

A Study of English Loanwords in Thai Modern Country Singers' Songs

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to investigate English loanwords found in Thai modern country singers' songs. The researcher collected the English loanwords found in six Thai modern country singers' songs. The data were based from a hundred and twelve songs from forty-five albums. The analysis was divided into two parts: types of loanwords and semantic changes. There are four main types of loanwords: transliteration, loan translation, loan blend, and loan shift; and the second part is related to four main kinds of loanwords according to semantic changes: original, narrower, broader, and deviating. The data were analyzed according to the method of assimilation into English and Thai context. Based on the findings, it was found that transliteration was used most. Besides, original meaning was used most in the contexts according to semantic changes. To conclude, this study offers insight into English loanwords in the Thai language.

Keywords: *loanwords, lexical borrowing, source language, semantic change*

1. Introduction

English is considered one of the world's most dominant languages. Hoffer (2005) stated "*Its history is interesting for many reasons, including its flexibility in borrowing from other languages, a flexibility that has enriched its vocabulary over the centuries.*" In other words, because of the process of borrowing, English has become the language filled with words from a number of foreign languages.

When mentioning the process of borrowing, Trask (1996) stated "*it is one of the most frequent ways of acquiring new words, and speakers of all languages do it.*" Borrowing is also said to be a natural process of language change. It is a matter of one language which adds new words to its own lexicon by imitating those words from another language (Hall-Lew, 2002). According to Hall-Lew (2002), a sociophonetician, the words, which are borrowed, are called 'borrowings' or 'loanwords.'

It was believed that the major reason why borrowing is essential in the development of languages might come from the idea and the need of "filling conceptual gaps" in the absorbing language (Danesi and Rocci 2009). Therefore, loanwords can be significantly used to describe a new thing or a new word. It means that some of the ideas which might not have appeared in one language before might be able to be added up because of the process of word borrowing from another language.

With its beneficial purpose for some, English loanwords have probably played an important role in many areas from business and education; a number of authors, writers, bloggers, and scholars have been continuously adopting loanwords to magazines, websites, and academic textbooks for communication. Consequently, English loanwords are regarded immensely necessary like a part of our life.

In Thailand, the fact that English loanwords are widely accepted cannot be denied. It can be seen from the volume of English loanwords in the Thai language which has been tremendously rising. The expansion of its vocabulary has come from extensively borrowing words from English. It is obvious that there is nowhere more apparent than in the media since the language is nearer the spoken word.

Obviously, the Thai country songs are believed to reflect the meaning and storytelling regarding the social value information and most of these songs have a subtle and indirect message that needs to be interpreted and studied (Tusalanon & Prajaknet, 2017). Because of the interesting aspect, this study aims to investigate the use of English loanwords found in Thai modern country singers' songs. This study will help those interested in learning and currently studying English loanwords understand more about how they are used in Thai contexts.

2. Objective

The study aims to explore the types of loanwords and the types of semantic changes in six Thai modern country singers' songs.

3. Materials and methods

The research procedures are as follows:

First of all, the researcher collected the English loanwords found in six Thai modern country singers' songs. The main reasons why these singers were purposively selected are because of their level of success and popularity and also some of the lyrics from their songs that could be considered profound and meaningful to listeners. The data were collected from these singers' songs from all of their albums as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 General information about the data

Name	Number of songs	Number of albums	Year
1. GOT JAKRAPUN	18	4	2010 - 2014
2. BLUEBERRY R-SIAM	20	7	2004 - 2012
3.SAOMAT MEGADANCE	15	4	1990 - 2003
4.PAOWALEE PORNPI MOL	27	11	1986 - 2002
5.SUNAREE RATCHASIMA	13	12	1993 – 2005
6.APAPORN NAKORNSAWAN	19	7	2001 - 2012

Then, the researcher studied the related theories based on loanwords. The framework for the analysis was synthesized from the works of Hatch and Brown (1995) and Hoffer (2005). Lastly, those words were analyzed based on each type of loanwords. All collected data are analyzed to find out the meanings and forms used in both Thai and English contexts. The English meanings of these collected words were studied from the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary. Also, the Thai meaning from the latest edition of dictionary issued by the Thai Royal Institute was used in the analysis process. Therefore, the English and Thai meanings were compared to study the semantic change.

Moreover, the occurrence of each type and meaning are presented in Table and applied in percentage. In the analysis procedures, the researcher categorized loanwords into two manners: form and meaning. Regarding form, there are four types: transliteration (carried out directly loanwords with very little or no change to the particular word), loan blend (combined loanwords and an already existing word in the language), loan translation (translated loanwords and made the word already available in the language), and loan shift (extended loanwords from the first language to existing word in the language). When it comes to the change in meaning, four types are also presented: original meaning (Thai meanings of these loanwords are not different from the English meanings), narrower meaning (some parts of English meanings are taken into Thai words), deviating meaning (the Thai meanings of these loanwords are used differently from the English meanings), and broader meaning (the Thai meanings of these loanwords are added to the English meanings).

4. Results

This section analyzes the data collected according to the method applied in the present research. The results are presented according to the actual number in percentage form.

Table 2 Results of English loanwords (form)

Name	Types of Loanwords			
	Transliteration (words)	Loan Blend (words)	Loan Translation (words)	Loan Shift (words)
1. GOT	21	0	1	0
JAKRAPUN	(97%)	(0%)	(3%)	(0%)
2. BLUEBERRY	40	1	1	1
R-SIAM	(93%)	(3%)	(2%)	(2%)
3. SAOMAT	29	1	0	0
MEGADANCE	(96.7%)	(3.3%)	(0%)	(0%)
4. PAOWALEE	31	0	3	0
PORNPIMOL	(91%)	(0%)	(9%)	(0%)
5. SUNAREE	23	3	2	2
RATCHASIMA	(76.6%)	(10%)	(6.7%)	(6.7%)
6. APAPORN	18	2	3	4
NAKORNSAWAN	(80%)	(3%)	(7%)	(10%)

From Table 2, it was revealed that transliteration was used most while loan shift was found the least. Transliteration is the practice of converting or replacing a text from one writing system into another, word-by-word, or ideally letter-by-letter.

Table 3 Results of English loanwords (meaning)

Name	Types of Loanwords			
	Original (words)	Narrower (words)	Deviating (words)	Broader (words)
1. GOT	21	0	0	1
JAKRAPUN	(97%)	(0%)	(0%)	(3%)
2. BLUEBERRY	40	0	2	1
R-SIAM	(93%)	(0%)	(5%)	(2%)
3.SAOMAT	29	0	0	1
MEGADANCE	(96.7%)	(0%)	(0%)	(3.3%)
4.PAOWALEE	33	1	0	0
PORNPIMOL	(97%)	(3%)	(0%)	(0%)
5.SUNAREE	28	0	1	1
RATCHASIMA	(93.4%)	(0%)	(3.3%)	(3.3%)
6.APAPORN	21	0	6	0
NAKORNSAWAN	(87%)	(0%)	(13%)	(0%)

In Table 3, it was found that in terms of the meaning, English loanwords in Thai language which has the original meaning was used most while narrower meaning was found the least. Original meaning refers to the loanword, which is not different from the original English meaning.

Some examples of loanwords found in the data are presented here with the borrowed words highlighted as follows:

1. “GOT JAKRAPUN”

Table 4 The analysis of loanwords

No.	English word	Thai word	Content	English meaning	Thai meaning
1.	Show	โชว์	บ่มีรูระ แต่โทรหาเพราะว่า ก็คฮอดแลกเหรียญมา หยอด ดู โทรศัพท์ ริมทาง (Excerpt from the song หัวใจคฮอด)	(V.) Show somebody something to point to something so that someone can see where or what it is.	เปิดให้ดู, อวด, แสดงให้คนทั่วไปได้ดูได้ชมการ , แสดง (ราชบัณฑิตยสถาน. พจนานุกรม ฉบับ ราชบัณฑิตยสถาน พจนานุกรมศัพท์ ๒๕๕๔ .ศ. เนื่องในโอกาสพระราชพิธี พระบาทสมเด็จพระเจ้าอยู่หัว รัชกาลที่ ๙ รอบ ๘ มหามงคลเฉลิมพระชนมพรรษา ๒๕๕๔. กรุงเทพฯ : ราชบัณฑิตยสถาน, 2556, หน้า 262.)

“โชว์” is borrowed from “Show”. The English pronunciation sounds similar to the way it is pronounced by Thai native speaker. As a result, it is categorized as “Transliteration”. The direct meaning of the word “Show” given in the dictionary is associated with the Thai meaning in the context. Therefore, it conveys an original meaning of the word.

Table 5 The analysis of loanwords

No.	English word	Thai word	Content	English meaning	Thai meaning
2.	Telephone	โทรศัพท์	บ่มีรูระ แต่โทรหาเพราะว่า ก็คฮอดแลกเหรียญมา หยอด ดู โทรศัพท์ ริมทาง (Excerpt from the song หัวใจคฮอด)	(N.) a system for talking to someone else over long distances, using wires or radio.	ระบบโทรคมนาคมซึ่งใช้อุปกรณ์ทางไฟฟ้าเป็นเครื่องมือสื่อสารให้ ติดต่อพูดถึงกันได้ในระยะไกลโดย ใช้สายตัวนำโยงติดต่อถึงกัน และอาศัยอำนาจแม่เหล็กไฟฟ้าเป็น หลักสำคัญ

“โทรศัพท์” is borrowed from “telephone”. When considering the meaning of the word which Thai native speakers use are translated from English language, “โทร” is translated from “tele” and “ศัพท์” is translated from “phone”. Semantically, the meaning of word “telephone” given in the dictionary is associated with meaning in the Thai context. Therefore, it conveys an original meaning of word. That is why it is categorized as “loan translation”.

2. “BLUEBERRY R-SIAM”

Table 6 The analysis of loanwords

No.	English word	Thai word	Content	English meaning	Thai meaning
1.	Care	แคร์	อย่างกับไม่แคร์ใจกัน ไม่ให้ ไป พุดไม่ได้หรือ (Excerpt from the song สักพักค่อยไป)	(V.) Feel concern or interest; attach importance to something	สนใจ, ใส่ใจ, ดูแล, ห่วงใย

“แคร์” is borrowed from “care”. The pronunciation sounds similar to the way it is pronounced by Thai native speakers. This is why it is categorized as “transliteration”. In addition, the meaning of the word “care” given in the dictionary is associated with the meaning in the Thai context. Thus, it conveys an original meaning of the word.

Table 7 The analysis of loanwords

No.	English word	Thai word	Content	English meaning	Thai meaning
2.	Fan	แฟนเพลง	ให้เสียงเพลงล่องลอยไป กราบขอบคูดในน้ำใจ <u>แฟน</u> <u>เพลง</u>) Excerpt from the song มุลเบอร์รี่ ผลไม้ ในใจแฟน	(N.) someone who admires and supports a person, sport, sports team, etc.	น แฟนเพลง เช่น ผู้นิยมชมชอบ . แฟนมวย แฟนภาพยนตร์

“แฟนเพลง” is borrowed from “fan”. “แฟนเพลง” is a combination of a Thai morpheme (เพลง (and the English morpheme (แฟน); therefore, this borrowed word is categorized as “loan blend”. Semantically, the meaning of the word “fan” given in the dictionary is associated with the meaning in the Thai context. Thus, it conveys an original meaning of the word.

3. “PAOWALEE PORNPIMOL”

Table 8 The analysis of loanwords

No.	English word	Thai word	Content	English meaning	Thai meaning
1.	Status	สเตตัส	<u>สเตตัส</u> ล้ำมีคู่ เห็นแล้วควีน ออกหู คาร์บอนต่ำ (Excerpt from the song สวัสดิ์จะคุ้มเนื้อคู่)	(N.) Relative social or professional position; standing	สถานภาพ (ราชบัณฑิตยสถาน พจนานุกรม . .ศ.พ ฉบับราชบัณฑิตยสถาน 2542. กรุงเทพฯ : ราชบัณฑิตยสถาน, 2546 หน้า 256)

“สเตตัส” is borrowed from “Status .”The English pronunciation sounds similar to the way it is pronounced by Thai native speakers .Then, it is categorized as “Transliteration .”Semantically, the meaning to word “Status ”given in the dictionary is associated with the meaning in the Thai context .Therefore, it conveys an original meaning of the word.

Table 9 The analysis of loanwords

No.	English word	Thai word	Content	English meaning	Thai meaning
2.	Number	เบอร์	<u>เบอร์</u> ก็ให้แล้ว แล้วเบอร์ก็ไม่ โทร (Excerpt from the song ไม่อยากเป็นคน รักเธอข้างเดียว)	An arithmetical value, expressed by a word, symbol, or figure, representing a particular quantity and used in counting and making calculations. (Excerpt from the song เบอร์โทรคนเหงา)	ตัวเลข

“เบอร์” is borrowed from “Number”. The English pronunciation sounds not similar to the way it is pronounced by Thai native speakers because it was translated before used in the language. That is why it is categorized as “Translation”. Semantically, the meaning to word “Number” given in the dictionary is associated with the meaning in the Thai context. Therefore, it conveys an original meaning of the word.

4. "SAOMAT MEGADANCE"

Table 10 The analysis of loanwords

No.	English word	Thai word	Content	English meaning	Thai meaning
1.	Dinner	ดินเนอร์	ชอบออกงาน ดินเนอร์ (Excerpt from the song "ดาวมหาลัย")	(n) a formal evening meal, typically one in honour of a person or event.	อาหารมื้อค่ำ

"ดินเนอร์" is borrowed from "dinner". The English pronunciation sounds similar to the way it is pronounced by Thai native speakers. As a result, it is categorized as "Transliteration" Semantically, the meaning of the word "dinner" given in the dictionary is associated with the meaning in the Thai context. Therefore, it conveys an original meaning of the word.

Table 11 The analysis of loanwords

No.	English word	Thai word	Content	English meaning	Thai meaning
2.	Motorcycle	มอเตอร์ไซค์	เมาเหล้าขาวเหล้า โทรมอเตอร์ไซค์ (Excerpt from the song "ดาวมหาลัย")	(n) a two-wheeled vehicle that is powered by a motor and has no pedals.	รถจักรยานยนต์

"มอเตอร์ไซค์" is translated from English words "motorcycle". The English pronunciation sounds similar to the way it is pronounced by Thai native speakers. As a result, it is categorized as "Transliteration." Semantically, the meaning of the word "motorcycle" given in the dictionary is associated with the meaning in the Thai context. Therefore, it conveys an original meaning of the word.

5. "APAPORN NAKORNSAWAN"

Table 12 The analysis of loanwords

No.	English word	Thai word	Content	English meaning	Thai meaning
1.	Say goodbye	เซ่กู๊ตบาย	น้องนี้ขอ เซ่กู๊ตบาย (Excerpt from the song "ถองซอง")	Used to express good wishes when parting or at the end of conversation	พูดลา

"เซ่กู๊ตบาย" in a Thai sentence means the sentence is used to say goodbye, which is exactly the same as the English meaning. It carried out the meaning directly to the particular word. Therefore, it is categorized as transliteration and original meaning.

Table 13 The analysis of loanwords

No.	English word	Thai word	Content	English meaning	Thai meaning
2.	Microphone	ไมค์	ชักมือเสียบแล้วชีวิตมือถือ ไมค์ (Excerpt from the song "ไฟในใจก็รัก")	The instrument used to amplify the sound is used for recording or broadcasting.	เครื่องขยายเสียง

"ไมค์" in a Thai sentence means the instrument used to amplify the sound is used for recording or broadcasting, which is exactly the same as the English meaning. It carried out the meaning directly to the particular word. Therefore, it is categorized as transliteration type and original meaning.

6. "SUNAREE RATCHASIMA"

Table 14 The analysis of loanwords

No.	English word	Thai word	Content	English meaning	Thai meaning
1.	commission	ค่า คอมมิชชั่น	เอาใจดวงน้อยมาคอยรับรักจากฉัน ไม่มีค่าคอมมิชชั่นก็ไม่ว่ากันรักฉัน สบาย (Excerpt from the song ตามมาเลข)	(1) An instruction, command, or role given to a person or group. (2) A sum, typically a set percentage of the value involved, paid to an agent in a commercial transaction. (Oxford dictionaries)	ส่วนแบ่งเปอร์เซ็นต์, เงินตอบแทน

"ค่าคอมมิชชั่น" is borrowed from "commission". It is a combination of Thai morpheme "ค่า" and the English morpheme "commission". So, this word is classified as loan blend. The meaning of the word "commission" in number (2) is alike with Thai meaning. Therefore, this word conveys an original meaning.

Table 15 The analysis of loanwords

No.	English word	Thai word	Content	English meaning	Thai meaning
2.	Coupon	บัตรคูปอง	ไม่เคยรู้จักเจ้าบัตรคูปอง (Excerpt from the song คนเลวขอร้อง)	(1) A voucher entitling the holder to a discount off a particular product. (2) A detachable portion of a bond which is given up in return for a payment of interest. (oxforddictionaries)	บัตรหรือตัวชนิดหนึ่งที่ใช้แลก ของ ชื่อของ หรือใช้บริการขึ้น ดอกเบี้ย หรือเป็นส่วนเครื่องอุปโภค บริโภคในเมื่อมีการควบคุม (พจนานุกรม ราชบัณฑิตยสถาน)

The word "บัตรคูปอง" borrowed from "Coupon". It is a combination of Thai morpheme "บัตร" and the English morpheme "คูปอง." Thus, this word is classified as loan blend. The meaning of the words "Coupon" and "บัตรคูปอง" are similar. So, it conveys an original meaning.

5. Discussion

Based on the results, the transliteration and original meaning were found the most in this research study since the musical style of Thai country songs is somewhat direct and when it comes to the type of loanwords regarding the form, the songwriters might want to straightforwardly use loanwords with very little or no change to the particular word. This also applies to the aspect of loanwords regarding meaning to the degree that Thai meanings of these loanwords are not different from the English meanings. It can be assumed that the listeners do not probably need to interpret or try hard to understand each word or the message these singers want to convey. This is line with Katamba (2005) who asserts that "to adopt a word [is much easier] rather than to make up an original one from nothing". Moreover, Danesi and Rocci (2009) provided the similar conclusion that borrowing is "a practical strategy" for enriching language vocabulary instead of creating new words for new notions as it takes much less cognitive effort.

The current study is also relatively consistent with two previous works from Mahakaew in 2016 and 2017 who investigated English loanwords in two contexts as follows:

The first one in 2016 is with the focus on English loanwords in the advertisements in four Thai magazines: *Cheeze*, *Cleo*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *DONT* (monthly women's magazines). The data were collected from January to December in 2010 for *Cheeze*, in 2014 for *DONT*, and in 2015 for *Cleo* and *Cosmopolitan*. It was revealed that the most found type of loanwords is transliteration and original meaning

because some words cannot be translated into Thai language, so they have to take a part of form or meaning to use directly in those contexts.

The second one is related to his research work in 2017 that put an emphasis on English loanwords found in Thai teen romantic fictions. The researcher collected the English loanwords found in eleven Thai teen romantic fictions. The data were collected from January to December in 2016. It was found that transliteration was used most in each fiction. Besides, original meaning was used most in the contexts according to semantic changes.

Therefore, it can be summarized that English loanwords are frequently used since these listeners are able to understand the words directly better than Thai translation meaning.

6. Conclusion

Zhou Li-na (2016) made an interesting point in her article that is relatively precise and concise about the benefits of loanword studies:

“The more contacts, the more loanwords the language will acquire. The borrowing and lending lead to the merging of different languages from different nations and form new English words. Presently modern English has developed a set of scientific and technological terms common to and used by all languages as is true with politics, media, and finance. Although many words from French, German, Russian, Spanish, Japanese, and Arabic have been incorporated into English language, its wide usage, openness, flexibility, tolerance, as well as creativity make it possible to be the main body of international language in the merging of vocabularies.”

Because of the advantages of loanword studies mentioned above and based on the current analysis of English loanwords having given enough evidence of the role of such loanwords in the sampling data that were collected in six Thai modern country singers' songs, some of the infiltrating English loanwords which have been phonologically adapted and morphologically integrated.

Further research may be conducted along different lines. For instance, the sociolinguistic aspect of the use of those loanwords may be studied. This dimension will shed some light on the variation in the use of these loanwords in such parameters as age, gender, social class and educational background. The use of the English loanwords in local newspapers, poetry and proverbs would be also worth investigating.

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