WORD-FORMATION OF NEW VOCABULARY IN THAI DICTIONARY

Kanyarat Unthanon[1], Rattana Chanthao[2] and Warinthon Dandee[3]

[1]Faculty of Humanity and Social Sciences,
Khon Kaen University, Mueng, Khon Kaen, Mittraphap road 40002, Thailand

[2]Faculty of Humanity and Social Sciences, Khon Kaen University,
Mueng, Khon Kaen, Mittraphap road 40002, Thailand

[3]Faculty of Humanity and Social Sciences, Rajamangkala University of Technology Tawan-ok,
Sriracha, Chonburi province, 20110, Thailand

ABSTRACT

The increase or decrease in the vocabulary of a language is a natural aspect of language evolution. Word formation refers to the process through which a language incorporates new words and meanings into social usage. Thai is a language known for its diverse methods of forming new words. This article aims to illustrate how new words are formed in Thai. The research data were extracted from the New Words Dictionary, published by the Royal Institute. This study adopts a documentary and qualitative linguistic approach. Rahti and Gusdian's (2018) word-formation classification framework, based on the Oxford dictionary, serves as a guide for analyzing new words in Thai. The findings reveal 10 distinct methods of forming new words in the Thai language, with compounding being the most prevalent. While this research aligns with Rahti and Gusdian's framework in 8 processes, it diverges in 2 processes. Specifically, this study did not identify affixation and blending processes but identified sound imitation and sound assimilation processes, which may be unique to Thai word formation. Subsequent research should explore English loanwords in the new words dictionary, categorizing them to uncover their relationships with new meanings in Thai society.

KEYWORDS: Lexical change, new vocabulary, Thai language, Word-formation

1. INTRODUCTION

Humans naturally acquire language through self-learning and formal education within the school system. Generally, vocabulary learning primarily focuses on acquiring new words [1]. New words in any language enter through various pathways. Typically, the introduction of new words also brings new meanings contributing to the expansion of societal meanings. The addition of new vocabulary in a society is characterized by word-formation processes that are similar. Word formation often encompasses processes such as borrowing, compounding, blending, affixing, clipping, acronyms, conversion, backformation, derivation, reduplication, and coinage [2],[3],[4]. These word-formation

processes often leverage the meanings of existing words in the language, thereby connecting new words with meanings from the original language.

The book 'Word-Formation in English' written by Plag [5] describes the process of introducing new vocabulary into the English language through various methods. These methods are analyzed concerning the formation of new vocabulary in different languages, as English words influence languages around the world due to English becoming an international language, especially in business and accessing information on the internet. English is also used as a lingua franca in today's era of fast communication through modern technology, with people learning English words and incorporating them into everyday speech, thereby contributing to the expansion of the language's new vocabulary. However, English words entering any language are likely to have their pronunciation adjusted to match the linguistic characteristics of the target language [6].

In addition, the rapid introduction of a large number of English vocabularies has also had the effect of changing the language. For example, in the Lao language, it has been found that English loanwords cause phonological changes, especially in diphthongs and spelled consonants. The inclusion of English loanwords in Lao writing has also led to modifications in the writing system to maintain the characteristics of English loanwords [7]. On the other hand, the pronunciation of new vocabulary from English can also cause interference with the sound system of the speaker's original or native language. For instance, students at the college level who take English language study courses may pronounce English with a mother tongue accent. Therefore, even though India accepts English as one of its official languages, there are still clear gaps in the English sound system compared to local Indian languages. This leads Indian students to pronounce English words with their own local accents or phonemes, causing language interference [8].

In the context of Thai society, the introduction of new vocabulary into Thai society has occurred continuously since the Sukhothai period, as evidenced by the vocabulary in King Ramkhamhaeng's first stone inscription. It appears that vocabulary comes from Pali, Sanskrit, Khmer, and Mon [9], including some loanwords from western countries, such as Talat Pasan, where the word 'talat' is a Khmer word. The word 'Pasan' comes from the word 'Plaza', which is a European root word. In every era of social change in Thailand, new words arise. Those words may or may not be recorded in the Thai dictionary because the process of creating a dictionary is complex and time-consuming. The way to officially record words is to compile new words into a dictionary. The Royal Institute of Thailand is responsible for producing the Thai dictionary. They have published three volumes of the 'Royal Institute Dictionary of New Words' in 2009, 2011, and the third volume in 2013, respectively. This last dictionary is more modern than the others because it contains words that have emerged over a relatively short period of time. Therefore, new vocabularies in this dictionary represent new words in Thai society as far as official government records are concerned.

This article, therefore, demonstrates how to form words in Thai from the vocabularies in this last dictionary. The concept of word formation, as presented in the work of Ratih and Gusdian [3], is used as a criterion for classifying word formation in the dictionary. The content of this article expands the scope of research on word formation in the Thai language, which has been utilized by many Thai researchers [2],[10],[11] and illustrates the development of word formation in the Thai language, which is broader and covers the current period more comprehensively.

2. Previous Studies of New Vocabulary in Thai Language

Most of the research on word formation in the Thai language is found in theses within the Thai language and linguistics field. Sirisaiyat [11] presents word formation and the meanings of slang words in the Thai language. The slang information was collected from the Matichon Thai Dictionary, published in 2004. The selection of information from this dictionary is appropriate for studying slang because it contains new words, especially in the spoken language of Thai people. The data are used to find percentage statistics to determine how words are formed. The results revealed three types: forming words using the morpheme system as the most common, followed by forming words using the method of changing meaning, and forming words from the phonological system as the least common type. Additionally, slang words have evolved, acquiring new and expanded meanings, and diverging from their original meanings. The discovery of this dictionary's word formation method is a significant aspect of Thai word formation. However, this research does not discuss the types of slang words in terms of their composition, thus failing to provide comprehensive information on the formation of slang words in the Thai language.

Chanachit [2] published the study 'Word Formation and Meaning of Slang on Facebook.' Social media slang data were collected from 50 Facebook pages published over a 6-month period in 2015, yielding 3,584 data points. Slang was used to classify different types of word formation. The research revealed that there are two main characteristics of word formation: the formation of slang words from combinations of words and the formation of slang from other characteristics. The first method is subdivided into two: structural slang formation, which includes blending, reduplication, compounding, borrowing, clipping, avoiding, combination, and abbreviations. The second sub-method is creating metaphorical meanings. The formation of slang using a few other methods is divided into five processes: spelling, using gestures, using onomatopoeia, using symbols and numbers, and using emoticons to express emotions. Regarding the meaning of slang words, analysis of the meaning of the form found that there are synonyms, multiple meanings, opposite meanings, and homophones. There may be a combination of methods used to form slang. This phenomenon represents the formation of slang in spoken Thai language in general.

The knowledge that Chanachit discovered in his research is consistent with word-formation theory, which makes slang characteristics understandable as words used in informal speech. It differs from vocabulary information in a dictionary, which comprises words that can be officially referenced in both spoken and written language, as well as used in academic circles in terms of both meaning and

spelling, because the publisher of the dictionary is the Royal Institute, a government organization whose duty is to disseminate vocabulary, including increasing or decreasing vocabulary. A few years later, there was research by Saenarooncharoensuk [10] titled 'Forming Words about Animals in the New Dictionary, Volumes 1-3, Royal Institute Edition.' He collected only whole words related to animals that have direct meanings, comparative meanings, and all words that take the meaning of animals into new words, totaling 156 words. He analyzed all the words to determine how they were formed. The research results revealed three types of animal word formation: forming according to the morpheme system, forming according to meaning, and forming g according to the phonological system, respectively. However, Saenarooncharoensuk did not explain the word-formation process in detail, making it impossible to compare the slang formation methods of previous studies. Nevertheless, his work is based on the search for word formation using semantics, thus proposing changes in the meaning of animal words that expand their meanings into idioms and connotations. Additionally, the knowledge gained also shows relevance to Thai beliefs and expressions about animals and the current use of the Thai language through these new words.

3. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this research is to analyze the word structure of new vocabularies in Volume 3 of the New Words Dictionary, Royal Institute edition. The research hypothesis posits that word borrowing is a prevalent method of word formation found in large quantities.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN

This research is a qualitative study in the form of documentary research in linguistics focusing on the issue of word formation. The research data are taken from new words that appear in Volume 3 of the New Words Dictionary published by the Royal Institute [12]. The approach involves taking these words and categorizing them to identify methods for forming new words, using the methodology proposed by Ratih and Gusdian (2018), who outlined a method for forming new English words in the Oxford dictionary. The research results revealed ten main methods for forming new words in English, as found in the dictionary, including: affixation, folk etymology, compounding, abbreviation, acronyms, borrowing, blending, clipping, back-formation, and double word formation,

Using the guidelines provided for forming new vocabularies above, there may be some differences in forming Thai words because Rahti and Gusdian's data uses English words. This article utilizes Thai words, as the two languages have different linguistic characteristics. One similarity is that many words in the Thai language have roots in the Pali-Sanskrit language, which is closer to English than Thai. Additionally, many English loanwords collected in Volume 3 of the dictionary have been translated and created to represent the borrowed English. Therefore, Rahti and Gusdian's choice of word formation criteria above is appropriate to use as a framework for this research.

The Thai writing in this article uses transliteration methods using English letters that closely approximate the pronunciation in Thai and is enclosed within forward slashes (/ /). The meanings are

indicated with single quotation marks (' '). Regarding the tones, numbers 1-5 are used to represent the five tones in the Thai language, and they are written at the same level as the letters.

1   mid tone 2 low tone 3 falling tone 4 high tone 5 rising tone '   ' meaning

5. RESULT
5.1 Compounding
Most of the new vocabularies in Volume 3 of the dictionary are composed of words that are combined to form new words and meanings, where they are still linked to the original meaning of the words. Most words consist of 2-3 combined words. The newly formed compound words have two types: compound words of Thai origin and compound words formed from combinations of Thai and English words, as shown in Example 1.

Example 1 Compounding

    a)   kongtap-mod   /kong1 tap4/ 'army' + /mod4/ 'ant'
                                'a group of people gathered together for doing the same point.

    b)   kampheang-phasi   /kam1pheng1/ 'high wall' + /pha1 si5/ 'tax 'protective tariff'
    c)   kam-online/kam   / 'karma' + online 'online' 'getting quickly the bad things after did
        bad behave'

Example (a) is a compound word created by combining Thai words, where the new meaning is still connected to the original meaning. Example (b) is a compound word that translates the English word 'protective tariff'. The word in example (c) is a combination of the Thai word 'karma' and the English word 'online'.

5.2 Folk etymology
Forming new words involves combining words with metaphorical meanings or old expressions that have long been used in the Thai language with new words, resulting in a new meaning closely related to the original meaning.

Example 2 Folk etymology

    a)   khongbeu-khongmao   /khong5 beu2/ 'arsenic' + /khong5 mao1/ 'alcoholic/
                                         'the drink with alcohol'

    b)   khaotook-dookmai   /khao3 took2/ 'local food for traditional ceremony' + /dook2
        mai4/ 'flower' 'sacrifice'
    c)   chaokrom-phithikan   /chao3 – krom1/ 'director' + /phiti1-kan1/ 'formal'
                                         'a person who prefer to be organizer in formal work'

The three examples above are created by using old words related to the culture, traditions, and traditional beliefs of Thai people to create new meanings. However, these new meanings still reflect their origins in the traditional ways of Thai society in the past.

5.3 Abbreviation

The process involves abbreviating words to facilitate pronunciation. Although the abbreviated words themselves do not introduce new meanings or words in the Thai language, their abbreviated forms do become new words in Thai.

Example 3 Abbreviation

    a)   kom   /kom1/ 'computer'

    b)   kuu   /kuu1/ 'google'

    c)   mo   /mo1/   'modify'

    d)   kaw   /kao1/   'Korea'

All the words in the examples above originate from other languages, particularly English. Abbreviating words to a single syllable is a common method for expressing English loanwords in Thai society, especially among teenagers. Additionally, there are words borrowed from other languages, such as Korean, where 'Korea' is abbreviated to /kao1/. Thai people generally pronounce 'Korea' as /kao1-li5/. Therefore, the first syllable /kao/ is used to replace all words in the Thai pronunciation. Newly formed words in these abbreviated forms are combined with other words to create new meanings; for instance, /kru1/ 'teacher' + /kuu1/ 'Google' means to search on Google.

5.4 Acronyms

Vocabularies that are a combination of many words and are long are typically abbreviated using acronyms, which are formed by taking the first letter of each word to create a new one, such as UNESCO, AFTA, COP. These acronyms are officially used in Thai society, written using Thai letters according to their English pronunciations, as shown in the following examples.

Example 4 Acronyms

    a)   /yu nes ko/   'UNESCO' United Nations Education, Scientific and Culture Organization

    b)   /ar sian/   'ASEAN' Association of South East Asian Nations

    c)   /e yu /   'EU' European Union

    d)   /kop/   'COP' Conference of the Parties

The pronunciation of the words above is based on their pronunciation in Thai, which may not correspond to the correct pronunciation in English. This method of forming new words has only been observed in the transliteration of English words.

5.5 Borrowing

The adoption of borrowed words from other languages into the Thai language has continued from the past to the present, especially from English, which is widely used in both spoken and written contexts. The process of borrowing new words seems to occur more easily and quickly than other processes. The loanwords that result from this process are transliterated borrowings (transliteration), where both words and meanings are incorporated into Thai usage and written according to criteria established by the government.

Example 5 Borrowing

a) /kot sip/	'gossip'
b) /ko/	'goal'
c) /chi kun kun ya/	'chikungunya' (African disease name)
d) /ka wa sa ki/	'kawasaki' (Japanese disease name)

The borrowed words in examples (a) and (b) are adjusted by Thai people in terms of pronunciation of the final consonant in the first syllable, aligning with popular Thai pronunciation, which may not correspond to the English sound. In addition to English loanwords, there are loanwords from other languages such as African and Japanese in examples (c) and (d), which refer to diseases that pose a danger if they enter Thailand.

5.6 Back formation

According to Thai word structure, adjectives are placed after nouns, unlike in English where adjectives come before nouns. These different linguistic characteristics result in back formation when forming new words in the Thai language. This research found only one word:/khip-video/ 'video clip'. However, word formation in this manner demonstrates the adaptation of English loanwords into Thai, which aligns with Thai language characteristics. It is likely that there will be more new words with the same structure in the future.

5.7 Clipping

Clipping a word's pronunciation while retaining its meaning is a form of slang in various languages. The clipping process involves selecting words or syllables from longer words to create brevity in speech. Some words are shortened into new forms that can convey heightened emotion.

Example 6 Clipping

    a.   /juat/   /ban1 – juat2/ 'beautify'

    b.   /chao/   /au3-chao5/   'scandalous'

    c.   /phot/   /phot4 cha2 na1 nu4 krom1/ 'dictionary'

    d.   /bra/   /bra1/ 'brasier'

In the examples (a) and (b) above, the first syllable is clipped, leaving only the second syllable. However, words with the original two-syllable pronunciation are still in use. The creation of this dictionary and the inclusion of new words aim to certify the meanings and usage of these new words and to align with the language of Thai people today.

5.8 Double word formation

The Thai language has a word-formation process known as repetition that has been present since ancient times. Repetition of a word in this manner creates a new meaning that is similar to the original meaning but enhances or diminishes the speaker's emotional expression. Additionally, the Thai language employs repetition markers as evidence of this word-formation technique.

Example 7 Double word formation

    a) khray-khray   /khray1/ 'who' + /khray1/ 'who'   'whoever'

    b) buam-buam   /buam1/ 'swell' + /buam1/ 'swell'   'out of mind'

    c) tu-tu   /tu3/ 'not sharp' + /tu3/ 'not sharp' 'to put up with'

In general, the repetition of words in Thai often indicates a larger quantity, such as /dek-dek/ or /dek/ for 'children'. Repeating the word twice implies there are many children. However, the double word formation process differs because repeating the word changes its meaning from the original one. It acquires a new metaphorical meaning, as seen in the example of /buam/ ('swell'), which is used to describe a patient whose brain has swollen due to an accident, resulting in memory loss. Therefore, when used in its repeated form, the word takes on a metaphorical meaning unrelated to its literal one.

5.9 Sounding Imitation

Forming words by imitating the sounds of verbs, actions of people, or things that are still connected to those actions is a new finding in addition to the work of Rahti and Gusdian (2018). Using sounds to form words in Thai is not a new process, as many words in the Thai language are formed from sounds heard, including sounds made by people, animals, human actions, or surroundings. When such a sound is mutually accepted, it is used to represent the meaning of that thing or action, as shown in the following examples.

Example 8 Sound imitation

     a) /krait4/   'happy'   (to screams of joy)

     b) /pret4/   'angry'   (to scream of unhappy)

     c) /chea4/   'to take photo' (sound of camera shutter)

Native speakers perceive these sounds as similar and understand the same meaning, but those outside the culture may hear these sounds differently compared to Thai people. Examples include the sound of a train, a woman's screams, a gun, or a waterfall. Therefore, these sounds are characteristic of each language and can be used to form new words in various ways depending on each society.

5.10 Sound assimilation

Thai people enjoy playing with words that have similar sounds or meanings, similar to spoonerism. This characteristic is a cultural trait unique to the Thai language, distinguishing it from other languages. Assimilating sounds from similar words to form new words is also a characteristic of word formation in the Thai language.

Example 9 Sound assimilation

     original word   /yuk phra-si aan/   'Phra Sri Aryan Era in Buddhism'

     assimilation   /yuk pha-si aan/   'high taxing rate'

                        /yuk4/ 'era' + /pha-si5/ 'tax' + /aan/ 'lot of paying'

Although this research found only one word, it demonstrates that this type of word formation has occurred in the past and continues to occur in the present. Word formation through sound assimilation mostly involves forming words with ironic meanings.

6. DISCUSSION

The results of this research were compared with the 10 types of word-formation processes proposed by Rahti and Gusdian [3], and no new word information was found from the word-formation processes of affixation and blending. This could be due to the nature of the Thai language, which lacks affixation. As for the blending process, it is likely that this method is not commonly found in many Thai words and is more complex than other methods. Therefore, new words may not yet have been discovered using this method. However, this research found that word formation in Thai involves two different processes: sound imitation and sound assimilation. These two new processes have previously occurred in Thai word formation and are evident in this research, indicating that these two methods of word formation in Thai are unique to the Thai language, reflecting the linguistic characteristics of the Thai people.

Compounding is still a word-formation process commonly used by Thai people to introduce new words into the Thai language, reflecting the linguistic characteristic of single-syllable words with complete meanings. This characteristic results in compound words always being new words in Thai, as Thai speakers draw on the meaning of the original word, including both the direct and metaphorical meanings, to form new words. Forming words using this method of linking original meanings happens easily because people generally have a repertoire of original meanings for words. By taking many old words and creating new ones, most of them retain a meaning close to their original sense. However, in terms of the double word-formation process, the resulting meaning is often different from the original one compared to other processes. The borrowing process from English loanwords, through transliteration and compounding with Thai words, is popular, even adapting the loanword's sound to fit Thai pronunciation style.

7. Other Recommendation

The next issue to study should be to investigate the characteristics of English loanwords in Thai from the three new word dictionaries to understand the influence of new words originating from English. Categorizing the meanings of these English loanwords will reveal their relationship with the contextual meaning and the impact on Thai society through the adoption of new words that are English loanwords in various categories.

REFERENCES

[1]   M. Alqastani, "The Important of Vocabularies in Language Leaning and How to be Thought", International Teaching and Education, 3(3), pp. 21-34,2015

[2]   K. Chanachit, Word formation and meaning of slang on Facebook (Master's thesis), Thammasat University, Thailand, 2017.

[3]   E. Ratih, & R.I. Gusdian, "Word Formation in New English Words in Oxford English Dictionary (Old)", Online. CELTIC, 5(2), pp. 25-35, 2018.

[4]   L. Wei, & L. Wenyu, "Analysis on the Word-formation of English Netspeak Neologism", Journal of Arts & Humanities, 3(12), pp. 22-30, 2014.

[5]   I. Plag, Word-Formation in English, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

[6] F. Katamba, English Word, London and New York, Routledge, 1994.

[7] K, Unthanon, & R. Chanthao, "English Loanwords in the Lao Language", Humanities and Social Sciences, 34(3), pp. 82-99, 2018.

[8]   R. Shanmugasundaram, N.A. Jebakumar, "Mother Tongue Influence on English Pronunciation: A Case study in College Students", Journal for Educators, Teachers and Trainers, 13(4), pp.312-316, 2022.

[9]   V. Moungboon, Loan words in Sukhothai inscriptions (Master's thesis), Silpakorn University, 1989.

[10] S. Saenarooncharoensuk, "Forming animal vocabulary in the Royal Institute's new dictionary", Phetchabun Rajabhat Journal, 21(2), pp. 79-86, 2019.

[11]   R. Sirisaiyat, Study of Word Formation and Meaning of Slang, Matichon edition (Master's thesis). Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand, 2008.

[12] Royal Institute, New Words Dictionary, Volume 3, Royal Institute Edition, Bangkok, Union Ultra Violet, 2011.