



## English Code-Mixing in the Thai TV Series “Suptar 2550”

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the characteristics of English code-mixing in all episodes of the Thai television series "Suptar 2550," aired in 2022, and available on Netflix. All dialogues from the series' 10 episodes were studied. The findings were classified according to the two primary classes of code-mixing that Kannaovakun and Gunther (2003) had proposed: the nativized features, which included truncation, hybridization, conversion, semantic shift, reduplication, and word order; and the intrasentential code-mixing words. According to the nativized features of 54 words, truncation displayed the highest frequency (17 words/ 31.48%), followed by semantic shift (15 words/ 27.78%), hybridization (11 words/ 20%), reduplication and conversion (5 words each/ 9.26%), and word order (1 word/ 1.85%). It is likely that Thais shorten words to make them simpler to understand and easier to pronounce. In terms of intrasentential code-mixing words, the 203 words discovered in this study demonstrated that nouns (65.52%) were the most common type of intrasentential code-mixing words.

**Keywords:** Code-mixing, Thai television series, Nativized features, Entertainment industry

### 1. Introduction

Language is one of the essential aspects of social life since it enables people to interact with one another and articulate their emotions. In the current age of globalization, communicating in several languages is precious since language serves as a measure of one's place in society (Jocelin & Tryana, 2019). When a language takes on a role that is known in every country, this is called "global status." This special status can be achieved either by making the language the official language of the country or by giving English special priority in countries where its citizens are required to study it as a second or foreign language (Kuptanaroaj et al., 2020). Given that English is the most widely spoken language in the world, its significance globally cannot be dismissed or disregarded. English is one of the languages that is spoken all over the world by a significant number of people. (Ilyosovna, 2020)

According to Sarwat & Qadir (2022), in today's world, the English language functions as a lingua franca for most of the population. It is of exceptional significance and holds a lofty position among the community of countries. It paves the way for tremendous new horizons of knowledge in every area. It is the language used in the commercial world as well as in educational institutions. Moving forward in today's interconnected world requires knowledge of English. Similarly, Putra (2020) considered English to be the language spoken in the majority of the world, which aids individuals in adapting to both the present and future working environments.

According to Kannaovakun & Gunther (2003), the English language is used by Thai people daily, although it is neither the country's national nor official language. As Thailand has been globalized while the ASEAN Community is coming into existence, English will inevitably continue to serve as the lingua franca of international communication, research, education, and commercial dealings (Wisitudonkarn, 2020). English is the most important foreign language in the country (Kannaovakun & Gunther, 2003). This is because of things like international trade and business, industrial growth, communication technologies, and the influence of Western culture, entertainment, and higher education.

Kannavakun & Gunther (2003) state that nowadays, Thai people utilize English to communicate with native and non-native English speakers. In addition, Thais frequently employ English by combining English and Thai terms or by transitioning from Thai to English, both purposefully and inadvertently. As a

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result, Thais utilize and recognize several English terms, such as *all right, care, date, fashion, happy, and party*. Hence, the influence of English on the Thai language is evident on several levels, including phonology, morphology, and syntax. The insertion or mixing of English terms into the Thai language, known as "code-mixing" in English, has had a significant impact. (Somsin & Suksakorn, 2022)

Code-mixing, as defined by Richards, Platt, & Platt (1992); Crystal (1997); Wardhaugh (2006); Ho (2007), is the phenomenon in which bilingual or multilingual speakers speak in the same language while switching automatically between them inside the borders of various elements of the language such as the phonology, morphology, grammatical structure, or orthography. Code-mixing, also known as the alternation of two languages, is seen as a normal process in second or foreign languages and not a sign of a language issue. As a result of this process, code-mixing, which may occur in bilingual and multilingual settings when speakers combine two or more languages to create a new code in speech, primarily refers to situations in which languages are combined without the necessity for language mixing. There may thus be no specific restriction on using a second language in communication.

Due to Muysken (2000); Thomason (2001); Kannaovakun & Gunther (2003), the definitions of code-mixing are associated with intrasentential switching, where the switching occurs at the word level and the switched word is introduced within a sentence in a completely different language. Also, Bokamba (1989) says that code-mixing is when words and phrases from a foreign language are used in a sentence in the native language of the speaker.

As Bokamba (1989); Kannaovakun & Gunther (2003) noted, foreign words change little as they are assimilated into speakers' native tongues. In other words, English words can be nativized for use in Thai. According to Weinreich (1953), code-mixing is one of the occurrences that occurs when a speaker knows more than two languages, one of which influences the other. This process of adaptation is known as "nativization." Nativization is the process by which a language or culture adapts to or is accepted by a new environment or community, becoming a "native" component of that environment or community. Code-mixing is divided into six categories based on the nativized feature classified by Kannaovakun & Gunther (2003).

The categories classified by Kannaovakun & Gunther (2003) are as follows: 1) Truncation: a shortened English word by removing the first or last syllables. For example, the word "air" (แอร์) is shortened from the English word "air conditioner." 2) Hybridization: terms created by combining English words with a Thai prefix or noun. For example, the word "นักบาสเก็ตบอล" (basketball player) is a combination of the Thai prefix "นัก" and the English word "basketball." 3) Conversion: the transition from one part of speech to another. For example, the noun "success" is converted into the verb "to succeed." 4) Semantic shift: the transformation of a word's meaning from one language to another. For example, "เสื้อฟิตจัง" (This shirt is far too snug.) The English definition of "fit" is to be the correct size; consequently, the meaning of "fit" in the Thai context has altered. 5) Reduplication: the continual repeating of the English word. For example, "modern modern" in the Thai context "วัยรุ่นพวกนี้ชอบเสื้อผ้าโมเดิร์นโมเดิร์น" (These teenagers like modern style clothes.) was reiterated in purpose. 6) Word order shift: when a foreign language is mixed with the native language, the word order of the foreign language undergoes a syntactical shift. For example, "เกมคอมพิวเตอร์" (game computer) has been shifted rather than the correct word order of "computer game."

According to research on English code-mixing, English terms are prevalent in a variety of mass media, including advertisements, social media, magazines, TV shows, TV series, songs, films, and others. For example, Kumtanit & Srisakorn (2016) study code-mixing between Thai and English in printed media. The results showed that semantics shift displayed the highest frequency. Onkhao and Tipayasuparat (2018) examine English code-mixing in Thai hip-hop songs; Kunarawong (2014) examines Thai-English code-mixing and code-switching in Cosmopolitan magazine. The results revealed that hybridization was the most frequent. Kannaowakun & Gunther (2003); Tanabut & Tipayasuparat (2018); Yuthayothin & Tipayasuparat (2018); Kuptanaroaj et al. (2020); Somsin & Suksakorn (2022) study English and Thai code-mixing in Thai TV programs. The results indicated that truncation was the highest regularly used, whereas the study of Somsin & Suksakorn (2022) found that hybridization was the most frequent.



As is evident from all of the research on Thai and English code-mixing, Thai television is one of the best sources for observing the nativized aspects and characteristics of English code-mixing, particularly in the "Suptar 2550" series about the lives of people in the Thai television industry. The Thai entertainment industry, especially the film and television industries, frequently employs English code-mixing to create a modern and international image. This might be especially true for actors and actresses, who frequently utilize English code-mixing for a variety of reasons. As a result of this, the researchers have an interest in examining the code-mixing of English that occurs in the television series "Suptar 2550."

## 2. Objective

To examine the characteristics of English code-mixing in the Thai television series "Suptar 2550" using Kannaovakun and Gunther's (2003) frameworks

## 3. Materials and Methods

### 3.1 Data Collection

The research data came from the Thai TV series "Suptar 2550," aired in 2022, and available on Netflix. The study examines various patterns of Thai-English code-mixing and evaluates the code-mixing features in Suptar 2550, which consisted of 10 episodes. In addition, proper names such as the name of a brand, the name of a person, the name of a place, the name of a business organization, and the name of an application were not used to analyze. Nonetheless, each word's reputation or appearance was investigated in this study, and duplicate words in the same category were not counted.

### 3.2 Data Analysis

An analysis of the data was carried out to investigate the English Code-mixing in 10 episodes. In the study, nativized features as well as intrasentential code-mixing were used. The entirety of the dialogues was examined for English words and phrases, and those that were found were afterwards subjected to an analysis based on the theoretical framework for the nativization of English proposed by Kannaovakun & Gunther (2003). Items with Code-mixing were looked at, processed, and counted by hand. Following that, a percentage depiction of the frequency of each classification was derived.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Results

The collected data related to English code mixing in the Thai television series "Suptar 2550" were classified based on the parts of speech and the classification framework of the nativized features by Kannaovakun and Gunther (2003). There are six types of nativized features consisting of truncation, hybridization, semantic shift, reduplication, conversion, and word order.

The following tables are the details of the English classification divided into: English units of words and phrases; English word classes; and code-mixing words with nativized features. It is followed by the examples of truncation, semantic shift, hybridization, reduplication, conversion, and word order.

**Table 1** Classification of English units

Types of English units	Frequency	Percentage
Words	192	94.58
Phrase	11	5.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1 shows the classification of English units from the total of 203 items. The first type was found in words for 192 times (94.58%), followed by phrases for 11 times (5.42%).

**Table 2** Classification of English word classes

English word classes	Frequency	Percentage
Noun	133	65.52
Verb	45	22.17
Adjective	16	7.88
Interjection	9	4.43
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 illustrates the parts of speech established for each word. Noun was found the most at 133 times (65.52%), followed by 45 verbs (22.17%); 16 adjectives (7.88%); and 9 interjections (4.43%).

**Table 3** Classification of code-mixing words with nativized features

Nativized features	Frequency	Percentage
Truncation	17	31.48
Semantic shift	15	27.78
Hybridization	11	20
Reduplication	5	9.26
Conversion	5	9.26
Word order	1	1.85
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 displays a total of 54 words categorized into six types of nativized features. Truncation displayed the highest frequency (17 words/ 31.48%), followed by semantic shift (15 words/ 27.78%), hybridization (11 words/20%), reduplication and conversion (5 words each/ 9.26%), and word order (1 word/ 1.85%).

**Table 4** Examples of Truncation

Truncation	Full word	Code-mixing in the conversation
<b>1) Retaining the first syllable of the word</b>		
App	Application	“ตอนนี้มีแอป หนึ่งจะไร่น่าสนใจมั่ง”
Out	Outdated	“ฉันไม่อยากให้ใครมาว่าฉันเฮ้อ”
Sis	Sister	“ไปเถอะค่ะ ซิส”
Self	Self-confident	“วิว เนี่ยเธอ เกือบเสียเซลฟ์ไปแล้วด้วยซ้ำ”
Gen	Generation	“ต้องเอาดาราดเจนใหม่เข้ามาเสริม”
<b>2) Retaining the last syllable of the word</b>		
Noid	Paranoid	“แคท ก็ยังขี้สงสัยเหมือนเดิม”
Load	Download	“เคี้ยวค่อยโหลดมาคูลู”
Ber	Number	“เบอร์ใคร”
<b>3) Retaining the first and last syllable</b>		
Suptar	Superstar	“เห็นว่าเป็นซีรีส์ร่วมซูเปอร์สตาร์รุ่นเก่า ๆ”
<b>4) Cutting off the first and last syllable</b>		
Ver	Overact	“ถ้าไม่ต้องเตรียมตัวกันหนักหนา เวอร์”

Table 4 reveals the truncation type that was most frequently used in this Thai TV series. The truncation of words was divided into four forms. The first one was to retain the first syllable of the word. An example is in the word "แอป" in "ตอนนี้มีแอป หนึ่งจะไร่น่าสนใจมั่ง" which is shortened from the word "application." Another one is "เงิน" which is shortened from the word "generation." The second form is to retain the last syllable of the word. Some examples are shown in "นอยด์" (noid) which is shortened from "paranoid" as in the Thai context of "แคทก็ขี้สงสัยเหมือนเดิม" (Catt is still paranoid as usual.)



Next is an example of “โหลด” (load) which is shortened from “download” as in the Thai context of “ให้ดาวน์โหลดโหลดมาดู” (Let’s download later on.) The third form is to retain the first and last syllable of the word this can be seen in the example of “ซูตาร์” (suptar) which is maintaining the first syllable and the last syllable of the word “superstar” as shown in the Thai context of “เห็นว่าเป็นซีรีส์รวมซูตาร์รุ่นเก่า ๆ” (This is the series which gather the old generation of the superstars.) The last form of truncation is to cut off the first and the last syllable. An example is provided in the example of “เวอร์” (ver) which is cutting off the first and last syllable of the word “overact” as shown in the Thai context of “ทำไมต้องเตรียมตัวกันหนักหนา เวอร์” (Why do we have to overact so seriously?).

**Table 5** Examples of semantic shift

Semantic shift	English word	Code-mixing in the conversation
Style	Type	ชอบงานสไตล์ดีด้วยกันเลย
Form	Sail in	ผู้หญิงที่ฟอร์มจัดทุกคนเลยปะ
Fit	Hard-working	เด็กมันฟิตเนอะ
Fan	Boyfriend/ Girlfriend	ทำไมไม่อยากเห็นแฟนตัวเองต้องเสียใจ

Table 5 displays the results of the semantically shifted words. For example, the word “form” was changed in meaning from bringing together parts or combining to create something to the women’s movement in a smooth and rapid or in a confident manner, when used by character. The second word “fit” literally means being in good health or being of a suitable quality, standard, or type to meet the required purpose. On the opposite to the Thai context, the word was used to mean a hard-working person.

**Table 6** Examples of hybridization

Hybridization	English word	Code-mixing in the conversation
<b>1) A hybridization made by retaining English word at the first syllable</b>		
Fight บังคับ	Mandatory fight	มันไฟท์บังคับอะ พุดชาก
<b>2) A hybridization made by retaining English word at the ending syllable</b>		
รถ hybrid	Hybrid car	รถไฮบริดมีมลภาวะที่โหด
เจ้าของ hotel	Hotel owner	เห็นเขาวัว เป็นเจ้าของโฮเต็ลนะคะ
เครื่อง drip	Dripper	เงินซื้อเครื่องคริปมาใหม่
ชาว rock	Rocker	มีดีใหม่แห่งการทำอาหารแบบชาวร็อก

Table 6 explains the feature of hybridization, which was found to have the third highest frequency. An English word is blended with a Thai word to form a new word while maintaining the former meaning there are 2 forms of hybridization in this research, the first one of which is a hybridization made by retaining the English word at the first syllable. For example, "fight บังคับ" is from the Thai context of "มันไฟท์บังคับอะ พุดชาก" (It’s a mandatory fight, of course.) To clarify, fight is an English word spoken for the first syllable while บังคับ is a Thai word spoken for the last word.

The second form of hybridization is made by retaining the English word at the ending syllable. Some of the examples are รถ hybrid (hybrid car), เจ้าของ hotel (hotel owner), เครื่อง drip (dripper), ชาว rock (rocker).

**Table 7** Example of reduplication

Reduplication	English word	Code-mixing in the conversation
Bye bye	Bye	เดี๋ยวขึ้นนี่เจอกันนะครึบ บ้าย บาย
Retro retro	Retro	มันก็ดูแบบเรโทร ๆ ดี
Fade fade	Fade	เฟด ๆ ไปเลย
Clear clear	Clear	เคลียร์ ๆ ไปเลย จะได้จบ ๆ
No no	No	โน ๆ ไม่ต้องพูด



Table 7 indicates there were some words in reduplication forms. Five words were found in this research and 1 example is “clear clear” in the Thai context “เคลียร์ ๆ ไปเลย จะได้จบ ๆ” (Let’s clear everything so it will be over.) This item was reduplicated in meaning. Similarly, “bye bye,” “fade fade,” “no no,” and “retro retro” were reduplications of precisely the same word with the same meaning.

**Table 8** Examples of conversion

Conversion	Form (Original from to code-mixing)	Code-mixing in the conversation
Man	Noun to verb	เฮ้ย มันต้องอย่างนี้สิ แมน ๆ เลย
Unexpected	Adjective to verb	สุดยอดเลยล่ะ มัน unexpected มาก ๆ เลยล่ะ
Hot	Adjective to verb	เรื่องนี้มันเป็นกระแสอยู่ มันกำลังฮ็อต

Table 8 reviews the example of the change in the part of speech of the English code when mixed with the Thai code. For example, in the statement "เฮ้ย มันต้องอย่างนี้สิ แมน ๆ เลย" (Oh, that’s the way it should be, act like a man.), the part of speech of the English word "man" is a noun, however, when it is used in this context, the part of speech is converted into a verb. Likewise, in "เรื่องนี้มันเป็นกระแสอยู่ มันกำลังฮ็อต" (This is still in trend. It is hot.), The word "hot" used as a code-mixing word in the Thai context, is a verb, not an adjective, as its original English part of speech.

**Table 9** Examples of word order

Word order	English word	Code-mixing in the conversation
Team PR	PR team	นี่ทีมพีอาร์ครับ

Table 9 shows an example of a word order shift. In the above example, there was a shift in word order of the English code when mixed with the Thai code. In the only example of the Thai context, the phrase "team PR" was used instead of "PR team," which was the correct word order in the English structure. In the Thai language structure, the head noun always comes before its modifier. As a result, when the English code was mixed with the Thai code, a word order shift in the mixing process occurred.

#### 4.2 Discussion

The findings of an English code-mixing analysis conducted on 10 episodes of the Thai television series "Suptar 2550" were given in the form of the English code-mixing words with nativized features and the intrasentential code-mixing words based on the framework proposed by Kannaovakun & Gunther (2003).

According to the findings of English code-mixing words with nativized features, the total number of results was 54, and the most frequent nativization included truncation (31.48%), followed by semantic shift (27.78%). The findings were consistent with those of Kannaovakun and Gunther (2003); Tanabut & Tipayasuparat (2018); Yuthayotin & Tipayasuparat (2018); Kuptanaroaj et al. (2020). They found that the most common type of code-mixing words with nativized features in Thai television programs were truncation. It may be presumed that Thai people truncated words to shorter forms to make them simpler to grasp and for the ease of pronouncing them because truncation was found most frequently. Instead of utilizing the original word, Thai people only choose a part of an English term and seamlessly incorporate it into Thai without altering its meaning or the part of speech of the shortened words. For example, the word “เจ็น” (Gen) is truncated by preserving the initial syllable of the word “generation.” The word “ซูปลดาร์” is truncated by preserving the initial and final syllable of the word “Superstar.” However, this research was inconsistent with the findings of English code-mixing in the series “The Gifted” by Somsin & Suksakhon (2022), revealing that hybridization displayed the highest frequency. The differences among this study and Somsin & Suksakhon’s (2022) might be plausible that the characters from the series “The Gifted” are the high school students tending to use the English Code-mixing in Thai and sometimes the English words may not carry adequate meaning to convey the whole idea. That is why hybridization was frequently used to combine Thai words and English words to deliver the complete thought.



In addition, the second significant finding was semantic shift. The occurrences of the semantic shift can be presumed to develop the meaning and extend the original meaning in the Thai context. Kunarawong (2014) proposed that the development of meaning refers to the alteration or distortion of a term's actual English meaning when employed in a Thai context. The expansion of meaning might be stated as there being no change in the meaning of an English term when used in a Thai context, but a new meaning is acquired. For example, “ได้ว่าจะเอาฉันไปเมาท์กับหลังอีก” (She will take me to gossip once more.) The origin of the English term “mouth” has shifted from the part of the face surrounding the lips to gossiping. The second is expanding the definition of an English term when applied to the Thai context. The English word “fan” refers to someone who admires and is highly enthusiastic about a sport, a movie star, or a musician. However, when this word is employed in a Thai context, its meaning is expanded to encompass a lover or girlfriend. For example, “ทำไมไม่อยากเห็นแฟนตัวเองต้องเสียใจ”(I don't want my girlfriend to feel sad.)

Regarding the finding of English code-mixing with the intrasentential code-mixing words as a word or phrase inside an utterance, the data revealed that in the Thai television series "Suptar 2550", there were four English word classes based on their parts of speech, which included noun, verb, adjective, and interjection. Additionally, the classification of English units, out of a total of 203 items, occurred in words 192 times, or 94.58 %. The findings were consistent with the previous studies in code-mixing of Thai Television programs of Kannaovakun and Gunther (2003); Tanabut & Tipayasuparat (2018); Yuthayotin & Tipayasuparat (2018); Kuptanaroaj et al. (2020). They found that the forms of single noun were found most frequently. According to Kunarawong (2004), the majority of intrasentential English code-mixing retains the lexical or grammatical characteristics of English; the English words or phrases have not received any change.

According to the series' characters, they all engage in the entertainment industry. English code-mixing is frequently viewed as projecting an innovative and global image. Those in the entertainment industry who use English code-mixing are frequently viewed as more cosmopolitan, educated, and sophisticated. In addition, the utilization of English code-mixing in communication is frequently perceived as a means of connecting with a larger worldwide audience. As the entertainment business becomes increasingly worldwide, industry experts who can successfully communicate in English are viewed as more marketable and more likely to succeed. The findings that focused on the intrasentential level of code-mixing, it is rational to determine that English code-mixing becomes a part of Thai language without creating any transformations in relation to the meaning or the form of the words they are applying. Furthermore, Thais normally nativize English by shortening words and expanding the original meaning.

## 5. Conclusion

This study investigated the characteristics of English-Thai code-mixing utilized in the Thai television series "Suptar2550." The data came from ten episodes of the 2022-released television series, available on Netflix. Intrasentential code-mixing and the nativized features are the major focuses of this study. In addition, the theoretical framework developed by Kannaovakun and Gunther (2003) is employed to analyze the series' use of English code-mixing.

As English is frequently taught as a foreign language in Thai schools and colleges, many Thais are conversant with the English language and idioms. Moreover, English is the international language of commerce, technology, and the media. Code-mixing in English is frequently considered to be an operative method for projecting an appearance of sophistication and globalization. Code-mixing in English is used in communication relatively frequently these days since it is seen as an effective technique to interact with a broader international audience. Professionals in the entertainment industry who are able to communicate well in English are considered to be more marketable and have a higher chance of being successful as the globalization of the entertainment industry continues. To put it another way, this linguistic occurrence vividly illustrates the widespread adoption of the English language in the Thai culture. With regard to the findings that focused on the intrasentential level of code-mixing, it is reasonable to say that Thais have a tendency to employ English code-mixing without making any changes in relation to the meaning or the form of the words they are utilizing. Additionally, Thais commonly nativize English by truncating words and broadening the original meaning.



This study only examined the characteristics of English code-mixing in the Thai television series. It would be more beneficial to investigate the reasons why code-mixing is utilized in this context or to examine the English code-mixing in other entertainment industries with a different framework.

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