



THAI INTERFERENCE IN ENGLISH WORD CHOICE

NITIRAT UTTHACHAT

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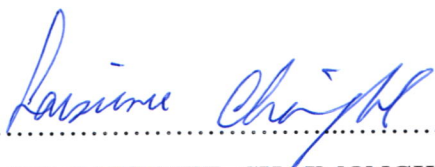
TITLE THAI INTERFERENCE IN ENGLISH WORD CHOICE

AUTHOR MISS NITIRAT UTTHACHAT

EXAMINATION COMMITTEE


DR.SIRINTIP BOONMEE	CHAIRPERSON
DR.SAISUNEE CHAIMONGKOL	MEMBER
DR.LUGSAMEE NUAMTANOM KIMURA	MEMBER

ADVISOR


.....
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.....
(ASST.PROF.DR.KANOKWAN MANOROM)

DEAN, FACULTY OF
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.....
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(Miss Nitirat Utthachat)

Researcher

บทคัดย่อ

ชื่อเรื่อง : การแทรกแซงของภาษาไทยในการเลือกใช้คำภาษาอังกฤษ
 โดย : นิติรัตน์ อุทธชาติ
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ศัพท์สำคัญ : การแทรกแซงของภาษาที่หนึ่ง การเลือกใช้คำภาษาอังกฤษ

งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อตรวจสอบว่าภาษาไทยมีบทบาทในการใช้คำภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษามากน้อยเพียงใด กลุ่มตัวอย่างคือนักศึกษาที่ไม่ได้เรียนวิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏอุบลราชธานี จำนวน 150 คน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัยคือ แบบทดสอบแปลภาษาไทยเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ โดยกลุ่มตัวอย่างต้องแปลคำภาษาไทยจำนวน 15 คำ ซึ่งเชื่อว่ามีปัญหาสำหรับผู้เรียนคนไทย

ผลการศึกษาที่ได้มาจากคำตอบในการทำแบบทดสอบแปลของกลุ่มตัวอย่างชี้ให้เห็นว่าภาษาไทยมีบทบาทสำคัญในการเลือกใช้คำภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษา และแสดงให้เห็นว่าปัญหาดังกล่าวเกิดจากการขาดความรู้เรื่อง คำปรากฏรวม และ คำพ้องรูปพ้องเสียง

ABSTRACT

TITLE : THAI INTERFERENCE IN ENGLISH WORD CHOICE
BY : NITIRAT UTTHACHAT
DEGREE : MASTER OF ARTS
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CHAIR : SAISUNEE CHAIMONGKOL, Ph.D.

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The purpose of the study was to investigate the extent to which L1(Thai) played a role in English word choice of 150 non-English majors at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, Mueng District, Ubon Ratchathani Province, Thailand.

The instrument was a translation task requiring the participants to translate 15 Thai words which were believed to be problematic for Thai students into English.

The results were obtained from the answers on the translation task. The finding indicated that L1 or Thai played a very significant role in the students' word choice. It was also shown that the problems were caused by the students' lack of collocation and homonym knowledge.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the rationale, research question, purpose of the study, significance of the study and scope of the study.

1.1. Rationale

In Thailand, English is used as a foreign language and is contained in the curriculum of all education levels. Even though Thai students have to learn English for many years, a few become successful because English is not used in their daily life. They use more Thai than English. They have a slim chance to communicate in English with foreigners outside the classroom. Besides, they are frequently but negatively influenced by Thai in learning English (Bennui, 2008). For example, students may produce the sentence 'My home stays at Nakhon Si Thammarat.' This sentence is clearly constructed based on Thai structure (Phoocharoensil, 2011). This is because when a place or location is referred to in Thai, the verb 'yuu' (literally translated as stay or live) and the preposition 'thii' (at) are used together as in 'yuu thii' (be located at/in). This is a phenomenon called 'interference' which results in difficulty in learning various aspects of a second or foreign language such as sounds, words and structures (Lado, 1964). Dulay et al. (1982) state that interference is the automatic transfer of the surface structure of the first language to that of the target language, leading to mistakes or errors. When the learners find the differences of two languages difficult to learn and understand, they would resort to L1 for help (Dulay et al., 1982 ; Selinker, 1979).

The first thing that humans need to know when they learn language is words. Those who have more vocabulary can use language more effectively and fluently (Huckin, 1986), especially language learners. The learners who know more words can more clearly understand texts (Nation, 2001). This enables them to widely

explore various kinds of English media such as the Internet, newspapers, textbooks and others.

Knowing a word includes knowing the word commonly used with it or its collocation, its register and its cultural accretion (Thornbury, 1988). One way of vocabulary learning is through the distinction between knowing a word and using a word. Both remembering words and capability to use them automatically in a wide range of language contexts when the need arises are the purposes of vocabulary learning (McCarthy, 1984). Therefore, vocabulary learning should include strategies for “using” as well as “remembering” a word.

To use appropriate English words, learners should be aware of collocations and homonyms. Violating collocations can cause unacceptable English. For example, the students may produce ‘I eat medicine’ instead of ‘I take medicine’. This is because in Thai, the word ‘eat’ can be used in various contexts such as ‘eat rice’ ‘eat fish’ and ‘eat medicine’ whereas in English the word ‘eat’ is used with ‘food’ and the word ‘take’ with ‘medicine’. Therefore, the sentence ‘I eat medicine’ is not accepted in English. Furthermore, homonyms can cause ambiguity. For instance, the English sentence ‘He is cool’ is ambiguous because the word ‘cool’ has at least two meanings, which are ‘rather cold’ and ‘very attractive and fashionable’. (Macmillan English dictionary for advanced learners, 2006).

Word choice is very important in language use. Words used in different contexts can have different connotations, thus possibly causing misunderstanding or unacceptability. Such a phenomenon may be caused by interference. Regarding this, lexical interference can also affect Thai students’ word choice. That is, they may use English words influenced by Thai words. In other words, they may use wrong English words in certain contexts proper in Thai only. For instance, Thai students may use ‘The price is cheap’ instead of ‘The price is low’. This is because Thai people use the word ‘cheap’ rather than ‘low’ with the noun ‘price’. (Pengpanich, 2002).

From the researcher’s experience in teaching English at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University for two years, students have often been found to make errors in English word choice. For instance, in the sentence ‘I turn on the light’, a lot of students use the word ‘open’ instead of ‘turn on’. This is because in Thai the word ‘เปิด’ (open) can be used in various contexts including ‘open the door’ and ‘open the

light'. In contrast, 'open' in English can be used with only certain nouns such as 'open the door', 'open the window', but not 'open the light'.

To solve the problems of English word choice, the researcher is interested in investigating errors in English word choice possibly caused by L1 interference of the students at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University so that teachers are more aware of these errors and find a proper teaching technique to correct them.

1.2 Research Questions

To what extent is English word choice of 150 non-English majors at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University interfered by Thai?

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to find out how much L1 plays a role in English word choice of 150 non-English majors at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University.

1.4 Significance of the study

Using inappropriate English words is one serious problem faced by EFL learners. Some teachers may give priority to such problems as structures and tense usage, and neglect this problem. If it happens that L1 (Thai) plays a role in the students' English word choice, English teachers may be aware of lexical errors and pay more attention to teaching English word choice. This study is also expected to provide additional information for English teachers to solve the lexical problems by designing proper teaching materials and/or remedial exercises for their students.

1.5 Scope of the study

This study aims to investigate 15 Thai words which are believed to be problematic for Thai students when translated into English as found in the studies by Thep-Ackrapong (2005), Boonyasquan (2005) and the researcher's experience. The subjects of the study are 150 non-English majors taught by the researcher at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University in the second semester of academic year 2012.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses L1 interference, roles of English word choice in language learning and some previous studies.

2.1 L1 interference

As L2 learners master their first language before learning the second language, L1 transfer often occurs in second language acquisition (Yule, 1985). It seems that learners tend to think in L1 and translate it into L2, which can cause errors or inappropriate use of the second language. It also happens that both similarities and differences of structures are transferred from their L1 to L2, resulting in positive and negative transfers respectively (Lado, 1957 cited in Troike, 2006). Similarities between the first and the second language facilitating the process of second language acquisition are called 'positive transfer'. In contrast, differences that are believed to cause learning difficulties and are a main source of errors are 'negative transfer' or 'interference'. Ellis (1997) defines interference as 'transfer' by which the learner's first language negatively influences the acquisition of a second language. That is, the rules of L1 make it difficult for learners to acquire the rules of L2.

It is apparent that L1 interference causes many problems in language learning. Lado (1957, cited in Bada, 2001) claims that the major source of problems in study and acquisition of a foreign language is grammatical structure transfer from the native language to the foreign language. Furthermore, Beardsmore (1982) suggests that the transfer habit from L1 causes many of the difficulties in learning various aspects of phonology, vocabulary and grammar of L2. In other words, L1 interference can occur in many aspects of language such as sounds, words and structures. Using English words is one of the aspects which can be affected by L1 interference. This type of problem needs teachers' attention as English word choice in language learning is essential as elaborated in the next section.

2.2 Word choice in language learning

Word choice is one aspect which is difficult for language learners and needs special attention. Before learning new words in a second language, learners have concepts of the words in their first language. In other words, “the second language learner is likely to short-cut the process of constructing a network of association and simply map the word directly onto the mother tongue equivalent” (Thornbury, 1988). In case of Thai learners, they may think that a Thai word can be directly translated into English, which may result in inappropriate second language use. In fact, language to language translation is a source of problematic word choice (Leech, 1994).

To use appropriate English words, collocations and homonyms are to be taken into consideration. According to Sinclair (1991 cited in Phoocharoensil, 2011), “collocations are items that occur physically together or have strong chances of being mentioned together”. They are important because using wrong words can cause unacceptable English. For instance, the students may produce the sentence ‘close the television’ instead of ‘turn off the television’. In such a case, the word ‘close’ in Thai can be used in various contexts such as ‘close the door’ ‘close the television’ and ‘close the light’ while in English ‘close’ is used with ‘the door’, ‘turn off’ with ‘the television’ and ‘switch off’ with ‘the light’. In this case, the three words ‘close’ ‘turn off’ and ‘switch off’ are used in three different contexts in English. That Thai students use the word ‘close’ in all the three contexts is caused by L1 interference.

The incorrect word choice may also result from homonyms which are words that share the same form but have different meanings (Thornbury, 1988). Homonyms can create ambiguity. For example, the sentence ‘I will meet you at the bank’ is ambiguous because the word ‘bank’ has at least two meanings, which are ‘the financial institution’ and ‘the riverside’. Homonyms can be found in all languages including Thai. For example, the word ‘แก้’ (gae) has at least two meanings ‘to correct’ as in ‘แก้ข้อผิดพลาด’ and ‘to undress’ as in ‘แก้ผ้า’.

Whatever causes are, incorrect word choice causes a serious problem for Thai students when learning language. Errors in word choice can impact the students’ overall success in using language, often resulting in misinterpretation or unacceptability (Leech, 1994).

An example of misinterpretation caused by incorrect word choice is when Thai students produce the sentence 'I'm easy.' instead of 'I'm simple'. This is because the word 'easy' is equivalent to 'ง่าย (nai)' in Thai ; the word 'ง่าย' meaning 'simple' is homonymous with the word 'ง่าย' meaning 'not difficult'. In contrast, in English, the sentence 'I'm easy' means 'I'm a person who is ready to go with someone'. This can cause misunderstanding for a native speaker.

Unacceptability possibly occurs when using wrong words, for instance, when Thai students produce the sentence 'My hair is busy' instead of 'My hair is messy'. This case is caused by the direct translation of the Thai word 'ยุ่ง (yung)' into English. That is, the word 'ยุ่ง (yung)' in Thai, meaning 'very untidy', is homonymous with the word 'ยุ่ง (yung)' meaning 'having a lot of things to do'. In contrast, in English, 'very untidy' is 'messy' and 'having a lot of things to do' is 'busy'. Therefore, the sentence 'My hair is busy' is unacceptable in English.

In conclusion, one cause of incorrect word choice is L1 interference. Thai learners may use a wrong English word because they directly translate Thai words into English ones without knowledge of English collocations or awareness of homonyms. Errors in word choice can cause misunderstanding and unacceptability; consequently, learners should consider both the meaning of the word and how to use the word in appropriate context. Therefore, teachers cannot ignore and should pay more attention to this problem.

2.3 Previous studies

There are several studies that concern lexical interference. The results of these studies are quite similar; that is, the first language influences lexical use in the second language.

Boonyasquan (2005) studied collocational violations in translation of business news articles of students at Srinakharinwirot University in Bangkok. The analysis of the violations of collocations showed that major causes of the violations were the interference of the patterns of the source language and the students' unawareness of collocations due to deficiency of collocational knowledge.

Similarly, Bennui (2008) analysed and described features of L1 interference in paragraph writing of students at Thaksin University. Three levels of L1 interference: words, sentences and discourse, were analyzed, using samples of the students' paragraph writing. It was found that literal translation of Thai words into English mainly represented features of L1 lexical interference in the students' written English.

Moreover, Mongkolchai (2008) investigated the knowledge of English collocations of third year English majors at Srinakharinwirot University. The students had to do a collocation test which consisted of two parts. The first was in a sentence completion form and the second was in a multiple choice form. The result of the test showed that the violations of collocation were caused by the participants' limited knowledge of collocations and application of the strategy of transferring L1 to L2 collocations.

Furthermore, Phoocharoensil (2011) investigated errors in the acquisition of English collocations in essay writing of the students at a university in Thailand. It was found that first language transfer was the outstanding cause of the errors. The L1-based errors involved preposition addition, preposition omission, incorrect word choice, and collocational redundancy.

The findings from the studies mentioned above indicate that L1 interference affects English word use. Similarly, this study aims to find out how much L1 plays a role in English word choice of 150 non-English major students at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University taught by the researcher. How the study was conducted is described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides information about the subjects, the instrument, the research procedure and the data collection and analysis.

3.1 Subjects

The subjects of the study were all 150 non- English major students at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University who studied General English 9022102, English for Learning Information, taught by the researcher in the second semester of academic year 2012. They were composed of 97 first year, 26 second year, 16 third year and 11 fourth year students from the Faculties of Law, Science, Education, Agriculture, Industrial Technology, Computer Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, Business Administration and Management and College of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine. Most of them had low English proficiency, considering their low midterm examination scores in that semester. Moreover, they could not communicate fluently and accurately, nor could they well understand textbooks.

3.2 Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a translation task which consisted of 15 Thai sentences. Each sentence contains a Thai word that was believed to be problematic for Thai students. The participants had to translate into English only the target Thai word which was underlined in each sentence. Some of the Thai words used in the study were selected from the previous studies, which are เปิด (turn on), ปิด (turn off), ชุ่ย (messy) (Thep-Ackrapong, 2005), ราคาแพง (high price) (Boonyasquan, 2005) and เล่น (play) (Phoocharoensil, 2011). The rest were from the researcher's experience in teaching English at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, which are กิน

(take), พูด (tell), ง่าย (simple), แท้ (real), ไปส่ง (take), ขอโทษ (excuse me), ทำ (make), ถูกต้อง (right), หาเงิน (earn). (See Appendix A)

3.3 Research procedures

The participants were required to take the test in an English class in the second semester of academic year 2012. They had 30 minutes to complete it without permission to use any dictionary.

3.4 Data collection and analysis

The data were from the participants' scores on the translation task. In this study, the researcher focuses only on English word choice, not parts of speech and spelling. All the answers were checked and grouped into the following categories:

3.4.1 Correct word choice (C)

3.4.2 The answers interfered by L1 or Thai (T)

3.4.3 The answers unfit in (1) or (2) (U) such as words with deviant meaning from (1) and (2) and no answers supplied. (See Appendix C). To find out the answer to the research question, frequency was counted and converted into percentages and chi-square was also used to find whether there were significant differences among the three groups.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study to answer the research question, “To what extent is the English word choice of 150 non-English majors at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University interfered by Thai?”

The data were collected and analyzed by using percentages after the participants had completed the translation task. The information in Table 4.1 reveals the answer to the research question.

Table 4.1 The number of answers in each category

Category C (Correct word choice)	Category T (Answers interfered by Thai)	Category U (Unfit answers)	Total
295	1,351	604	2,250
13.11%	60.05%	26.84%	100%

The data in Table 1 indicate that the highest percentage (60.05% or 1,351 out of 2,250 answers) falls in the category T, English word choice affected by Thai interference. The answers falling in the category U (Unfit answers) and the category C (Correct word choice) are 26.84 % (604 out of 2,250 answers) and 13.11% (295 out of 2,250 answers), respectively. The results show that the English word choice of the Thai students was heavily influenced by L1 or Thai. This is confirmed by the p-value of the three categories as demonstrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Statistic comparisons of the three categories

Categories	Answers	Chi-square	P value
T	1,351	786.056	0.000
U	604		
C	295		
Total	2,250		

To get a more conclusive answer to the question, chi-square was used to find out whether each category is statistically different from the others. As can be seen in Table 4.2, the number of answers in the category T, category C and category U are significantly different at $p < 0.05$. This indicates that the students' use of the English words was substantially influenced by Thai. The greatest number of answers was in category T, followed by those in the category U and the category C respectively.

The students' answers for each item classified into the three categories are shown in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3 Students' choice of each word

Items	C	T	U	Total
1. ตอนนี้มีค้มาก ฉันต้องการเปิดไฟ (switch on, turn on)	22 (14.67%)	105 (70.00%)	23 (15.33%)	150 100%
2. เขาเป็นหัวหน้กมก ดังนั้นเขาจึงต้องกินยา (take)	6 (4.00%)	133 (88.67%)	11 (7.33%)	150 100%
3. พวกเขาเล่นคอมพิวเตอร์ในเวลาว่างเสมอ (work on)	0 (0.00%)	142 (94.67%)	8 (5.33%)	150 100%
4. ฉันสัญญาว่าจะพูดความจริงกับเธอ (tell)	5 (3.34%)	132 (88.00%)	13 (8.66%)	150 100%
5. ผมของฉันยุ่งเมื่อนั่งอยู่ใกล้พัดลม (messy)	0 (0.00%)	80 (53.33%)	70 (46.67%)	150 100%
6. เขาเป็นคนง่าย ๆ ทำให้เข้ากับผู้อื่นได้ดี (simple)	2 (1.34%)	124 (82.66%)	24 (16.00%)	150 100%
7. ฉันต้องการจะซื้อแหวนทองแต่มันราคาแพงมก (high)	0 (0.00%)	93 (62.00%)	57 (38.00%)	150 100%
8. เด็ก ๆ ชอบเล่นอินเทอร์เน็ต (surf)	2 (1.34%)	134 (89.33%)	14 (9.33%)	150 100%
9. ฉันดูไม่ออกว่า นี่เป็นเพชรแท้หรือเพชรเทียม (real)	33 (22.00%)	17 (11.33%)	100 (66.67%)	150 100%
10. ฉันจะไปส่งเธอที่สนามบิน (take, see off)	3 (2.00%)	96 (64.00%)	51 (34.00%)	150 100%
11. ขอโทษคะ พิพิธภัณ์ฯ ไปทางไหนคะ (Excuse me)	43 (28.66%)	100 (66.67%)	7 (4.67%)	150 100%

Table 4.3 Students' choice of each word (Continued)

Items	C	T	U	Total
12. ฉัน <u>ทำ</u> อาหารเย็นทานเองทุกวัน (make, cook)	78 (52.00%)	46 (30.67%)	26 (17.33%)	150 100%
13. แดง : เชียงใหม่อยู่ภาคไหนของประเทศไทย ? ดำ : อยู่ภาคเหนือ แดง : ใช้อย่างนี้! นั่นเป็นคำตอบที่ถูกต้อง (right, correct)	57 (38.00%)	48 (32.00%)	45 (30.00%)	150 100%
14. เธอ <u>ปิด</u> โทรทัศน์เพื่อประหยัดพลังงาน (turn off)	32 (21.33%)	37 (24.67%)	81 (54.00%)	150 100%
15. เขาเป็นนักธุรกิจที่ <u>หา</u> เงินได้เยอะ (make, earn)	12 (8.00%)	64 (42.67%)	74 (49.33%)	150 100%

According to Table 3, none of the words, except the word ‘ทำ’ in the context of ‘ทำอาหารเย็น’ (make dinner), was over 50% correctly used by the students. The words which none of the students used correctly are the word ‘เล่น’ in the context of ‘เล่นคอมพิวเตอร์’ (work on computer), the word ‘ยุ่ง’ in the context of ‘ผมยุ่ง’ (messy) and ‘แพง’ in the context of ‘ราคาแพง’ (high price).

Moreover, the words greatly interfered by Thai (more than 80 %) are the word ‘เล่น’ (play) in the context of ‘เล่นคอมพิวเตอร์’ (work on computer) (94.67%), the word ‘เล่น’ (play) in the context of ‘เล่นอินเทอร์เน็ต’ (surf the Internet) (89.33%), the word ‘กิน’ (eat) in the context of ‘กินยา’ (take the medicine) (88.67%), the word ‘พูด’ in the context of ‘พูดความจริง’ (tell the truth) (88.00%) and the word ‘ง่าย’ in the context of ‘เขาเป็นคนง่าย ๆ’ (He is simple) (82.66%) respectively. On the contrary, those not much affected by L1 interference (lower than 50%) are the word ‘แท้’ in the context of ‘เพชร

แท้' (real diamond) (11.33%), the word 'ปิด' in the context of 'ปิดโทรทัศน์' (turn off a television) (24.67%), the word 'ทำ' in the context of 'ทำอาหารเย็น' (make dinner) (30.67%), the word 'ถูกต้อง' in the context of 'นั่นเป็นคำตอบที่ถูกต้อง' (That's right) (32.00%) and the word 'หา' in the context of 'หาเงิน' (make money) (42.67%).

However most of these words were not correctly used by the majority of the students.

The discussion of the results is provided in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION



In this chapter, the results shown in the previous chapter and pedagogical implications are discussed.

5.1 Discussion

The results indicated that the English word choice of the Thai students was greatly influenced by L1 or Thai as more than half of the answers were affected by L1 interference. It is apparent that the students directly translated the Thai words into English without considering collocations or homonyms. This is in line with the study by Boonyasquan (2005), which showed that the major causes of deviation in translation of business news articles of students at Srinakharinwirot University in Bangkok were L1 interference and the students' poor collocational knowledge. Similarly, Mongkolchai (2008) found that the violations of collocations were caused by the participants' limited knowledge of collocations and application of the strategy of transferring L1 to L2 collocations. Moreover, Bennui (2008) found that literal translation of Thai words into English in paragraph writing of students at Thaksin University mainly represented features of L1 lexical interference. As well, the study by Phoocharoensil (2011) indicated that L1 transfer was the outstanding cause of the errors in essay writing of the students at a university in Thailand. The L1-based errors involved preposition addition (leave from home), preposition omission (listen music), incorrect word choice (domesticate fish) and collocational redundancy (dwelling place).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, there are five words which were greatly influenced by L1 (over 80%). The major cause is the students' lack of collocation and homonym knowledge. The words caused by the lack of collocational knowledge are the word 'เล่น' in the context of 'เล่นคอมพิวเตอร์' (work on computer), the

word ‘เล่น’ in the context of ‘เล่นอินเทอร์เน็ต’ (surf the internet), the word ‘กิน’ in the context of ‘กินยา’ (take the medicine) and the word ‘พูด’ in the context of ‘พูดความจริง’ (tell the truth), in which cases ‘play’, ‘play’, ‘eat’ and ‘say’ were principally used respectively. It should be noted that the first and the second phrases employ the same word in Thai ‘เล่น’. That is in Thai the word ‘เล่น’ (play) can be used in various contexts such as เล่นเทนนิส (play tennis), เล่นกีตาร์ (play the guitar), เล่นคอมพิวเตอร์ (work on computer) and เล่นอินเทอร์เน็ต (surf the Internet). Likewise, the words ‘กิน’ in the context of ‘กินยา’ (take the medicine) and ‘พูด’ in the context of ‘พูดความจริง’ (tell the truth) were also influenced by Thai to a great extent because the word ‘กิน’ (eat) can be used with any edible items in Thai and the word ‘พูด’ can be translated as ‘tell’ ‘talk’ ‘say’ and ‘speak’ in English. It can be assumed that the students’ incorrect use of the words above is due to their lack of collocational knowledge. On the other hand, the word caused by the students’ ignorance of homonyms is the word ‘ง่าย’ in the context of ‘เขาเป็นคนง่าย ๆ’ (He is simple). Most students used the word ‘easy’ instead of ‘simple’ (82.66%). This can cause misunderstanding because ‘He is easy’ means ‘He is ready to go with someone’. This error is most probably caused by their unawareness of homonyms because in Thai the word ‘ง่าย’ meaning ‘simple’ is homonymous with ‘ง่าย’ meaning ‘not difficult’.

In contrast, the words which were least affected by Thai (lower than 50 %) are the word ‘แท้’ in the context of ‘เพชรแท้’ (real diamond), the word ‘ปิด’ in the context of ‘ปิดโทรทัศน์’ (turn off a television), the word ‘ทำ’ in the context of ‘ทำอาหารเย็น’ (make dinner), the word ‘ถูกต้อง’ in the context of ‘นั่นเป็นคำตอบที่ถูกต้อง’ (That’s right) and the word ‘หา’ in the context of ‘หาเงิน’ (make money). Two words are somewhat affected by L1 with the high percentage of correct answers: the word ‘ถูกต้อง’ in the context of ‘นั่นเป็นคำตอบที่ถูกต้อง’ (That’s right) and the word ‘ทำ’ in the context of

‘ทำอาหารเย็น’ (make dinner). In case of the word ‘ถูกต้อง’ in the context of ‘นั่นเป็นคำตอบที่ถูกต้อง’ (That’s right), it can be noted that the percentage of correct answers (38.00%) is higher than these of L1 interference (32.00%) and unfit answers (30.00%). That this word was less affected by L1 may be because the word ‘right’ and ‘correct’ are often used in class, especially as compliments by the teacher such as ‘That’s right’ and ‘That’s correct’. For the other word ‘ทำ’ in the context of ‘ทำอาหารเย็น’ (make dinner), it can be seen that this word was somewhat affected by L1 with a little over half of the students (52%) using this word correctly and a number of students (30.67%) using the word ‘do’ instead. It is possibly because the word ‘ทำ’ in Thai can be translated as either ‘do’ or ‘make’ in English. As a result, it cannot be definitely assumed that the students’ correct use of the word is due to their real knowledge of collocation.

The other three words, the word ‘แท้’ in the context of ‘เพชรแท้’ (real diamond), the word ‘ปิด’ in the context of ‘ปิดโทรทัศน์’ (turn off a television), and the word ‘หา’ in the context of ‘หาเงิน’ (make money) were somewhat interfered by L1 with the percentage of the correct answers being less than 50% and the percentage of unfit answer higher than those of the other two categories. The word ‘แท้’ in the context of ‘เพชรแท้’ (real diamond) and the word ‘หา’ in the context of ‘หาเงิน’ (make money) seem to be beyond the students’ knowledge as their answers totally diverted from the correct answers. They could not even find the Thai equivalent words in English. For example, the word ‘right’ and ‘no copy’ were used in the context of ‘เพชรแท้’ (real diamond) and the word ‘take’, ‘keep’ and ‘work’ were used in the context of ‘หาเงิน’ (make money).

Concerning the word ‘ปิด’ in the context of ‘ปิดโทรทัศน์’ (turn off a television), it happened that about three quarters of the students used the word ‘off’ in this context. This may be the result of their familiarity with the words ‘on’ and ‘off’ in electric appliances.

In addition, the words which none of the students used correctly are the word ‘เล่น’ in the context of ‘เล่นคอมพิวเตอร์’ (work on computer), the word ‘แพง’ in the

context of ‘ราคาแพง’ (high price) and the word ‘ยุ่ง’ in the context of ‘ messy’.

As mentioned earlier, this is probably caused by the students’ ignorance of collocations and homonyms. The words caused by collocation ignorance are the word ‘เล่น’ in the context of ‘เล่นคอมพิวเตอร์’ (work on computer) and the word ‘แพง’ in the context of ‘ราคาแพง’ (high price). However, the incorrect use of the word ‘เล่น’ in the context of ‘เล่นคอมพิวเตอร์’ (work on computer) may also be caused by the misleading item on the test itself as เล่นคอมพิวเตอร์ does not imply any work, but fun activities.

The more appropriate word to be used should be ‘ใช้คอมพิวเตอร์’ which can be more accurately translated as ‘work on computer’. Moreover, the students may not be familiar with the phrase ‘work on computer’ both in class and in daily life. In case of the word ‘แพง’ in the context of ‘ราคาแพง’ (high price), many students (61.33%) used the word ‘expensive’ instead of ‘high’. This is partly due to their lack of collocational knowledge because in English ‘high’ is used with the noun ‘price’ and partly due to their direct translation of the Thai word into English without considering the context. That is, the students may not pay attention to the word ‘ราคา’ (price). Likewise, none of the students correctly used the word ‘ยุ่ง’ (messy) in the context of ‘ messy’. As previously stated, this may be caused by their unawareness of homonyms because in Thai the word ‘ยุ่ง’ meaning ‘very untidy’ is homonymous with the word ‘ยุ่ง’ meaning ‘having a lot of things to do’. So the majority of them used the word ‘busy’ for this word.

To conclude, the study shows that the English word choice of 150 students at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University was greatly affected by L1 coupled with their ignorance of collocations and homonyms. These problems may have resulted from teaching and learning. The students may not have enough input and opportunity to use and practice English word choice. How to use appropriate words may not have been taught or emphasized in class. Collocations and homonyms may not have been adequately mentioned either. Furthermore, the differences between Thai and English may not be sufficiently pointed out in order to raise the students’ awareness of using

correct English words. To solve the problems, pedagogical implications are suggested.

5.2 Pedagogical implications

Since languages are different in many aspects, L1 interference is rarely evitable in foreign language learning. In terms of teaching and learning, teachers should raise the students' awareness of L1 interference by pointing out the differences between Thai and English in order that students can use L2 correctly and appropriately. Teachers should also warn students about direct translation from Thai into English, which may cause inappropriate English and they should introduce lessons on collocations and homonyms in class so that the students can use English words correctly.

Furthermore, the translation task may be used so that students will have an opportunity to observe L1-L2 differences in word choice and to practice how to use English words correctly. In that way, teachers can enhance students' collocation and homonym knowledge.

The conclusion will be provided in the next chapter in order to summarize the whole study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
TRANSLATION TASK

แบบทดสอบ

คำชี้แจง อ่านประโยคที่กำหนดให้ต่อไปนี้แล้วแปลคำที่ขีดเส้นใต้ในแต่ละประโยคเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ

1. ตอนนี้มีคนมาก ฉันต้องการเปิดไฟ

2. เขาเป็นหัวคั่นมาก ดังนั้นเขาจึงต้องกินยา

3. พวกเขาเล่นคอมพิวเตอร์ในเวลาว่างเสมอ

4. ฉันสัญญาว่าจะพูดความจริงกับเธอ

5. ผมของฉันยุ่งเมื่อนั่งอยู่ใกล้พัดลม

6. เขาเป็นคนง่าย ๆ ทำให้เข้ากับผู้อื่นได้ดี

7. ฉันต้องการจะซื้อแหวนทองแต่มันราคาแพงมาก

8. เด็ก ๆ ชอบเล่นอินเทอร์เน็ต

9. ฉันดูไม่ออกว่า นี่เป็นเพชรแท้หรือเพชรเทียม

10. ฉันจะไปส่งเธอที่สนามบิน

11. ขอโทษค่ะ พิพิธภัณฑ์ ไปทางไหนคะ

12. ฉันทำอาหารเย็นทานเองทุกวัน

13. แดง : เชียงใหม่อยู่ภาคไหนของประเทศไทย ?

ดำ : อยู่ภาคเหนือ

แดง : ใช่แล้ว! นั่นเป็นคำตอบที่ถูกต้อง

14. เธอปิดโทรทัศน์เพื่อประหยัดพลังงาน

15. เขาเป็นนักธุรกิจที่หาเงินได้เยอะ

APPENDIX B
ANSWER KEYS

Items	Correct word choice
1. ตอนนี้มีค้มาก ฉันต้องการ <u>เปิด</u> ไฟ	switch on , turn on
2. เขาเป็นหัวค้หนักมาก คังนั้นเขาจึงต้อง <u>กิน</u> ยา	take
3. พวกเขา <u>เล่น</u> คอมพิวเตอร์ในเวลาว่างเสมอ	work on
4. ฉันสัญญาว่าจะ <u>พูด</u> ความจริงกับเธอ	tell
5. ผมของฉัน <u>ยุ่ง</u> เมื่อนั่งอยู่ใกล้พัดลม	messy
6. เขาเป็นคน <u>ง่าย</u> ๆ ทำให้เข้ากับผู้อื่นได้ดี	simple
7. ฉันต้องการจะซื้อแหวนทองแต่มันราคา <u>แพง</u> มาก	high
8. เด็ก ๆ ชอบ <u>เล่น</u> อินเทอร์เน็ต	surf
9. ฉันดูไม่ออกว่า นี่เป็นเพชร <u>แท้</u> หรือเพชรเทียม	real
10. ฉันจะไป <u>ส่ง</u> เธอที่สนามบิน	take, see off
11. <u>ขอโทษ</u> คะ พิศิรภคณ์ท์ ไปทางไหนคะ	Excuse me
12. ฉัน <u>ทำ</u> อาหารเย็นทานเองทุกวัน	make, cook
13. แดง : เชียงใหม่อยู่ภาคไหนของประเทศไทย ? ดำ : อยู่ภาคเหนือ แดง : ใช่แล้ว! นั่นเป็นคำตอบที่ <u>ถูกต้อง</u>	right, correct
14. เธอ <u>ปิด</u> โทรทัศน์เพื่อประหยัดพลังงาน	turn off
15. เขาเป็นนักธุรกิจที่ <u>หา</u> เงินได้เยอะ	make, earn

APPENDIX C
EXAMPLES OF ANSWERS IN EACH CATEGORY

Items	Category C (Correct word choice)	Category T (Answers interfered by Thai)	Category U (Unfit answers) (examples)
1. ตอนนี้มืดมาก ฉันต้องการ <u>เปิด</u> ไฟ	switch on , turn on	open	on
2. เขาเป็นหัวด้นหนักมาก ดังนั้นเขาจึงต้อง <u>กินยา</u>	take	eat	get
3. พวกเขา <u>เล่น</u> คอมพิวเตอร์ในเวลาว่างเสมอ	work on	play	game
4. ฉันสัญญาว่าจะ <u>พูด</u> ความจริงกับเธอ	tell	say, speak, talk	call
5. ผมของฉัน <u>ยุ่ง</u> เมื่อนั่งอยู่ใกล้พัดลม	messy	busy	yung
6. เขาเป็นคน <u>ง่าย ๆ</u> ทำให้เข้ากับผู้อื่นได้ดี	simple	easy	shorten
7. ฉันต้องการจะซื้อแหวนทองแต่มันราคา <u>แพง</u> มาก	high	expensive	lower
8. เด็ก ๆ ชอบ <u>เล่น</u> อินเทอร์เน็ต	surf	play	tackle
9. ฉันดูไม่ออกว่า นี่เป็นเพชร <u>แท้</u> หรือเพชรเทียม	real	true	no copy
10. ฉันจะไป <u>ส่ง</u> เธอที่สนามบิน	take, see off	send	to
11. <u>ขอโทษ</u> ค่ะ พิพิภรณ์ฯ ไปทางไหนคะ	Excuse me	sorry	sony
12. ฉัน <u>ทำ</u> อาหารเย็นทานเองทุกวัน	make, cook	do	take

Items	Category C (Correct word choice)	Category T (Answers interfered by Thai)	Category U (Unfit answers) (examples)
13. แดง : เชียงใหม่อยู่ภาคไหนของประเทศไทย ? ดำ : อยู่ภาคเหนือ แดง : ใช่แล้ว! นั่นเป็นคำตอบที่ถูกต้อง	right, correct	true	yes
14. เธอ <u>ปิด</u> โทรทัศน์เพื่อประหยัดพลังงาน	turn off	close	off
15. เขาเป็นนักธุรกิจที่ <u>หา</u> เงินได้เยอะ	make, earn	find	work