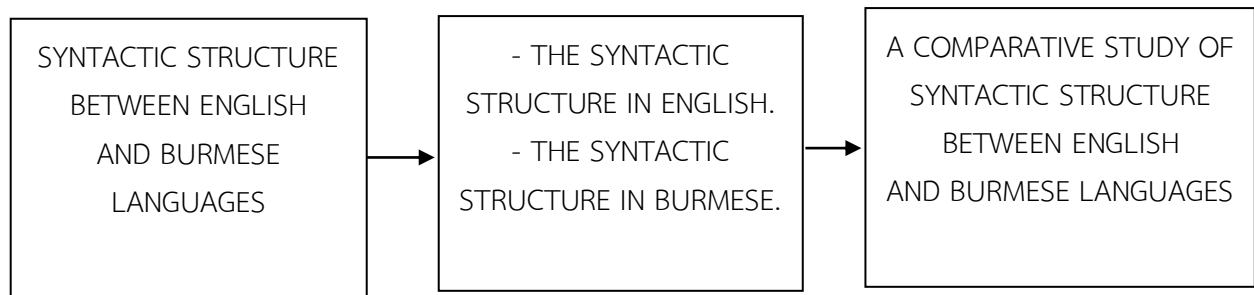


Figure 3. Conceptual Framework of Research

Research Methodology

This is a documentary research to describe the methods of research study in English and Burmese languages. The researcher studies based on comparative study English and Burmese syntactic structures from the modern usage English and Burmese such as; books, academic books, thesis, documentary, articles, library and online research. The methodology of this current research consists of four main parts;

- 1) Research Method
- 2) Research Design
- 3) Source of Data
- 4) Data Collection
- 5) Data Analysis
- 6) Summary

1. Research Method

It is important to have method of studying the syntactic structures in English and Burmese and also many other requirements in this study. To study and compare this thesis which is entitled “A Comparative Study of Syntactic Structure in English and Burmese Language” . The books that researcher consulted or used are mostly about syntax and others such as four kinds of sentence structures, three types of clauses written by previous scholars. After reading or finding information related to this study, researcher summarize all the data that had collected from books, documents and journals.

2. Research Design



This study is qualitative research focusing on a documentary method in nature to study the comparison of the difference and similarity of the sentence structures in English and Myanmar languages. Collecting data will be studied and compared from the primary sources of books and secondary sources of the English and Burmese newspaper, Webpages, and blogs. The documentary research methodology will approach what it needs. Data from other sources such as publish and unpublished books. Thesis, magazines, journals. Articles and electronic devices such as internet, E-books will be collected in this research.

3. Source of Data

The source of data being analyzed from the primary sources of many scholar books regarding with syntactic structure approaching on English and Burmese linguistics that related to Grammar and its respective English and Burmese Grammar. Especially, the researcher mentioned the sentence structures based on “Noam Chomsky, Syntactical Structure” it states about sentence structures which are some words classes, some verb patterns, some phrase structures and some clauses and use old patterns but in this book, some structures is not complete to understand sentence structures well. The analysis of the data will lead to a comprehensive understanding of the method of comparative study.

4. Data Collection

Collecting the related materials from primary and secondary sources. Try to understand the related terms with contexts and to categorize and compare them.

Data from the primary sources, as well as all the writing of the books in regards to the sentence structures approaching on linguistics in English and Burmese languages.

The guideline for collecting data and analysis method were advised by the advisers and collected by the researcher within six months form October 2020 to March 2021.

Research was carried out by the library research books in the file of language such as literature, especially syntactic structures of English and Burmese words in sentences from libraries of following university libraries, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University library, Lamsai, Wangnoi, Ayutthaya, Thailand and Yangon University library in Myanmar were examined.

5. Data Analysis

The data collection is analyzed by the content analysis. In analyzing the data, researcher attends to use documentary and qualitative analysis. It will make learners easier to see the types and function of Burmese syntactic restructure and English syntactic restructure frequencies. They are some steps that researcher follows when researcher tries to do the analysis. Firstly, researcher reads several textbooks about syntactic structure. Next, researcher analyzed the data based on the types and functions of syntactic structure. Then, researcher draws the tables which show the frequency of types and function from each act to data. Finally, researcher draws some conclusions after finishing the analysis.

6. Summary

In conclusion, this chapter refers to the research methodology of studying the syntactic structures based on linguistics in English and Burmese languages. Therefore, in this chapter, the researcher mentioned six kinds of research methodology which are (1) research method, (2) research design, (3) source of data, (4) data collection, (5) data analysis and (6) summary.

The Result of Research

In the section, the researcher will find out the similarities and differences between English and Burmese that I researched above. In basic components of syntactic structure, there will have simply subjects, verbs, objects, complement and adverbs in both of languages.

1. Subject in English and Burmese

As mentioned in the previous section about English and Burmese, both languages use both simple and compound subjects in their sentences, however, in English, the subject is usually at the beginning of sentence unless there is a need for an adverb to emphasis on by being put at the beginning of the sentence.

The following example shows the standard and common position of the subject in an English clause:

Subject in English Sentence			
S	V	O	Acir
They	Made	a wooden floor	In front of me.

In Burmese about the concept of subject, on the other hand, position of the subject is not necessarily restricted to the beginning of the sentence. It can come at the beginning, like in English, or after some other elements such as adverbial phrase as Acir as in the following example:

Subject in Burmese Sentence				
Acir	Acir	Acir	S	V
2014 k ^h u hni [?] hmā	lɛ yan p ^h yi ⁿ	Yangon ka ne	tɕəno	t ^h wa [?] k ^h wā k ^h e tɕ.
In 2014	by flight	from Yangon	I	left.

However, in both languages, the subject precedes the verb of a normal sentence. In both languages, the subject can be a single or plural noun or pronoun or a combination of nouns and adjectives representing a single or plural noun as subject of the sentence.

Another difference is in case of the subject as apposition, which in Burmese does not take commas as in English since Burmese does not use commas or other punctuations the same way as in English.



2. Verb in English and Burmese

In English, the verb usually follows the subject of the sentence unless there is a need for a conjunctive adjunct or adverb to separate them temporarily. But in Burmese concept, the verb does not necessarily follow the subject although it usually comes after the subject.

In Burmese grammar, the verb comes at the end of the sentence to complete the meaning. The following examples show the position of the verb both in English and Burmese for comparison:

Verb in Burmese		
S	Acir	V
təəno dó hā	Thai hma jī tɛ Pattayà kaṇ kʰye θó	θwà kʰe kyá ði.
We	To the beach in Thailand	Go.

Verb in English		
S	V	O
The soldiers	saw	These people.

In the above examples, "θwà kʰe kyá ði" (go) and "saw" are the verb of the sentence, but in Burmese, the verb comes at the end while in English, "saw" follows directly the subject of the sentence "The soldiers". The very rule is true about the position of the verb which is usually embedded in the verb of the clause.

3. Object in English and Burmese

As the name indicates, the object serves to complete the argument in a given sentence. The following examples compare the position of object in English and Burmese clauses. Object can be classified into two groups, as stated earlier. The first is direct object which has different positions in English and Burmese respectively. Direct object in English follow the verb and subject of the sentence as in the following example:

Direct Object in English Sentence		
S	V	D-Obj
They	like	Thai food

While in Burmese direct object preceded the verb of the sentence and follows the subject if the sentence is an active one.

Direct Object in Burmese Sentence		
S	D-Obj	V
θū dó ði	Thai ʔə sà ʔə sã ko	kyiʔ hniʔ θaʔ ði.
They	Thai food	like

Indirect object in English follows nearly the same rule as in the case of direct object. Indirect object always follows a transitive verb via a preposition as in the following example:

Indirect Object in English Sentence			
S	V	In-Obj	D-Obj
She	gives	me	an apple.

But in Burmese, indirect object, like direct object, precedes the verb although it comes after the subject if not necessarily following it immediately. In the following example in Burmese, unlike in English, indirect object "တေၤကၢၣ် ဘၢ တွာ?" (for me) comes before the verb "pyu lu? pyin san pɛpā tɛ" (make) of the sentence.

Indirect Object in Burmese Sentence			
D-Obj	Adv	In-Obj	V
tɛ? tã ʊɛ ɛ lɛ ti? loh ko	ʔi? rā ʔə p ^h yi?	təno ʔə twa?	pyu lu? pyin san pɛpā tɛ.
A very small box	as bed	for me	make.

4. Complement in English and Burmese

Intensive Complement in Burmese and English have different orderings in sentence. As the following examples presents a comparative display of the same sentence in both languages, in English intensive complement follows direct object which comes after the verb and subject of the sentence. While in Burmese, intensive complement does not follow direct object necessarily, but it is positioned after subject and before the verb which comes at the end of the sentence.

Complement in English Sentence			
S	V	D-Object	Complement
I	called	my young friend	John Soe.

Complement in Burmese Sentence			
D-Obj	S	Complement	V
tɛno mi? swe lɛ ko	tɛn ka	John Soe ló	k ^h ɔ pā tɛ.
My young friend	I	John Soe	called.

5. Adverb in English and Burmese

In both languages, adjuncts are adverbial, nominal or prepositional groups of words which perform as circumstances for the experiential meaning of a sentence. As with English,



Burmese recognizes three kinds of Adjuncts namely circumstantial adjunct, conjunctive adjunct and modal adjunct can be classified which are compared as following:

The position of circumstantial adjunct in both languages is illustrated in the following examples: As in the following examples, in English circumstantial adjunct can come after verb or at the beginning of the clause, therefore, we can restate the following example as, “That night, the storm started.”

Circumstantial Adjunct in English Sentence		
S	V	Acir
The storm	started	that night.

If there are two circumstantial adjuncts (Acir) , they follow the order according to their importance and relevance as in the following sample.

Two Circumstantial Adjunct in English Sentence			
S	V	Acir	Acir
I	was	in the sea,	among the great waves.

This position of circumstantial adjunct (Acir) in English is similar to that in Burmese with the difference that in Burmese the verb falls at the end of the sentence. In the following examples, Acir, like in English, can come after the subject or can be posited at the beginning of the clause depending on its level of emphasis.

Circumstantial Adjunct in Burmese Sentence		
Acir	S	V
myó tʰε hmā	sai twe ʔi tweʔ ʔə myà kyī	ʃi pā tε.
In the city	a lots of shops and houses	are.

Circumstantial Adjunct in Burmese Sentence		
S	Acir	V
hla pa té nañ tɔ kyī ka	myó lé hmā	ʃi tε.
A beautiful place	in the middle of the city	was.

Conjunctive adjunct (Acon) in English can come at the beginning or at the end of the sentence as shown in the following examples and the examples presented in the relevant sections above:

Conjunctive Adjunct in English Sentence (1)				
Acon	S	F	V	Acir
Then	the army	can	march	between your legs.

Conjunctive Adjunct in English Sentence (2)

Acon	S	F	Compl	CC	V
After that	I	was	very ill	and	wanted to bed

In Burmese, “conjunctive adjunct” comes at the beginning of the sentence. The examples below show conjunctive adjunct in Burmese:

Conjunctive Adjunct in Burmese Sentence (1)			
Acon	S	D-Obj	V
dī dó hma	θu dó ka	θin kyò twε ko	p ^h ε pε pā tε.
After that	they	the chain	take off.

Conjunctive Adjunct in Burmese Sentence (2)		
Acon	S	V
pa t ^h a mā dó	mya ⁿ twε ka	kyau? pā tε.
At first	the horses	scared.

And finally, “modal adjunct” (Amod) is compared in English and Burmese with the following examples:

In English, model adjunct (Amod) comes at the beginning of a sentence followed by a comma, or between the subject and the verb of the sentence and after Finite if there is any in the sentence:

Model Adjunct in English Sentence (1)			
Amond	S	V	Acir
Suddenly	my box	went up	in the air.

Model Adjunct in English Sentence (2)				
S	F	Amod	V	Complement
Our king	will	never	know	about this.

But in Burmese, since the verb always comes at the end of the clause, model adjunct (Amod) always comes before the verb but in the sentence it has a more flexible position in Burmese than in English. Model adjunct (Amod) in Burmese can come after or before subject and complement and other elements depending on its degree of emphasis. The following examples illustrate the different positions of model adjunct (Amod).

Model Adjunct in English Sentence (1)			
Amod	Compl	Acir	V
ru? ti? ra? so θā lo	tçə ⁿ ti? tā lè ka	lε t ^h é ko	myau? pā θwā tε.
Suddenly	my box	in the air	go up.



Model Adjunct in English Sentence (2)				
S	Acir	Amod	Acir	V
tɕəŋɔ	nya s̄a sà téʔə k̄hā	ʔə myè pé	ʔəme ʔənh̄ə sa pwè t̄h̄iʔ hmā	sà pà tɕ.
I	when I had dinner	always	on the table-top near mother	eat.

Discussion

As mentioned above, the key objective of the study was to discover the comparative study of syntactic structures between English and Burmese languages. The researcher had collected English books, Burmese books, Thesis, documents, library study and online research regarding to research title and linguistics.

Firstly, regarding with syntactic structure between English and Burmese, the researcher described that there are eight parts of speech in English, it was one way to begin studying basic sentence structures was to consider the traditional parts of speech (also called word classes): nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, preposition, conjunctions, and interjections. However, there were nine part of speech classes for all Burmese words since it was described by Myanmar Language Commission. These were Noun, Pronoun, Verb, Adjective, Adverb, Postpositional Marker, Particles and Interjection. In the parts of sentence construction in both languages, there are subject, verb, direct object, indirect object, complement. Every word in a sentence serves a specific purpose within the structure of that particular sentence. The most common word order in English sentences was subject-verb-object (SVO). When reading a sentence, we generally expect the first noun to be the subject and the second noun to be the object. Sentence construction in Burmese, there are subject, direct object, indirect object and verb as well. The common order in

Burmese grammar was subject-object-verb. Especially in Burmese, the verb was usually put at the end of sentence. Secondly, as types of sentences between two languages, there were four different types of sentences in English: (1) simple sentence, (2) compound sentence, (3) complex sentence and (4) compound – complex sentence. However, there were two different kinds of sentences in Burmese: (1) simple sentence and (2) Complex sentences. In clause structure, there were three types of clauses in English: (1) a noun clause typically acts as the subject of a verb or as the object of a verb or preposition. (2) An adjective clause modifies a noun phrase. And adjective clauses typically come at the end of their noun clause. Most adjective clauses start with the pronouns who, whom, why, whose, which, that, when, where. (3) An adverbial clause typically modifies its entire main clause: at the beginning of a sentence, in the middle of a sentence, and at the end of a sentence.

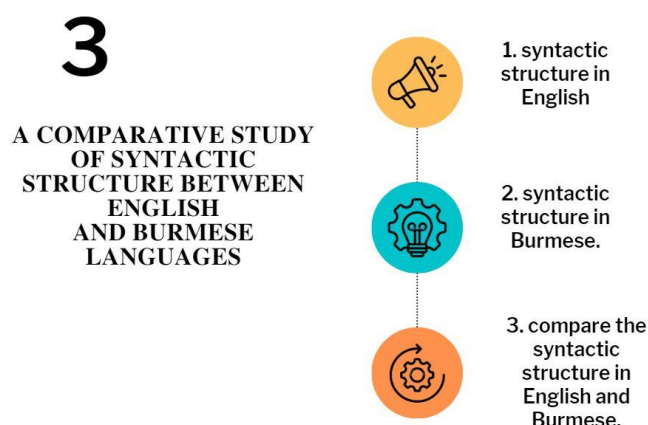
Besides, there were three main kinds of clauses in Burmese as well; (1) Noun clause is a group to words which contains a subject and a verb including Positional maker as /ka/ hmā/, and /ko/, and does the work of a noun was called noun clause. The noun clause does as a

noun. The noun clause was a dependent clause. (2) An adjective clause was a group of words which contains subject, object and verb in the final of clause including particles as /θɔ/ θi/, mɛ/. The adjective clause describes noun as an adjectives. The adjective clause was a dependent clause. Then (3) an adverb clause was a group of words including subject, object and verb in end of clause as conjunction as ði, ka, mu and hni?, pyiṁ. Thirdly, the researcher had mentioned about the similarities and differences between English and Burmese. About the concept of basic components for mainly sentence constructions in both languages, there are subjects, verbs,

The Knowledge of Research

The teaching and learning of English language play a fundamental role in Myanmar as a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), whose lingua franca is English. Therefore, the current demand for Myanmar people who are highly proficient in English language becomes inevitable, in order to be able to communicate not only with each people from the ASEAN region, but also with other people from all over the world.

The importance of English language has been obvious throughout the history of Myanmar, as it was used as the language of choice in the areas of law, administration, politics, and even education at all stages during the pro-independence era. In the era of post-independence, the use of English language in Myanmar has been limited to the diplomatic and educational arenas.



Conclusion

English is perceived as a permit to get employment opportunity and upward social mobility in Myanmar. Hence, there seems to be a positive relationship between students' socioeconomic status and their proficiency in English, probably due to the difference in opportunities available outside the home and community for learning and using English.

This indicates the urgent need for developing relevant and high-quality English language programmes for learners in public sector universities too. We knew well that Myanmar is not alone in facing these challenges. These and similar challenges abound in the majority of African



countries and many other countries in Asia. However, the environment for learning English in Myanmar is getting better than before, and students have more opportunities to learn English, whether in public or private schools. Myanmar government and international organizations have also provided a more accessible English environment for young people in Myanmar.

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