

Characteristics of Slang Terms in Online Discussion among Thai Stock Investors

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Abstract

Slang is actively used in society as a whole and it is more commonly used in spoken language. This study examines a context for such commonality by investigating the characteristics of slang terms used by Thai stock investors when they are communicating via social networking media: pantip.com (*Sindhorn café*) and facebook.com (closed group: เล่นหุ้นเก็งกำไรแบบรายวัน) during the timescale of August to October 2015. This study employed a mixed-methods methodology by using a quantitative approach methodology by counting the frequency of slang terms and a qualitative approach by analyzing metaphorical expressions, nativization and the categorizations of puns. The collected words were transcribed phonetically, using International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The findings highlight 55 slang words used in online discussion forums among Thai stock investors. The most noticeable features of slang words used by Thai stock investors in online stock discussions were the use of metaphorical expressions as they form the largest group with 31 words. The findings also highlight 15 slang words which undergo a nativatization process. In addition, there were nine paronymic puns that emerged from the data. Most of the slang terms used by Thai stock investors when discussing stocks have a humorous and sarcastic tone.

Keywords: Slang terms, online discussion, Thai stock investors, metaphors, nativization, puns

บทคัดย่อ

สแลงเป็นภาษาที่ใช้อย่างกว้างขวางในสังคมทั่วไป และมักพบการใช้ภาษาสแลงในภาษาพูด งานวิจัยฉบับนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาลักษณะของคำสแลงในการสนทนาออนไลน์ของนักเล่นหุ้นชาวไทยในการสนทนาออนไลน์ผ่านทางเครือข่ายสังคม ได้แก่ เพชบุค (เล่นหุ้นเก็งกำไรแบบรายวัน) และเว็บบอร์ดพันทิป (ห้องสินธุ) ระหว่างเดือนสิงหาคม – ตุลาคม พ.ศ. 2558 งานวิจัยนี้การเก็บข้อมูลแบบเชิงปริมาณ โดยนับความถี่ของการใช้คำสแลง และการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ โดยการตีความการวิเคราะห์จากการสำรวจกรรมเกี่ยวกับอุปถัมภ์ การปรับตามภาษาแม่ และชนิดของการเล่นคำ คำสแลงที่เก็บได้ถูกถอดเสียงตามหลักสัทศาสตร์ โดยใช้ส็อฟต์แวร์ภาษาลึกในการถอดเสียงคำสแลงที่ได้จากการเก็บข้อมูล งานวิจัยนี้พบคำสแลงที่ใช้ในการสนทนาออนไลน์เกี่ยวกับหุ้นของนักเล่นหุ้นชาวไทยทั้งหมด 55 คำ ลักษณะเด่นของคำสแลงที่ใช้ในการพูด

เกี่ยวกับหุ้นคืออุปลักษณ์ โดยพบคำสlangที่มีลักษณะของอุปลักษณ์มากที่สุดถึง 31 คำ การปรับตามภาษาแม่ 15 คำ และการเล่นคำ 9 คำ ทั้งนี้พบว่าการใช้คำสlangในกลุ่มนักเล่นหุ้นชาวไทยให้ความหมายต่างๆขึ้นและมีเนื้อหาเชิงเสียดสี

คำสำคัญ: คำสlang, การสนทนาออนไลน์, นักเล่นหุ้นชาวไทย, อุปลักษณ์, การปรับตามภาษาแม่, การเล่นคำ

Introduction

Stock investment is a type of investment where people invest their money in exchange for shares of particular public companies. Investors then receive dividends and profits from “buy low” and/or “sell high” investing strategies. Many people talk more about stock investment in conversation, yet what interests this researcher most is the way that Thai people use social networking sites, such as Facebook (closed group) and pantip.com (Sindhorn café), as the channels through which to discuss topics concerning stocks. The language and expressions used when Thai people discuss topics about stocks in online discussions, are unique, containing a great deal of slang words. Thus, the characteristics of Thai slang words used in online discussions among Thai stock traders or stock investors should be investigated.

However, the stock market is in a constant state of fluctuation, and with emergence of real-time trading online, there has also emerged new terminology, such as “day trader” or “day trading,” which refers to speculating in stocks, especially the buying and selling of stocks within the same trading day or holding the stock for a short period of time, and later selling the stock if he/she is satisfied with the profits gained. The term day trader or day trading is opposed to “value investors” who see value and make fundamental analysis of a company, then gradually invest their money in the form of stocks and hold the investment for a long time, believing that profit is gained gradually. In this paper, the term, Thai stock investors, is used to refer to both day traders and value investors. It is my intention to investigate informal language use and slang terms used by Thai stock investors when they are discussing stocks online.

According to Zhou and Fan (2013), slang is an informal speech style which can consist of a single word or phrase. Slang is often regarded as informal and a low prestige use of language. Although slang is considered by many people as having lower accountability in society, slang is noticeably increasing in society in terms of use as emergent in: everyday conversation, movies, media and magazines. Young people are active in creating slang. They use slang terms in their conversation to show their attitude against society, or to personalize their language to their own way of thinking. It can be said that slang is a product of society because it is created by people living in the society. It is one of the linguistic varieties which can reflect social trends of a society at that time and also reflect how the world is seen by its people.

As slang is actively used in society as a whole, commonly it is used in the form of spoken language, and it is my interest to investigate the characteristics of slang terms

used by Thai stock investors when they communicate using social networking sites such as pantip.com: Sindhorn café and facebook.com (closed group: เล่นหุ้นเก็งกำไรแบบรายวัน). The two websites for data collection are asynchronous. Based on Hadziahmetovi-Jurida (2007), the interaction between users is stored in a particular format, and made available to other users on their request. Users can hence catch up with the discussion in the postponed time (asynchronous), adding their comments to any given topic and are not limited by time.

As asynchronous online discussions are a way in which people can hold conversation in the form of posted messages on a website, many Internet users log onto websites and post as well as leave comments. Interaction in the form of “writing” seems to play a part in the online discussion. Communication is primarily typing and usually a non-standard form of writing is shown on computer screens and smart phones. Crystal (2001) stated that from the sociolinguists’ point of view, non-standard forms of writing such as using clipping and creating new words in online discussions are considered a new language variety. Language online is a system of linguistic expression whose use is governed by situational factors.

I visited many online discussion forums and web boards where stock investing was discussed in the Thai netscape. I noticed and encountered the use of slang terms in online discussion about stock investments. The language used among stock investors is difficult to understand by people outside the group, because new words are created and used by members in the discussion forums. I noticed that an important aspect of this online language variety was the use of slang, and other linguistics features are used in online discussion about stocks. Therefore, I decided to pursue an investigation into the characteristics of slang used in online discussions among Thai stock investors.

Scope of the study and limitation of the study

Usually, research results must be analyzed and interpreted bearing in mind the study’s limitations. Consequently, readers should be cautious about making generalizations from the findings. The limitation of the study is that the data was collected from two popular websites: pantip.com (Sindhorn café) and facebook.com (closed group: เล่นหุ้นเก็งกำไรรายวัน). The data was collected from these websites over three months: August to October 2015.

Pantip is a popular Thai language website and web board. One of the features of Pantip is that it provides a “café” which consists of 20 various topics of discussion such as politics, music, movies, dramas, education and celebrities. The topics, or cafés, are named after famous places in Thailand which include Ratchadumnern café (discussions and topics about politics), Silom café (discussions and topics about health), Sindhorn café (discussions and topics about economy and stock market). The focus of this study is Sindhorn café because there are active posts, discussions, comments about stock investments and mutual funds.

Facebook, which is considered the largest and most popular social network in Thailand, is also the focus of this study. I collected data from a “closed group” because posts and comments of the members in a closed group do not show in the newsfeed as opposed to a public group or fanpage. I chose to collect data from a closed group because I believe that the members feel free to post and comment about stocks. The closed group selected for this study is เล่นหุ้นเก็งกำไรรายวัน as there are more than 30,000 members, making the posts and comments that are regularly updated.

Literature review and conceptual framework

In this section, analytical concepts relevant to this study are reviewed, specifically: slang, metaphor, nativization, and puns. After reviewing the concepts of slang used from many dictionaries and scholars who note that slang is regarded as informal words and expressions used among a particular group of people which bristles with humor and is often characterized by lexical innovation through creation of new words (Crystal 2004; Hamaida 2007; Yule 2010; McCrindle 2011; Zhou & Fan 2013), I have devised metaphorical concepts relevant to the present analysis, nativization process, as well as categorization of puns which share some characteristics to slang use. In so doing, I emphasize the relevance of these concepts to my analysis of Thai stock investor’s online discussions.

Slang use

Slang is a term which has a long history especially in folk linguistics but for the purposes of this discussion I am using the definition of slang as outlined in Yule (2010) which suggests that slang refers to words or phrases that are used instead of more everyday terms among younger speakers and other groups with special interests. In what follows here is an outline of some of the many definitions of slang, and discussion of the emphasis on Yule’s definition. The common features of slang offered by many dictionaries are that slang is: informal, humorous, used by a special group of people and short-lived. The *Oxford Modern Dictionary of Slang* (2008) states that slang is a colorful alternative vocabulary bristling with humor, prejudice and informality. Crystal (2004) also defines slang as informal, non-standard vocabulary and the jargon of a special group.

Hamaida (2007) summarized that slang refers to the non-standard use of words in a language and it is associated with informal and colloquial spoken language. Slang often originates in the subcultures of a society. It is characterized by lexical innovation through the creation of new words. Particular forms of slang by teenagers are used as a means of expressing identity between members of a group.

According to Yule (2010), slang or colloquial speech, describes words or phrases that are used instead of more everyday terms among younger speakers, and other groups, with special interests. Slang is an aspect of social life that is subject to fashion

especially among adolescents. It can be used by those inside a group to share ideas and attitudes as a way of distinguishing themselves from others. As a marker of group identity during a limited stage of life such as early adolescence, slang expressions can grow old quite quickly.

However, Eckert (cited in Yule 2010) commented that the use of slang varies within the younger social group, for example in the use of obscenities, or taboo terms (words and phrases that people avoid for reasons related to religion, politeness and prohibited behavior). Eckert found that the regular use of taboo words among both males and females in the lower-status group yet their usage behavior differed among the higher-status group, where males used taboo words only with males whereas females did not appear to use them at all.

According to McCrindle (2011), youth slang refers to a young person's choice of speech, and it is an extension of the particular youth subculture he/she belongs to, or identifies with. Slang is created by young people by adopting old words, then mixing them up or changing their meaning and personalizing them. Although slang is short-lived, the life cycle of a slang word depends on whether or not it is adopted by the mainstream or a dominant culture. The common shared characteristics of youth slang are: blended words (single words made from two words, e.g., crunk = crazy + drunk), virtual words (computer terminology, e.g., cyberslacking, blogosphere, cyberloafing), analogous words (something that bears some resemblance to the thing or action it denotes, e.g., ice = jewel, diamond), onomatopoeic words (imitations of sound associated with the thing or action they denote, e.g., cha-ching = money, bling-bling = jewel) and gender-specific words (words used by members of only one sex or for addressing only one gender).

Zhou and Fan (2013) offered some interesting characteristics of American slang and through their discussion I noticed some shared characteristics of slang use by Thai stock investors. To them, the characteristic of humor can be shown through the lexicon. For example, the acronym NATO is used to describe somebody or something that only says something but does not put their plan into practice. American slang is used to show self-identity for dividing professional groups in society, and to show that they are qualified members among a certain distinct group. Also, an emotive function is shown in American slang as it reveals the speaker's attitude toward the subject. This is considered one of the most powerful uses of language because it is important in changing the emotional status of an audience for or against someone or something.

Metaphor and slang

The term metaphor is derived in this study from Lakoff's (1992) discussion in cognitive linguistics where he emphasizes that metaphor involves a mapping of two conceptual domains, where one conceptual domain (the source domain) is mapped onto another (the target domain). Here, I will highlight some academic work on metaphor of importance to the present discussion. Lakoff and Johnson (1980), the pioneers of the cognitive approach to metaphor, stated that metaphor is not only textual decoration but reflects the way humans think, act and speak. Conceptual metaphor is the process of

viewing one thing in terms of another, which results in metaphorical expressions. It is a mapping of two conceptual domains: the source domain onto the target domain at the cognitive level (Lakoff, 1992). Metaphor is regarded as ubiquitous and that human's conceptual metaphors make sense of the world and their experience. As a result, it is a reflection of how humans view the world. However, the proposed theory received criticism as it focused on cognition and the data come from decontextualized introspection; therefore empirical evidence is needed and should be based on a corpus of naturally occurring data. In addition, there should also be an analysis of the pragmatic function of metaphor in discourse because metaphor is also a tool for communication. Metaphor is used to communicate ideas in a vivid manner and has pragmatic force in the context it is used in.

Of more specific relevance to the present discussion is how metaphor is related to slang. Lederer (2009) stated that all slang is metaphor and all metaphor is poetry. He commented that American slang abounds in fresh figures of speech that evoke arresting word pictures in the mind's eye. Slang is a prominent part of the American wordscape. In fact, the *Dictionary of American Slang* estimates that metaphor makes up perhaps a fifth of slang words we use.

Bartel (1983) talked about metaphor in slang and that various motives have been ascribed to the makers and users of slang deviance, secrecy, peer loyalty, economy, self-assertion and creativity. In slang, comparisons are often so strained and so remote that they are hardly noticeable as comparisons, a fact that gives slang its most distinctive quality. Although the comparison may be obscure, their vitality is conspicuous. The makers of slang are free to use words in any way they choose. Since they can ignore the dictionary meaning of words, the rules of grammar, ordinary logic and common sense, they are able to produce a unique vocabulary that has little connection with Standard English. Depending on their motives and their resourcefulness, they can invent words that are mysterious or self-explanatory, colorful or drab, shocking or soothing, humorous or dull.

Nativization process

To reflect the importance and the power of English as the language of modernity and globalization emerging in the money market, I hypothesized that the nativization process is one of the features used in online stock discussion. Nativization of English is a linguistic process where an aspect of English linguistic structure (lexicon, syntax, and other aspects of grammar) is borrowed into a speaker's native language (Sankoff & Laberge, 1974). The English language is adapted to new uses and undergoes the process of nativization in new contexts and thus nativization can refer to the change of characteristics or linguistic features of some foreign words when they are used in the dominant language, including the process of the localization of English words (Pandharipande, 1987).

In addition, Kachru and Nelson (2006) stated that in the outer and expanding circles, nativization of English can be found in various artistic expressions such as

fiction, poetry and performance with the mixing of English items. This makes nativization bring about a new variety of English and causes change in native languages. Kachru and Smith (2008) said that the grammatical structure demonstrated in sounds, rhythm, words, processes of word formation, phrases, sentence patterns, idioms and the use of English in various contexts shown in genres and literacy creativity are effects of nativization and acculturation. The classifications of nativized characteristics of English words proposed by Kannaovakun and Gunther (2003) are truncation, hybridization, reduplication, conversion, semantic shift, and word order.

Many studies that seek to reflect upon the importance of English as a language of modernity have noticed that the nativization process is present. Janhom (2011) found that in Thai health magazines hybridization was at the highest level, followed by truncation, conversion, word-order shift and reduplication respectively. Papijit (2013) investigated Hormones the series and revealed the process of truncation, hybridization, conversion, semantic shift and reduplication respectively. Reduplication was frequently used in Thai pop songs as revealed by Likhitphongsathorn and Sappapan (2013).

Pun as for intended humorous and rhetorical effect

Puns, as noted by Giorgadze (2014), are a form of word play which can be expressed with ambiguity verbally and/or with orthographic peculiarities, sounds and forms of words, in breaking grammar rules. Pragmatically speaking, the role of puns tends to be humorous, satirical and sarcastic. According to Redfern (1985), a pun is to treat homonyms as synonyms. Puns are a figure of speech which consists of a deliberate confusion of similar words or phrases for rhetorical effect, whether humorous or serious. It is a way of using the characteristics of the languages to cause a word, a sentence or a discourse to involve two or more different meanings. Thus humorous or other effects created by puns depend upon the ambiguities that the words entail (Kjerkegaard, 2011). The humorous or rhetorical effects of puns are also supported in *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary and Thesaurus* that pun (“pun”, n.d.) is the exploitation of multiple meanings of words or of similar sounding words for an intended humorous or rhetorical effect. To some extent, the definition of pun fits the nature of slang in that the makers of slang are free to use words in any way they choose to make the communication humorous, shocking or dull.

Delabastita (1996) classified pun into four categories including: homonymic pun (identical sounds and spelling), homophonic pun (identical sounds but different spellings), homographic pun (different sounds but identical spelling) and paronymy pun (slight differences in both spelling and sound).

Most studies concerning pun found issues of pun and translation where pun creates linguistic problems of translatability because different languages have different meaning-form distributions. There are comparative case studies of subtitled puns in television series (Jing, 2010; Pedersen, 2010; Ushurova, 2012). However, the focus of the current study is to investigate the characteristics of Thai slang terms used in online discussion among Thai stock investors, and to discover if pun plays a part in creating

Thai slang terms by Thai stock investors. A review of literature found that at the moment there has been no empirical studies about the use of pun in Thai slang terms.

Data collection and analysis

The data were collected from asynchronous online discussion from Facebook (closed group: เล่นหุ้นแบบเก็งกำไรรายวัน) and pantip.com (Sindhorn café) from August to October 2015 (63 days). The words that appeared in the web board, posts and comments were collected. Thirty-two Thai stock investors, found by convenience sampling, were asked if they thought that the words in the survey were slang terms that were familiar to them. Also the meanings of the collected words were checked with Banks' *Financial Lexicon* (2005). The words were then transcribed phonetically by using International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Lists of phonetic notation in Thai language can be found in an appendix. After that, the collected words were grouped and analyzed from the interpretation based on a review of literature about metaphor, nativization process, and categorization of pun as for intended humorous and rhetorical effect.

Findings

The analysis found 55 slang words used in online discussion among Thai stock investors. The most noticeable features of slang words used by Thai stock investors in online discussions was the use of metaphors as they form the largest group with 31 words. There were 15 slang words that underwent the nativization process. The classifications of nativized characteristics of English words found in this study are hybridization and truncation. There were nine paronymic puns, meaning that there are slight differences in both spelling and sound. Table 1 is a summary of the numerical findings in terms of metaphorical expressions, nativization processes, and puns.

Table 1: Summary of characteristics of slang words used by Thai stock investors in online discussion

| Language Features | Number of slang words |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Metaphorical expressions | 31 |
| 2. Nativization | 9 |
| - Hybridization | |
| - Truncation | 6 |
| 3. Pun | 9 |
| Total | 55 |

Metaphorical Expression

It was very interesting to discover that the use of metaphorical expressions form the largest group of language features in slang words used among Thai stock investors. The collected words from Facebook (closed group: เล่นหุ้นแบบเก็งกำไรรายวัน) and pantip.com (Sindhorn café) were grouped under “metaphorical expression” by seeing if the words attempted to show comparison, or identify hidden similarities between ideas, as well as mapping of two conceptual domains: the source domain onto the target domain at the cognitive level (Lakoff 1992). It was found that 31 slang words were characterized as metaphorical expressions. Here I identify the Thai term in IPA, its frequency of occurrence, its English equivalent, and its definition of use among Thai stock investors.

/dɔ:j/ ดอย was found 483 times and it has the highest frequency. /dɔ:j/ is equivalent to “summit” in English. It means the loss of profits caused by the current stock price being significantly lower than the purchased price.

/tīt.dɔ:j/ ติดดอย was found 471 times and its closest meaning is to be caught on the summit. The term is used when Thai investors want to identify a situation of purchasing stocks at high prices while the market value of the stock is lower than the purchased price.

/lùt.dɔ:j/ หลุดดอย was found 425 times and its closest meaning is to come down from the summit. The term is used for expressing feelings of having freedom when the stock prices are finally higher than the original purchased price after holding the stock for a significant length of time.

/mâw/ แม่ was found 421 times and is equivalent to “fireflies” in English. It refers to individuals who are easily attracted by red and green colors on screens when their stock prices move.

/khă:j. mŭ:/ ขายหมู was found 419 times and its closest meaning is to “selling a pig.” The term is used for a situation when after one sells a stock the stock price begins soaring.

/tçâ:w. mu:/ or /tçâ:w/ เจ้า was found 417 times and it is equivalent to the house (of trading stock). The term is used for addressing large investors who have the power to control stock prices.

/pù:/ ปู่ was found 412 times and it is equivalent to “grandpa” in English. The term is used by Thai stock investors when they want to refer to the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) as it is weak and declining quickly, as if kicking an old weak grandfather down a flight of stairs.

/lâ:k/ ລາກ was found 256 times and means “to drag up.” The term can be identified with an act of purchasing stocks, with the intention of driving up the price and the stock index.

/thûp/ ທູບ was found 244 times and is equivalent to “pump and dump” in English. It refers to a situation of dumping or selling a large number of stocks until their prices drop.

/?ɔ:k. rót/ ອອກຮັດ was found 212 times and its closest meaning is “the bus is leaving.” The term is used to refer to a situation when the stock market is increasing daily.

/tòk. rót/ ຕກຮັດ was found 211 times and it has its closest meaning to “miss the bus” in English. It refers to a situation while the stock market is rising, some investors gain profits while other portfolios remain empty.

/rót. faj. hɔ?/ ຈຳໄຟເຫດ was found 195 times and is equivalent to “a roller coaster” in English. The term can be identified with the daily fluctuation of the stock market which is going up and down very quickly.

/sùk.sà.yɔ:ŋ/ ສຸກສ້ຍອງ was found 193 times and is equivalent to “frightful Friday” in English. This refers to the end of the workweek when investors dump their stocks before leaving for holidays and weekends, causing a decline in a stock market.

/kèp. khɔ:ŋ/ ເຄີບຂອງ was found 187 times and has its closest meaning to “collect/pick things up” in English. The term can be identified with a situation of purchasing stock at a price lower than the market value.

/krà?. sຸນ/ ກະສຸນ was found 142 times and is equivalent to “bullet” in English. It refers to left over money in the portfolio that can be used to buy more stocks.

/dêŋ/ ເຕັງ was found 133 times and has its closest meaning to “bounce.” It refers to gaining 100% profit.

/rɔ:. loŋ. pâ:j. nâ:/ ຈອລັງປ້າຍໜ້າ was found 131 times and its closest meaning is to “get off the bus at the next stop.” This refers to a situation of the selling of stocks in anticipation of receiving a high index yield.

/khuñ. rót/ ຂຶ້ນຮັດ was found 130 times and its closest meaning is to “get on the bus.” It refers to a situation of purchasing stocks which investors believe will be profitable (the prices will rise).

/lúk. tɕʰà:. tɕà:j. rɔ:p. wɔŋ/ ລຸກ້າຈ່າຍຮອບຈະ was found 131 times and its closest meaning is “grasp all, lose all.” It refers to a situation of holding stocks which are under the manipulation of someone. The investor may gain some profits at the beginning but if the investor is greedy, he/she may lose the profit.

/thɔ:j. rót. ma:. ráp/ ດອຍຮົມມາຈັບ was found 102 times and its closest meaning is “to backup the car to pick up someone.” This term is used to refer to the small decline within the stock in anticipation of those investors who have not yet purchased the stock.

/pha.ya:.plùək/ ພູມາປລວກ was found 51 times and is equivalent to “the king/queen of termite” in English. It refers to local investors who win the market, always earning profits.

/khɔ:n. thù:k/ ຂອງໜູກ was found 44 times and has its closest meaning to “inexpensive stock.” It refers to a situation when stock prices are declining, while their actual value price is high.

/thɔ:j. rót. ma:. tháp/ ດອຍຮົມມາທັບ was found 42 times and its closest meaning is “to backup the car to run over.” It refers to the decline of the stock market, resulting in a number of investors buying the stocks believing that they will receive a good price but then the stock market goes down even more, causing a loss of profit.

/stú:. khwa:j/ ຊົ້ວຄວາຍ was found 39 times and its closest meaning is to "buy a buffalo." It refers to purchasing stocks at low prices while prices are continually declining.

/bàk. krò:k/ ບັກໂກກ was found 31 times and its closest meaning is to "be very skinny." It refers to the loss of profit.

/tít. khúk/ ຕິດຄຸກ was found 21 times and its closest meaning is to "be in jail." It refers to stocks in which the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has announced that some stocks are required to be traded in cash balance.

/plák.lùt/ ປລັກທລດ was found 16 times and its English equivalence is to "unplug." It refers to a circuit breaker (Measures taken to halt trading on an exchange in the event of predefined price levels are reached. Circuit breakers are intended to allow market participants to rebalance their positions in an orderly manner without contributing to further price pressures. Common breakers include temporary trading halts, curbs or bans on automated trading programs, and/or hourly/daily price limits.).

/mɔ:p.tua/ ມອບຕ້ວ was found 15 times and its closest meaning is to "surrender." It refers to ATC (at closing time) an order to buy or sell a stock at the closing price. An ATC order is allowed during the pre-close session only.

/sɔŋ. kɔ:n. bâ:n/ ສ່ອງກ່ານ was found 13 times and its English equivalence is to "submit the homework." It means to show a financial statement (a document that a company must prepare regularly, showing its financial performance during a particular period of time. It usually includes profits and loss accounting, the balance sheet and other information).

/sâj. tæk/ ໄສແຕກ was found 11 times and its literal meaning is to "breaking intestine." It refers to the decline of the stock market, resulting in the loss of profits.

/hèp. tçʰà. la:m/ ເໜີບຂາມ was found 8 times and its closest meaning is to "the shark's flea." The term can be identified with a situation of riding on someone else's coattails (buying stocks today in the hopes that it will be profitable in the future).

Nativization

According to Sankoff and Laberge (1974), nativization in the context of English refers to the process by which characteristics of English are applied to one's L1. To Pandharipande (1987), this includes the process of the localization of English words or English in a localized context in this case Thai stock investor's on-line discussions. The classifications of nativized characteristics of English words found in slang words in online discussions among Thai stock investors are truncation and hybridization. Other characteristics of nativization processes such as conversion, semantic shift, reduplication and word order were not found.

Truncation

Truncation is a short form of English words made by either deleting the first or last syllable. However, this study found that most slang words used by Thai stock investors are words made by cutting the last syllables or back-clipping. It was found that six slang words underwent the truncation process.

Deletion of the last syllables or back-clipping

/ma:/ ມາກ or marketing officer was found 242 times. It refers to a person who watches stocks for the investors. He/she gets a percentage of the buying and selling of stocks from the investors.

/tçʰɔ:t/ ຖົກຕ or short sale was found 124 times. It refers to a transaction by a person who believes a security will decline and sells it, though the person does not own the security.

/lɔ:ŋ/ ລອກ or long position was found 114 times. It signifies ownership of securities and benefits from price appreciation.

/līŋ/ ลีง or ceiling price was found 112 times. A boundary placed on certain exchange – traded assets that limits the amount of upward or downward price movement that can occur during a trading session.

/flo:/ พล๊อฟ or floor price was found 104 times. It is the lowest legal price the stock can be sold.

/in.sái/ คินไซด์ or insider was found 84 times. It refers to any instance where non-public information is used to purchase or sell securities in order to generate a profit.

Hybridization

The findings show that there were nine slang words which can be classified as hybridized, the combination of an English word with a Thai word. Interestingly, it was found that these slang terms underwent truncation, the dropping of the last syllable, or back clipping, before undergoing hybridization as in the following list where the Thai words are placed before the cut syllables:

ADVANC /?æt.wán/ → /?æt/

INTUCH /?in.thât/ → /in/

Hang Seng /hàŋ.sěŋ/ → /hàŋ/

DTAC /di:.thæk/ → /di:/

Dow Jones /daw.t̬o:n/ → /daw/

Short sale /t̬ó:t.sew/ → /t̬ó:t/

Long position /lɔ:ŋ.po.si:.t̬ó:án/ → /lɔ:ŋ/

Technical analysis /thék.nì.kɔ.an.na.li.sít/ → /thék.nìk/

Commission /khɔ:m.mì.t̬ó:hán/ → /khɔ:m/

Insertion of kinship terms in Thai into a stock's name

/ná:. ?æt/ น้า๊แธต was found 126 times and it is used for addressing ADVANC which is an abbreviation or stock symbol for Advanced Info Service Public Company Limited in the SET. It is an information and communication technology blue chip company, well-known and highly respected publicly traded company as well as

financially sound. Uncle ad – the word /ná:/ in Thai has its equivalent to uncle in English. This is to signal the feeling of respect toward something as in the word /ná:/ which is a Thai kinship term used to address the mother's younger brothers or sisters. Thai stock investors insert the word /nà:/ to address ADVANC stock and instead of using its full name ADVANC /?éét.wá:n/, they simply cut the last syllable as in /?éét/.

/khǔn. ?in/ คุณอิน was found 97 times and is used for addressing INTUCH, an abbreviation or the stock symbol for Intouch Holdings Public Company Limited in SET. It is an information and communication technology blue chip company. The word /khǔn/ in Thai is equivalent to prince or the king of a region before the integration of Thailand in English. This implies the feeling of security as the king, in the past, was the leader of an army who fought in the war to protect the people. Thai stock investors combine the word /khǔn/ to address INTUCH stock and instead of using its full name INTUCH /in.thá:t/, they simply drop the last syllable as in /in/.

/phí:.hàŋ/ พี่หัง was found 94 times and is used for addressing Hang Seng /hàŋ.séŋ/ , which is an index indicating the changes of the largest public companies of the Hong Kong stock market. Bro/Brother Hang – the word /phí:/ in Thai has its equivalence to brother in English. Again, this implies a sense of respect as /phí:/ is a Thai kinship term to address the first son or sister in the family. Thai stock investors combine the word /phí:/ and simply cut the last syllable as in /hàŋ/.

/nǔ:.di:/ หนูดี was found 93 times and is used for addressing DTAC /di:tæk/ , which is an abbreviation or stock symbol of the Total Access Communication Public Company Limited. It is an information and communication technology blue chip company, which is considered a lower than average risk and it has a long history of sustained earnings, growth and dividend yields. Younger sister, Dee – The word /nǔ:/ in Thai is the second person pronoun used for calling a little girl (usually /nǔ:/ + the child's name) and this implies the speaker's tender feeling toward the child. Thai stock investors combine the word /nǔ:/ to address this stock and simply cut the last syllable as in /di:/.

/nó:ŋ.daw/ น้องดาว was found 91 times and is used for addressing Dow Jones – a benchmark price-weighted index of the US stock market comprised of 30 large cap stocks representing the industrial sector. Younger sister, Dow – the word /nó:ŋ/ is a Thai word which is used as a personal pronoun and is also used as a title before someone name to address someone who is younger and this also implies the speaker's tender feeling toward the person he/she is talking to. Thai stock investors combine the word /nó:ŋ/ with the word Dow Jones in English and simply drop the last syllable as in /daw/.

Insertion of the word /khă:/ as a body part to signal a collective noun in Thai

/khă:.tç^hót/ խաչօտ was found 84 times and is used for addressing a group of people who short sale – the word /khă:/ is a Thai word which means a group of people who prefer doing something together. Thai stock investors combine the word /khă:/ which is a collective noun with the word short sale in English, and they simply drop the last syllable as in /tç^hót/. Short sale is a transaction by a person who believes a security will decline and they sell it, though the person does not own the security.

/khă:.lɔ:ŋ/ խալօն was found 74 times and is used for addressing a group of people who have a long position – the word /khă:/ is a collective noun in Thai, meaning a group of people who prefer something. Thai stock investors combine the word /khă:/ with the word long securities and benefits from price appreciation.

Insertion of the Thai word /phûak, signaling a collective noun in Thai

/phûak.thék.nìk/ ພວກເທົກນິດ was found 71 times. A standard term used in technical analysis – securities and market analysis techniques that are based on the concept that past price formations repeat in particular patterns, and can thus be used to forecast future movements. This means a group of investors who use technical analysis as a method to gain profits from stock. Thai stock investors combine the Thai word /phûak/, which is a collective noun (usually /phûak/ + name), meaning a group of people, to the English word and simply drop the last syllable as in /thék.nìk/.

Insertion of the Thai word /khâ:/, equivalent to fee in English

/khâ:.khɔ:m គោគុម or commission fee – the broker's basic fee for purchasing or selling securities or property as an agent, was found 221 times. Thai stock investors combine the Thai word /khâ:/ which is equivalent to "fee" in English and cut the rest of the following syllables as in /khɔ:m/.

Pun

The classification of pun found in this study is paronymy, meaning that there are slight differences in spelling, vowels and tones. Based on Partington (2009), this refers to a pun as defined in a more phonetic way as the bisociative play between the two sound sequences.

Consonant play

/pɔ̄:p/ ป้อป, a type of ghost in Thai folklore, described as a malevolent female spirit that devours human entrails, has the highest frequency as it was used 324 times. The slang term /pɔ̄:p/ was used for addressing "property trading" in English. It is a play with the consonant cluster as the first syllable of the English word "property" which sounds similar to the word /pɔ̄:p/ in Thai language. This shows how Thai investors have negative attitudes toward property trading because it is supposed to help local individuals; however, usually it causes the SET to fluctuate.

/pɔ̄:t/ ป้อต which is equivalent to lungs in English, was found 285 times and refers to "portfolio." This is a play with the final consonant as the first syllable of the English word "portfolio" sounds similar to the word /pɔ̄:t/ in Thai.

/dūn/ ดຸນ was found 55 times and refers to "stock." In fact, the standard term is /hūn/ หຸນ. However, the slang term /dūn/ which means "dick" and it is an obscene word in Thai and thus is meant to have a humorous effect.

/lam. jaj/ ลำไย – a kind of Thai fruit – was found 52 times and refers to " profit." The standard term is actually /kam. rai/ กำไร. However, the term /lam.jaj/ which means a kind of Thai fruit, is used to have a humorous effect. The word /lam.jai/ and /kam.rai/ have similar sounding with the change of the initial consonant from the first syllable /l/ and /k/ and the second syllable /j/ and /r/.

/di:. tèk/ ดีแทก was found 36 times and refers to DTAC which is a blue chip stock. It is speculated that when its price drastically drops, it is called /di:. tèk/. /di:/ is equivalent to "good." However, /tèk/ is equivalent to broken which signals negative meaning or an unpleasant situation.

/tà?.lòk/ ตลาด was found 21 times and is a funny way for addressing the SEC or /kɔ:.lɔ:.tɔ:/ กตลาด in Thai. When the standard term /kɔ:.lɔ:.tɔ:/ is switched to /tɔ:.lɔ:.kɔ:/ ตลาด, it can be read as /tà?.lòk/ in Thai causing the term to have a humorous and satirical effect.

Shift in vowel sound

/ra:j. jûj/ ราษฎร์ was found 247 times and is used for addressing local individuals who lose some profits. This is a play with similar Thai vowel sounds. The standard term is actually /ra:j. jâj/ ราษฎร์. It is a shift of the vowel /ɔ/ in /ra:j. jâj/ to the vowel /u/ in /ra:j. jûj/. The slang term /jûj/ is used to make the term sound more powerful and have

satirical and sarcastic effect. The term, /jûj/, is equivalent to "being torn apart" in English, implying that local Thai individual investors lose the market.

/hûn.klùm.sù.săñ/ หุ้นกู้มศุสาน was found 12 times and is used to refer to information and communication technology stocks. /hûn.klùm.sù.săñ/ is equivalent to graveyard stocks in English. This is a play with similar vowel sounds in Thai language. The general term is actually /hûn.klùm.sùñ.săñ/ หุ้นกู้มสื่อสาร. The vowel /u:/ in the word /sùñ.săñ/ สื่อสาร is switched to the vowel /u/ in the word /sù.săñ/ ศุสาน, which means "a graveyard" in English to make the term have a satirical effect when their prices drop drastically.

Change in tone

/bø:. rí?. sàt. lák. sáp/ บริษัทลักทรัพย์ was found 74 times and is used to refer to a securities company that profits from commissions gained from buying and selling stocks from the traders. /bø:. rí?. sàt. lák. sáp/ is equivalent to stealing a company. The word /lák/ carries a high tone and it means "to steal" in English. The standard term /bø:. rí?. sàt. lák. sáp/ บริษัทหลักทรัพย์ /lák/ carries a low tone. The change of the tone implies a satirical tone of the speakers because /bø:. rí?. sàt. lák. sáp/, or securities company, is supposed to help and give advice to its clients about stock trends, instead of taking money and gaining profits from them as in /bø:. rí?. sàt. lák. sáp/ บริษัทลักทรัพย์.

Discussion

Of all 55 slang words found in online discussion among Thai stock investors, the most noticeable feature of slang words used was the use of metaphorical expressions as they form the largest group with 31 words. Moreover, there are 15 slang words which underwent the process of nativization. The classifications of nativized characteristics of English words found in this study are hybridization and truncation. There were nine patronymic puns, meaning that there are slight differences in both spelling and sound.

Metaphorical expressions as an outstanding feature in online stock discussion

As this study seeks to investigate the characteristics of slang terms used by Thai stock investors, among 55 slang words obtained in data collection, it was found that metaphorical expressions formed the largest group with 31 words. Lederer (2009) commented that American slang abounds in fresh figures of speech, that evoke an arresting word picture in the mind's eye, and it is estimated, that metaphor makes up perhaps a fifth of slangs word in use, a comment that is in accordance with the findings of this study.

The examples of novel figures of speech characterized as metaphorical expressions were found to have the highest frequency are the words associated with "summit" in English, /dɔ:j/ /fɪt.dɔ:j/ in Thai language, signifying the loss of profits caused by the current stock price being lower than the purchased price. The findings confirm what Lakoff and Johnson (1980) proposed, that metaphor is not only a textual decoration but reflects that way humans think, act and speak. Metaphorical expression is a mapping of two conceptual domains: the source domain onto the target domain at the cognitive level (Lakoff, 1992). For this study, stock trading is the source domain and the target domain is "summit," /dɔ:j/ or /fɪt.dɔ:j/. This concept makes sense of the experience regarding stock trading by Thai investors such that it can lead to a loss of profits when buying high (being caught on the summit or /fɪt.dɔ:j/) but the actual market price declines after the purchase. This is a metaphorical expression for communicating ideas in a vivid manner and has pragmatic force in the context it is used. To that end, more analysis of the conceptual metaphors of stock investing used by Thai stock investors in asynchronous online discussion should be further explored.

Reflection of Thai culture and lifestyles as portrayed in hybridization: placing the kinship terms before the stock names and indexes

The study found 15 slang words used in online discussion among Thai stock investors, which underwent the process of nativization, the integration of English linguistic structure borrowed into one's native language. Based on the notion of nativization, the English language used by Thai people contains features reflecting Thai culture and lifestyles. To illustrate hybridization, the combination of an English word with a Thai word, was found in the nativization process. It is very interesting to find the use of kinship terms such as /ná:/ /phí:/ /nǚ:/ /nó:ŋ/ which are equivalent to uncle, elder siblings, the second person pronoun used for calling a little girl, and younger sister respectively are placed before the stock names and indexes. These kinship terms in Thai are used to address the blue chip stocks as in /ná:. ?éét/ /phí:. hàn/ /nǚ:. di:/ /nó:ŋ. daw/. These kinship terms are placed before the stock names and indexes.

According to Vongvipanond (1994), in Thai culture, kinship terms are used to refer to anybody who is closely, or remotely, related to them by blood, by marriage or just by association, and has no formal kinship relation. Also, the kinship system is extended to include newcomers and strangers. When addressing someone who is not known before, Thai people will try to locate oneself in a kinship position arrangement such as using the term /phí:/ or /nó:ŋ/ and following it by the name of the person. I believe that the nature of Thai kinship principles as the way to address someone is transferred and applicable to the creation of slang terms used by Thai stock investors, because these kinship terms are also placed before addressing the stock names and indexes, similar to the way Thai people address someone they know.

Thongpyayoon and Hill (1996), Kuwinpant (2002), and Sattayanurak (2005) commented that Thai society is a hierarchical society. Each person may occupy a certain

position in the hierarchy due to age, sex and power. It can be inferred from the data that kinship terms such as /ná:/ uncle or aunt, /phí:/ elder siblings are placed before the blue chip stock, ADVANC and the index such as Hang Seng, to signify importance of superiority, because ADVANC is regarded as one of the blue chip stocks as it is a well-known and highly respected publicly traded company not to mention the fact that it tends to give high dividends. As a result many Thai stock investors agree that the company is financially sound and relatively low risk. The kinship term, /ná:/ is then placed before ADVANC as to imply that ADVANC is respected and has power to make Thai stock investors to gain profits. The kinship term, /phí:/, which is placed before the index, Hang Seng, also signifies the importance of superiority and wealth because it is a powerful index indicating changes of the largest public companies in Hong Kong.

Although the kinship terms in Thai, /nǚ:/ and /n᷑ɔ:ŋ/ signify the inferiority of the addressee because they are inferior, /n᷑ɔ:ŋ/ and /nǚ:/ will have to pay respect to the superior /phí:/, these terms also imply tender feelings toward the addressee. The terms, /nǚ:/ and /n᷑ɔ:ŋ/ imply positive feeling as when they are used with DTAC and the Dow Jones industrial average, because DTAC is a blue chip stock which is financially sound, similar to ADVANC and the Dow Jones industrial average is a benchmark price weighted index of the US stock market which is comprised of 30 large cap stocks representing the industrial sector. Therefore, it can be said that although the kinship terms used with DTAC and the Dow Jones industrial average may imply inferiority, a tender and positive feeling are portrayed through the kinship choices created by Thai stock investors.

Mixing of English words in Thai slang terms as a reflection of the power of English in globalization

Language mixing is a phenomenon occurring in bilingual talk with another bilingual in the same language and changes from one language to another automatically in the course of communication (Crystal, 1997). It was hypothesized that there are a great deal of English words mixed and used as slang terms in asynchronous online stock discussion in Thailand due to the importance and power of English as the language of modernity and globalization emerging in the money market. However, the study found only six slang words derived from English words, and these slang words were found to undergo a truncation process, a short form of English word made by dropping the first or the last syllable. For example, the word, "marketing officer" which was found to have the highest frequency, was reduced to /mā:/ and this term was understood among the users in the group.

All of the six words /ma:/ /tç^hɔ:t/ /lɔ:ŋ/ /fɪŋ/ /flɔ:/ /ɪn.sái/ which were found in online discussion about trading stocks have undergone a truncation process, indicating a non-standard use of English. This reflects Internet interaction features as explained by Danet and Herring (2007) that although Internet interaction mainly deals with written forms, it shares several features with face-to-face communication such as

lack of accuracy, complexity, coherence and standard. And as these words are used as slang, which is an informal speech style and low language, it stands to reason that non-standard English words were found in this study.

Although the data from this study found only six words which showed how English words were mixed and underwent a nativization process in asynchronous online discussion, this, to some extent, supports the increasing role of World Englishes in the modern day social network of Thailand. The mixing of English words found in this study reflects the increasing role of English as commented by Sanprasert (2014), who discussed the role of the widespread use of English among users in the expanding circle, including Thailand, where English is used as a foreign language and lingua franca, and about code mixing in World Englishes where English is used among people who share a common language, other than English, for their intranational and international communication.

Satirical and humorous effect in paronymic pun

Redfern (1985) concluded that puns are a figure of speech which consist of a deliberate confusion of similar words or phrases for rhetorical effect, whether humorous or serious. It is a way of using the characteristics of languages to cause a word or sentence or stretch of discourse to involve two or more meanings. Thus, puns create humorous and other effects based upon the ambiguities of the words that they entail. According to Delabatista (1996), the humor of a pun depends very much on the expectations shared by the framer of the message and the addressee, and on the way the addressee is taken by surprise and plunged into something entirely different from what she/he has been prepared for. Punning should also be considered in relation to another important aspect of human nature such as the sense of humor and the desire to produce a humorous effect on the people we communicate with.

This study found puns being used as one of the characteristics of slang use in asynchronous online discussions about trading stocks to show both the humorous and satirical emotion of its users. The slight differences in both spelling and sound, known as paronymy, found in this study is the play of tones, similar vowel sounds in Thai language and aspiration in Thai language versus English. The findings support the characteristics of slang that it is creatively used by a special group and it provides a colorful alternative vocabulary. It also bristles with humor, prejudice and informality.

Conclusion

The study found three characteristics of slang use among Thai stock investors in asynchronous online discussion which are: metaphorical expressions, nativization process by means of hybridization and truncation, and patronymic puns as found in word play. It was found that Thai stock investors actively create slang words used among online group discussions which show humorous and sarcastic tone as can be seen in patronymic puns. This finding corresponds to Zhou and Fan (2013) who found

that slang is the product of society because it is created by people living in the society, reflecting social trends and how the world is seen by its people. This study also showed that the slang terms found have a humorous tone which corresponds to the findings of Yule (2010), McCrindle (2011), Zhou and Fan (2013) who found that affective meaning such as humor is one of the most outstanding features of slang use. The study also supports the definition of slang proposed by many scholars that slang is a figure of speech which is informal, non-standard, humorous, satirical and is considered as a low language.

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Appendix

Lists of Phonetic Notation in Thai Language

| Consonants | | Bilabial | Labiodental | Alveolar | Palatal | Velar | Glottal |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|-------|---------|
| voiceless | unaspirated | p | | t | tç | k | ʔ |
| Plosive | voiceless | ph | | th | tç ^h | kh | |
| | aspirated | b | | d | | | |
| Nasal | | m | n | n | | ŋ | |
| Lateral | | | l | l | | | |
| Trill | | | r | r | | | |
| Fricative | | | s | | | h | |
| Semi-Vowel | w | | □ | □ | j | | |
| Simple vowels | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | | |
| | | Front | Central | Back | | | |
| High | □ | i | ɪ | ɯ | u | u: | |
| Mid high | □ | e | e: | ɤ | o | o: | |
| Mid low | □ | ɛ | ɛ: | ɔ | ɔ: | | |
| Low | | | a | a: | | | |
| Diphthongs | | | | | | | |
| Tone | | ia | ɯa | ua | | | |
| | low tone /`/ | Mid tone / / | High tone /'/ | Falling tone /˨/ | Rising tone /˥/ | | |

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