

# Code-Mixing in the Conversation of Northern Khmer Speakers in Thailand: A Case Study of Teenagers and Middle-Aged Northern Khmer Speakers in Buriram Province

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## Abstract

This study aims to examine the linguistic performance of code-mixing by Northern Khmer (NK) teenagers in Buriram Province while conversing with NK middle-aged speakers in their community. It focuses on types of linguistic units or categories of code-mixing that occur in NK conversation and also on the various situations in which that linguistic unit occurs. It is found that code-mixing between NK and the Thai language occurs on three linguistic levels: morphological, syntactic, and discourse. On the morphological level, 7 categories of Thai words are found: noun, verb, adjective, final particle, quantifier, conjunction, and exclamation word. Three types of code-mixing are found on the syntactic level: Inter-Sentential, Intra-Sentential, and Extra-Sentential Code-Mixing. On the discourse level, code-mixing occurs in the middle and at the end of the NK discourse. There are 6 different situations in NK conversations where these types of code-mixing occur: (1) Greetings (2) Expressing appreciation (3) Expressions of politeness (4) Telling information (General and Specific) (5) Indicative mood, Lexical meaning, and Sentence structure, and (6) English loan words further borrowed from the Thai language. It is also found that NK speakers adopt the morphological processes of reduplication, the sentential structure, and serial verb construction when utilizing the Thai language to mix in their NK word formation and NK sentence structure. Lastly, NK speakers borrow English loanwords from Thai, instead of borrowing them directly from English.

**Keywords:** linguistic performance, code-mixing, Northern Khmer language

## 1. Introduction

Even though the Central Thai language as spoken in Bangkok is the official language of Thailand and is used as the main language of education and government, an additional 70 ethnic languages are spoken in the country (Khreeda-oh Abdonloh, 2014). One of these is the Northern Khmer (henceforth NK) language. According to Premsrirat (1996), Northern Khmer is a Khmer variety spoken in Thailand, and it is generally called by the name of the districts or provinces where the NK speakers live, including Surin Khmer, Buriram Khmer, Sankha Khmer, etc. She states that William Smalley (1964, 1976) used the term “NK” in contrast to the Central or Southern Khmer of Cambodia and Vietnam, while David Thomas (1990) considered NK as a distinct language from a Sociolinguistics viewpoint. Although the NK delegates at the 1990 Orthography Conference in Surin Province agreed to officially call themselves and their language */k<sup>h</sup>mɛːn t<sup>h</sup>in t<sup>h</sup>ai/* “Khmer Dialect in Thailand (เขมรถิ่นไทย)” (Suwilai and Sophana, 1990), this study still uses the term “NK” in contrast to the Central or Southern Khmer of Cambodia as William Smalley’s suggestion.

Nuansay, B. (2013) has suggested that contact between Khmer speakers in Cambodia and in Buriram might have occurred in 1903 -1918, when some Khmer people from Battambang, Siem Reap, Sawai Jig, and Mongkonburi (also known as Banteay Meanchey) immigrated to the southern part of northeastern Thailand. While most Thai people think that the regional people always speak only their own regional dialect, Prasitrathasin A. (1999) has shown that there are some communities in which people are multilingual and fluent in two or three different languages. Benjana S. and Rattana C. (2013) have indicated that most NK speakers communicate in NK, but that they also use other languages, including the Thai language, Isaan dialect, and other ethnic minority languages such as “Thai Korat” and “Suai” in their conversation. Moreover, the surrounding communities which speak different languages cause language hybridization in conversation, known as code-mixing. For the purposes of this paper, code-mixing is defined as the embedding of linguistic units such as words or phrases of one language into an utterance of another language. Since the NK speakers speak NK as their mother tongue and speak the official Thai language as their second language, they tend to hybridize them both at the morphological and syntactic levels. According to Orawan Thongdee and Banyatti Sali (2020), among people in Buriram who use NK and the Thai language with a Khmer accent in their communication, the elders speak NK most of the time since they did not have the chance to learn the official Thai language in school;

middle-aged people and young people speak both languages, and young people use the Thai language more often than the NK language. In addition, the trade between Thailand and Cambodia borders at the temporary immigration office located at Chong Sai Ta Ku, Ban Kruat District of Buriram, has caused a variety of languages to be used in this area (Karakas P. and Kanewan P., 2016).

Since the NK speakers in Thailand, especially NK teenagers, cannot avoid studying the Thai language in school and communicating with Thai people in daily life, their NK language use is heavily influenced by Thai. This has caused the number of NK speakers to decrease (Wittayarat Daoruang, 2014). NK teenagers who study at the university are usually bilingual because they speak NK in their community and speak the Thai language at the university. It is noticeable that these NK teenagers unconsciously hybridize the Thai language into their NK dialogue, for example, /bɔɔŋ/ /həə/ /paac<sup>h</sup>iip/ /pɔj/ /cá?/ บอง เทอ ภาซึพ ออย จ๊ะ “What does your sister do?”. This statement is hybridized with two languages; NK words are /bɔɔŋ/ บอง ‘elder’, /həə/ เทอ ‘do’, /pɔj/ ออย ‘what’, Thai words are /paac<sup>h</sup>iip/ ภาซึพ ‘career’, /cá?/ จ๊ะ ‘female final particle’, which are combined in conversation with understanding by both the speaker and the interlocutor.

This study aims to examine the linguistic performance of code-mixing by the NK teenagers in Buriram Province when they speak with NK middle-aged people in their community. According to Newby David (2011), “Linguistic Performance” refers to the actual use of language in concrete situations. This study thus focuses on the types of linguistic units or categories of code-mixing that occur in NK conversation, and also on the various situations in which those linguistic units occur. The results of this study would benefit the NK community by encouraging its promotion and preservation as a local ethnic heritage language.

### Research Objectives

This study aims to find out the type of linguistic units or categories of code-mixing and the various situations in which those linguistic units occur in a conversation between NK teenagers and NK middle-aged people in Buriram Province, Thailand.

### Research scope

This study focuses on the NK language used by the NK speakers in Buriram Province of Thailand. It is the language used for daily communication within the family, and with NK speakers in the same or different communities.

## 2. Literature Review

### Northern Khmer (NK) language

NK is a Khmer variety spoken in Thailand (Premsrirat 1996). It is the ethnic language of the “upper Khmer”, which refers to the Khmer people who live in the northeastern (highlands) of Thailand. NK belongs to the Mon-Khmer language family and is a non-tonal language. The status of NK was described by Smalley (1994) as being a marginal language in Thailand. It is a lingua franca in some areas of the lower part of northeastern Thailand. Premsrirat (1998) and Smalley (1994) state that the NK speakers have developed a certain kind of multilingualism because there are many ethnic groups including Kuy, Yeu, Lao, and Thai Korat, living in the same region. However, the Thai language is at the top of the hierarchy as it is the language of government and education. So, a typical NK speaker will be able to speak the Thai language along with his/her mother tongue.

The NK language in this study focuses on the variety spoken by NK speakers who live in Buriram Province of Thailand. Besides the phonetic transcription of the NK data, the Thai-based NK orthography authorized by the Office of Thai Royal Society (B.E. 2556) is also used to transcribe the NK dialogue in this study. Since the NK language is a spoken language without a written tradition, the Thai-based NK script is based on the local Khmer sound system in Surin Province because it is agreed at the 2<sup>nd</sup> academic conference on the Khmer language of Thailand (1988) that NK spoken in Surin Province represented the most central accent of all NK varieties.

### Language Contact

Brian Joseph (2015) has stated that language contact is the influence of one language system over another. It is a social and linguistic phenomenon in which speakers of different languages or different dialects of the same language interact with one another, leading to the transfer of linguistic features. Language contact causes various linguistic phenomena such as code-mixing, code-switching, linguistic borrowing, and linguistic interference. The power that drives language contact can be caused by political, commercial, technological, and cultural forces, which may occur at the personal or societal level Crystal (2005). Language contact also causes language interference and language borrowing, which can be divided into 3 types: loanwords, loan meaning, and creation (Winford, 2013).

The NK speakers involved in this research speak NK as their mother tongue and Thai language as their second language. They have to communicate with both NK speakers and Thai speakers in daily life. Code-mixing is thus a common conversational strategy used to make their communication more effective and meaningful.

### Code-Mixing

Code-Mixing is defined by Crystal (2001) as the phenomenon of mixing the level of word or phrase in the same sentence by using foreign codes within the course of the communication, including the lexical items and grammatical features of two languages. The types of code mixing are classified by Pieter Muysken (2000) into three mixing patterns: insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization.

1. Insertion is the process of transferring a lexical item from one language to another, for example, (English - Spanish) Yo and use *in a state of shock* pa dos días “I walked in a state of shock for two days”. The prepositional phrase in English is inserted into a Spanish sentence during the insertion procedure.

2. Alternation occurs at the equivalent grammatical and lexical levels, for example, (English - Spanish) Andale pues *and do come again* “That’s alright then, and do come again”. There is a significant difference between the two languages. English tag form “and do come again” is mixed in the sentence even though it is not required by the structure of the Spanish sentence “Andale pues”.

3. Congruent lexicalization is the grammatical structure sharing of two languages. It is the process of combination of alternation and insertion, for example, (English - Spanish) Bueno, *in other words, el flight que sale de Chicago around three o'clock* “Good, in other words, the flight that leaves Chicago around three o'clock”. The structure of English and Spanish is shared with the elements of constituents or words.

Kenneth Zuercher (2009) has stated that insertion usually occurs with constituents at the word and phrase level. The alternation occurs in 3 ways: in conversational turns, between clauses in the same conversational turn, and between elements that are in the same clause.

Kannaovakun and Gunther (2003) found more types of code-mixing of English words into the Thai language. They are classified into 6 types as follows:

- 1) *Truncation*: it is a shortened form of an English word, divided into 2 types. First, a truncation by cutting off the first syllable, for example, ‘net’ is a shorter form of internet. Second, a truncation by cutting off the ending syllable, for example, ‘com’ is a shorter form of computer.
- 2) *Hybridization*: the combination of words from two languages, such as an English word with a Thai word; for example, /*nakgɔlf*/ นักกอล์ฟ “golf player” with golf as an English word, /*samutnoot*/ สมุดโน้ต “notebook” with the note is an English word.
- 3) *Conversion*: a change of part of speech from one class to another class. A few patterns of conversion can be found, such as an English noun converted to a Thai verb. For example, /*sɔ̌ə*/ /*tuuə*/ /*nūi*/ /*seil*/ /*jūu*/ /*tʰii*/ /*paaraakon*/ เสื้อตัวนี้เชลยอยู่ที่พาราگون “This shirt is on sale at Paragon”, the word ‘sale’ is an English noun converted to a verb in Thai.
- 4) *Semantic shift*: changing the meaning of the word when it is used in another language context, for example, /*kʰəwɔk*/ เข้าล็อก means “as expected or planned”. The meaning of the English noun /*ɒk*/, which is a mechanism for keeping a door, is changed when it is mixed with the Thai verb /*kʰəw*/ เข้า ‘enter’.
- 5) *Reduplication*: when the word is mixed with the other language, it is repeated, for example, /*wannūi*/ /*kɔ̌*/ /*sem sem*/ วันนี้ก็เซมเซม “Things are just the same today”.
- 6) *Word order*: there is a change in word order. For example, the order of a modifier before the noun in English “concert tour” is changed to the order of a noun before a modifier in Thai as “tour concert”.

According to the studies above, code-mixing refers to the hybridization of two languages on the morphological level. For example, Muysken found three types of code-mixing of English in Bahasa Indonesia: insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization.

When alternating between two or more languages in the context of a single conversation, many people tend to use the terms code-mixing and code-switching interchangeably. Both are typical processes for those who speak more than one language or more than one dialect. Sankoff and Poplack (1981) divided the types of code-switching they found in Puerto Rican Spanish and English into three types: which are 1) *Tag-switching or Extra-Sentential switching*: this is the switching of either a single word or a tag phrase or both from one language to another. 2) *Intra-sentential switching*: done in the middle of a sentence with no interruptions, hesitations, or pauses to indicate a shift. 3) *Inter-sentential switching*: the language switch is done at sentence boundaries—words or phrases at the beginning or end of a sentence. These types of code-switching are found on the syntactic level.

The term “code-mixing” as used in this study has a broader sense than used in Muysken’s, Kannaovakun and Gunther, and Sankoff and Poplack’s studies as their studies only focus on the mixing on the morphological and syntactic level. In this study, code-mixing refers to the process of mixing on three linguistic levels (morphological, syntactic, and discourse levels) that occurs in the conversation of people who speak more than one language or dialect. In other words, the term code-mixing in this study includes mixing processes on both the morphological and syntactic levels and also extends to mixing at the discourse level.

### 3. Methodology

#### Research Design

This study has adopted a qualitative research method. It focuses on studying the linguistic performances of code – mixing in the conversation between NK teenagers and NK middle-aged people in Buriram Province of Thailand. There are four steps in the research method, which are 1) Recording conversations between two NK teenagers and two NK middle-aged people, 2) Transcribing the data phonetically, 3) Classifying the mixing of the official Thai language in the NK conversation on three linguistic levels, namely the morphological, syntactic, and discourse levels, 4) Explaining the characteristics of those classifications based on the types of code-mixing and code-switching found in Muysken (2000), Kannaovakun and Gunther (2003), and Sankoff and Poplack (1981).

#### Sampling

This study utilized a purposive sampling method with the criteria of 1) age—teenager (aged between 18-25), and middle-aged people (aged between 30 -45), 2) mother tongue--speaking NK as their mother tongue, 3) bilingual—speaking more than one language, and 4) residence--being a resident of Buriram Province. The subjects were two NK teenagers and two middle-aged NK persons. For the teenagers, there are one male (22 years old) and one female (22 years old). For the middle-aged persons, both of them are female, with the age around 31 and 35 years old.

**Research Instrument**

The research instrument utilized an unstructured interview formatted as a conversation between the teenagers and the middle-aged persons. The topic of the conversation was daily life. The conversation was recorded on a mobile phone with the consent of all four research subjects. The transcription of the conversation was checked by NK speakers.

**4. Results**

The results of this study are presented into two sections. In the first section, the types of linguistic units of code-mixing in the conversation of NK teenagers and NK middle-aged speakers are described. The second section shows the various situations in which code-mixing occurs in the NK conversations.

*4.1 Types of Linguistic Units of Code-Mixing in the Conversation of NK Teenagers and the NK Middle-Aged Speakers*

It is found that the NK speakers mix various linguistic units of the official Thai language on three linguistic levels in their conversations. Those three linguistic levels are the morphological, syntactic, and discourse levels.

**4.1.1 Morphological Level**

On the morphological level, there are seven types of Thai words that are mixed in NK conversation: nouns, verbs, adjectives, final particles, quantifiers, conjunctions, and exclamation words. Examples are shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Examples of categories of code-mixing on the morphological level (Thai words underlined>

Part of Speech	Mixed word	Sentence examples
Noun	/sawatdii/ สวัสดี 'Hello!'	/sawatdii/ /câa/ สวัสดีจ้า Hello! (TF)
Verb	/nɛɛʔnam/ แนะนำ 'introduce'	/ʔɔj/ /ʔom/ /nɛɛʔnam/ /kluun/ /sadəɔj/ /câa/ อຍອມแนะนำគ្រូនស្រីខ្ញុំ "Introduce yourself please." (TF)
Adjective	/wàan/ ว่าง 'free'	/pliio/ /wàan/ /kô/ /kô/ /man/ /saw/ /baan/ /wàan/ /tee/ /tʰəɔ/ เปลี่ยว่างก็ ก็มันเซาบานว่างเตเทอกา "As for free time, I don't have much free time, only working." (MF1)
Final particle	/cáʔ/ จ๊ะ	/ʔaj/ /pʰaasaa/ /sadəɔj/ /cáʔ/ ຍິយភាសាស្រីខ្ញុំ "What language do you speak?" (TF)
Quantifier	/sùuən maak/ ส่วนมาก 'most'	/mani/ /sùuən maak/ /kô/ /kʰamɛer/ มะนี้ส่วนมากก็เขมร์ "Most people are Khmer." (MF1)
Conjunction	/kô/ ก็	/ʔanaa/ /ʔaj/ /ʔaatit/ /kô/ /baan/ /pʰakpʰòn/ /nuu/ /patiaʔ/ อะนางยอาติดก็บานพักพอนนุปะเตียะ "If it is Sunday, then I can rest at home." (MF1)
Exclamation	/ʔaa/ อา 'Ah!'	/ʔaa/ /kʰwɔpkʰuun/ /kʰrap/ อา ขอขอบคุณครับ "Ah! Thank you, sir." (TM)
	/ʔim/ อืม 'Ehm!'	/ʔim.../ /dam/ /tal/ /looŋ/ อืม ...ด่าตลโลง "Ehm!...plant the cassava." (TF)

**Remark:** The abbreviations used in the tables are the followings:

- TF stands for Teen Female,
- TM for Teen Male,
- MF1 stands for Middle-aged Female No. 1.
- MF2 is for Middle-aged Female No. 2.

When mixing Thai words in NK sentences in the examples above, part of speech is maintained. For example the Thai verb /nɛɛʔnam/ แนะนำ 'introduce' is placed in the verb position of the NK sentence /ʔɔj/ /ʔom/ /nɛɛʔnam/ /kluun/ /sadəɔj/ /câa/ อຍອມแนะนำគ្រូនស្រីខ្ញុំ "Introduce yourself please". Similarly, the Thai adjective /wàan/ ว่าง 'free' is placed in the adjectival position after an NK noun in /pliio/ /wàan/ เปลี่ยว่าง "free time". Similarly, /wàan/ ว่าง 'free' is placed after the negative item /man/ to explain that the speaker has no free time.

The Thai conjunction /kô/ ก็ is used in NK sentences to express both its grammatical and lexical meaning. According to The Royal Institute of Thailand's dictionary (B.E 2554), /kô/ ก็ is a conjunction meaning "then". In the NK sentence /ʔanaa/ /ʔaj/ /ʔaatit/ /kô/ /baan/ /pʰakpʰòn/ /nuu/ /patiaʔ/ อะนางยอาติดก็บานพักพอนนุปะเตียะ "If it is Sunday, then I can rest at home", the NK speaker uses the Thai word /kô/ ก็ as a conjunction between two sentences /ʔanaa/ /ʔaj/ /ʔaatit/ and /baan/ /pʰak

*p<sup>h</sup>òn/ /nuu/ /patiaʔ/*, conveying the original Thai meaning of ‘then’.

The NK speakers choose Thai exclamations to express their feeling after sentences in both Thai and NK. As shown in the last row of Table 1, the Thai exclamation */ʔaa/* อ่า ‘Ah!’ is placed before a Thai sentence while */ʔim/* อืม ‘Ehm!’ is placed before an NK sentence.

Besides the Thai words, Isaan words and an English loanword, which entered into the lexicon via Thai, were found in the NK conversation, as shown in Table 2:

Table 2. Examples of Issan and English code-mixing

	Mixed word	Part of speech	Sentence examples
Issan	<i>/dǎw/</i> ‘Ok’ [idiomatic].	Final particle	<i>/k<sup>h</sup>wǎpk<sup>h</sup>uun/ /carəən/ /carəən/ /dǎw/ /cáa/</i> ขอบคุณ เจริญๆ เต๋อจ้า “Thank you so much, Ok.” (TF)
English loanword from the Thai language	<i>/pʰân/</i> ‘ple’ from ‘apple’	Noun	<i>/ʔom/ /səmpʰʔ/ /pʰân/</i> อَمْชะเมาะเปิ้ล “My name is Ple.” (MF1)

The final particle */dǎw/* is used at the end of the sentence in the Issan dialect as spoken in communities around the NK speaker area. This final particle is used to emphasize the meaning of the sentence. In this example, it occurs between the Thai verb phrase */k<sup>h</sup>wǎpk<sup>h</sup>uun/* “Thank you” and the Thai polite particle */cáa/* (no equivalent in English). Also used is a common English word borrowed into the Thai language */pʰân/* ‘ple’, a truncated form of ‘apple’. Truncation of English words occurs often in Thai: ‘net’ from ‘internet’, ‘com’ is from ‘computer’, etc. Thai people usually borrow an English word and pronounce it via the Thai sound system. In this case, a syllable ‘-ple’ [pɛl] is pronounced as [pʰân] because the final /-l/ is pronounced as [n] sound according to Thai phonological rules. The NK speaker uses this word to name a person in the community and pronounces it the same way Thai speakers do.

The NK speaker also mixes the Thai morphological process in her sentence structure. Thai word duplication process is applied to the NK adverb */carəən/* เจริญ ‘much’ as in the NK sentence (1):

(1) */k<sup>h</sup>wǎpk<sup>h</sup>uun/ /carəən/ /carəən/ /dǎw/ /cáa/*

ขอบคุณเจริญๆ เต๋อจ้า

“Thank you very much” (TF)

The NK adverb */carəən/* เจริญ “much” is duplicated to convey the meaning of plurality “very much”.

#### 4.1.2 Syntactic Level

On the Syntactic level, all three types of code-mixing (Inter-Sentential, Intra-Sentential, and Extra-Sentential) are found in the NK conversation, as shown in Table 3:

Table 3. Examples of types of code-mixing on the Syntactic level

Type of code-mixing	Part of speech	Mixed word	Sentence examples
Inter-Sentential	Noun	<i>/sawatdii câa/</i> สวัสดีจ้า “Hello!”	<i>/sawatdii câa/ /niioŋ/ /cəwŋ/ /taʔ/ /nɛŋ/ /t<sup>h</sup>aa/ /ʔom/ /pliio/ /wǎaŋ/ /t<sup>h</sup>əw/ /səwəj/</i> สวัสดีจ้า เนิ่งจ๋องตะแนง ทาอมเปลี่ยว่าง เทอสะเดย “Hello, I would like to ask what you do in your free time.” (TF)
	Verb phrase	<i>/k<sup>h</sup>wǎpk<sup>h</sup>uun/ /</i> ขอบคุณ “Thank you”	<i>/niioŋ/ /kǎ/ /som/ /səmp<sup>h</sup>aat/ /pən/ /nɛŋʔ/ /həwŋ/ /cǎʔ/ /k<sup>h</sup>wǎpk<sup>h</sup>uun/ /carəən/ /carəən/ /dǎw/ /cáa/ /k<sup>h</sup>wǎpk<sup>h</sup>uun/ /k<sup>h</sup>ǎa/</i> เนียงก็ซ่มลัมภาษณ์เป็นแนะเฮยจ๊ะ      ขอบคุณเจริญๆ      เต๋อจ้า  “I would like to end my interview now. Thank you very much. (TF)
Intra-Sentential	Clause	<i>/lɛ̀ɛw tɛ̀ɛʔookaat/</i> แล้วแต่โอกาส “Depending on the situation.”	<i>/tuu/ /t<sup>h</sup>əw/ /kaa/ /kǎ/ /jaj/ /k<sup>h</sup>ameɛr/ /klaʔ/ /siim/ /klaʔ/ /lɛ̀ɛwtɛ̀ɛʔookaat/</i> ดูเทอากากี้ยยเขมร์คละ ซิมคละ แล้วแต่โอกาส “Sometimes I speak Khmer, sometimes I speak Thai, depending on the situation.” (MF1)
		<i>/raajdǎaj kǎ pəw/</i> รายได้ก็พอ “the income is enough”	<i>/səneɛʔ/ /raajdǎaj kǎ pəw/ /pəw/ /baan/ /prəə/</i> ชะแนะ รายได้ก็พอ พอบานเปรอ “then...the income is enough...is it enough?” (TM)
		<i>/p<sup>h</sup>həən ruəəm ŋaan kǎ mii t<sup>h</sup>ǎŋ k<sup>h</sup>amen/</i>	<i>/bəw/ /t<sup>h</sup>aani/ /kǎ/ /ranaamoo/ /kǎ/ /jaj/ /siim/ /p<sup>h</sup>həən/ /ruəəm/ /ŋaan/ /kǎ/ /mii/ /t<sup>h</sup>ǎŋ/ /k<sup>h</sup>amen/ /təwŋ/</i>

Extra-Sentential	เพื่อนร่วมงานก็มีทั้งเขมร “Colleagues are both Khmer...”	/k <sup>h</sup> ameɛr/ /tɔwŋ/ /liiəw/ /nu/ /həɔj/ เบอทานนีกีระนาโมก็ยัยซิม	เพื่อนร่วมงานก็มีทั้งเขมร
		นุเฮย “Some people speak Thai. Colleagues are Khmer, both Kh (1)	
Sentence		/k <sup>h</sup> aw/ /màj/ /kòɔj/ /p <sup>h</sup> uut/ /k <sup>h</sup> amen/ /nəʔ/ /luuk/ เขาไม่ค่อยพูดเขมรเนอะ... ลูก	
		“They rarely speak Khmer, right! son.” (MF1)	

For Inter-Sentential code-mixing, the Thai noun phrase /sawatdii/ /câa/ สวัสดีจ้า “Hello! There” is found at the beginning of the NK sentence while the Thai verb phrase /k<sup>h</sup>əwəp<sup>h</sup>uun/ /k<sup>h</sup>âa/ ขอขอบคุณคำ “Thank you, sir” is found at the end of the NK sentence. For the Intra-Sentential code-mixing, the Thai clauses /lêew/ /tèɛ/ /pookaat/ แล้วแต่โอกาส “Depending on the situation” and /raaj/ /dâaj/ /kô/ /pəw/ รายได้ก็พอ “the income is enough” are found in the middle of the NK sentences. As for Extra-Sentential code-mixing, the Thai sentence /k<sup>h</sup>aw/ /màj/ /kòɔj/ /p<sup>h</sup>uut/ /k<sup>h</sup>amen/ /nəʔ/ /luuk/ เขาไม่ค่อยพูดเขมรเนอะ... ลูก “They rarely speak Khmer, right! son” is inserted at the end of the NK conversation to emphasize a point that the speaker wants to make.

It is noteworthy to mention that the NK speaker also mixes Thai grammatical structure in the NK sentence structure. The serial verb construction in Thai is used in the NK sentence in which its subject is dropped as shown in sentence (2):

(2) /c<sup>h</sup>əwəp/ /sii/ /sadaəj/

ชอบซี้สะเดย

“What do (you) like to eat?” (TF)

A Thai verb /c<sup>h</sup>əwəp/ ชอบ ‘like’ is placed adjacent to the NK verb /sii/ ซี้ ‘eat’ to form a serial verb construction, which is a construction that composes of at least two verbs or two verb phrases in the series.

4.1.3 Discourse Level

On the discourse level, Thai phrases, clauses, and sentences are found in the middle and at the end of the discourse. In addition, a separate Thai sentence is found in the NK conversation as a type of Extra-Sentential code-mixing. The examples are shown in Table 4:

Table 4. Code-mixing in the discourse level

Code-mixing	Categories	Sentence examples	Discourse structure
/raajdâaj kô pəw/ รายได้ก็พอ “the income is enough”	Phrase	/sanɛɛʔ/ /raajdâaj/ /kô/ /pəw/ /baan/ /prəə/ ชนะเน รายได้ก็พอบานเปโร “Well .. is the income enough ?” (TM)	mid-clause
/p <sup>h</sup> iiən rüəəm ŋaan kô mii t <sup>h</sup> aiŋ k <sup>h</sup> amen/ เพื่อนร่วมงานก็มีทั้งเขมร “Colleagues are both Khmer...”	Clause	/mani/ /süəən/ /maak/ /kô/ /k <sup>h</sup> ameɛr/ /bəə/ /t <sup>h</sup> aani/ /kô/ /ranaamoo/ /kô/ /jaj/ /siim/ /p <sup>h</sup> iiən/ /rüəəm/ /ŋaan/ /kô/ /mii/ /t <sup>h</sup> aiŋ/ /k <sup>h</sup> amen/ /tɔwŋ/ /k <sup>h</sup> ameɛr/ /tɔwŋ/ /liiəw/ /nu/ /həɔj/ มะนี้ส่วนมากก็เขมร เบอทานนีกีระนาโม ก็ยัยซิม เพื่อนร่วมงานก็มีทั้งเขมร ตองเขมรตองเสียนุเฮย “Most people are Khmer. I speak Thai with any people who come. Colleagues are both Khmer... they are both Khmer and Lao.” (MF1)	
/lêew tɛɛ ʔookaat/ แล้วแต่โอกาส “Depending on the situation.”	Phrase	/ʔom/ /samɔʔ/ /p <sup>h</sup> ân/ /pliəə/ /wàan/ /kô/ /kô/ /man/ /saw/ /baan/ /wàan/ /tee/ /t <sup>h</sup> əə/ /ka/ /pliəə/ /nuu/ /patioʔ/ /kô/ /nuu/ /ʔanaa/ /ŋaj/ /ʔaatit/ /kô/ /baan/ /p <sup>h</sup> akp <sup>h</sup> òn/ /nuu/ /patioʔ/ /tuu/ /t <sup>h</sup> əə/ /kaa/ /kô/ /jaj/ /k <sup>h</sup> ameɛr/ /klaʔ/ /siim/ /klaʔ/ /lêew/ /tɛɛ/ /ʔookaat/ อมชนะเมะเปิล เปลี้ยว่างก็ ก็มันเขมรบานว่างเตเทอกา เปลี้ยนุปะเตี้ยะ ก็นุอะนังยอาดิดักบานพักผ่อนนุปะเตี้ยะ ตูเทอกาก็ยัยเขมรคละ ซิมคละแล้วแต่โอกาส “My name is Ple. In my free time, I don't have much free time, only working. The time at home, just stay. On Sunday, I can relax at home. Sometimes, speak Khmer. Sometimes, speak Thai when going to work. Depending on the situation.” (MF1)	phrase final
/k <sup>h</sup> aw màj kòɔj p <sup>h</sup> uut k <sup>h</sup> amen/ /nəʔ/ luuk/ เขาไม่ค่อยพูดเขมรเนอะลูก “They rarely speak Khmer, right son.”	Sentence	/k <sup>h</sup> aw/ /màj/ /kòɔj/ /p <sup>h</sup> uut/ /k <sup>h</sup> amen/ /nəʔ/ /luuk/ เขาไม่ค่อยพูดเขมรเนอะ ... ลูก “They rarely speak Khmer, right! son.” (MF1)	separate sentence

The NK speaker switches to Thai in the phrase /raajdâaj/ /kô/ /pəw/ รายได้ก็พอ “the income is enough” and in the clause /p<sup>h</sup>iiən/ /rüəəm/ /ŋaan/ /kô/ /mii/ /t<sup>h</sup>aiŋ/ /k<sup>h</sup>amen/ เพื่อนร่วมงานก็มีทั้งเขมร “Colleagues are both Khmer...”, switching languages in the middle of discourse to give the listener a better explanation in Thai. Then she switches back to the NK with a clause and sentence with the same meaning. The

Thai phrase and sentence at the end of the NK discourse show the speaker’s mood. A clause /lɛw/ tɛɛ/ /ʔookaat/ แล้วแต่โอกาส “Depending on the situation” is used to express the speaker’s state of being uncertain. This clause is related to the previous discourse in the way that the speaker is not sure of the situation when she will speak Thai or NK. The separate Thai sentence /kʰaw/ /màj/ /kòɔj/ /pʰuut/ /kʰamen/ /nəʔ/ /luuk/ เขาไม่ค่อยพูดเขมรเนอะ...ลูก “They rarely speak Khmer, right! son” at the end of the NK discourse shows the hesitation and uncertainty of the NK speaker as she switches the whole sentence into Thai and adds a particle /nəʔ/ เนอะ to persuade the listener to agree with her.

To sum up, it is found that code-mixing of Thai in NK conversation occurs on three linguistic levels: morphological, syntactic, and discourse. On the morphological level, words found in Thai belong to seven different parts of speech. They are a noun, a verb, an adjective, final particles, quantifiers, conjunction, or exclamation. Three types of code-mixing are also utilized on the syntactic level: Inter-Sentential, Intra-Sentential, and Extra-Sentential Code-Mixing. On the discourse level, code-mixing occurs in the middle and at the end of the NK discourse.

4.2 The Various Situations in the NK Conversation in Which Code-Mixing Occurs

Six social situations were found in the NK conversations in which code mixing occurred. Those situations are as follows:

1) Greeting

The Thai greeting /sawatdii/ สวัสดี ‘Hello!’ is used to start the NK conversation, as shown in Table 5:

Table 5. Code-mixing in Greeting

Code-mixing	Examples	Situation
/sawatdii/ สวัสดี ‘Hello!’	/sawatdii/ /câa/ สวัสดีจ้า “Hello!” (TF)	Greeting

The Thai greeting /sawatdii/ สวัสดี ‘Hello!’ with a female final particle /câa/ จ้า is used in informal yet polite Thai speech acts. The NK speaker chooses the Thai greeting expression to start the conversation even though the listener is also a NK speaker.

2) Appreciation

The Thai expression of thanks /kʰɔp kʰuun/ ขอขอบคุณ “thank you” is found when the NK speaker expresses her feeling of thankfulness, as shown in Table 6:

Table 6. Code-mixing in expressing appreciation

Code-mixing	Examples	Situation
/kʰɔp kʰuun/ ขอขอบคุณ “thank you”	/kʰɔp kʰuun/ /kʰâa/ ขอบคุณค่า “Thank you,” (TF) /ʔaa kʰɔp kʰuun/ /kʰrap/ อา ขอขอบคุณครับ “Ah! Thank you,” (TM) /kʰɔp kʰuun/ /carəən/ /carəən/ /dóə/ /câa/ ขอบคุณเจริญๆ เต๋อจ้า “Thank you very much.” (TF)	Appreciation

Thai thankful expression /kʰɔp kʰuun/ ขอขอบคุณ “thank you” is used with the Thai female polite particle, /kʰâa/ ค่า (no equivalent in English), or the Thai male polite particle /kʰrap/ ครับ (no equivalent in English), or sometimes including the Issan final particle, /dóə/ เต๋อ (no equivalent in English), to express appreciation with politeness. In addition, the NK adverb /carəən/ เจริญ “much” is placed after this Thai expression of thanks to emphasizing it.

3) Expressing politeness

Thai female final particle /câa/ จ้า, /cáʔ/ จ๊ะ, /kʰâa/ ค่า (no equivalent in English) and the Thai male final particle /kʰrap/ ครับ (no equivalent in English) are used after Thai greeting expressions and Thai appreciation expressions in NK conversation to express the speaker’s politeness. In addition, the Thai polite particle /cáʔ/ จ๊ะ is found after the NK question word /sadəəj/ “what”, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Code-mixing in expressing politeness

Code-mixing	Examples	Situation
/câa/ “female final particle”	/sawatdii/ /câa/ สวัสดีจ้า “Hello!” (TF)	Greeting
/câa/ “female final particle”	/k <sup>h</sup> ɔɔpk <sup>h</sup> uun/ /carəən/ /carəən/ /dɔɔ/ /câa/ ขอบคุณเจริญๆ เต็มจ้า “Thank you very much.” (TF)	Appreciation
/k <sup>h</sup> âa/ “female final particle”	/k <sup>h</sup> ɔɔpk <sup>h</sup> uun/ /k <sup>h</sup> âa/ ขอบคุณคำ “Thank you.” (TF)	
/k <sup>h</sup> rap/ “male final particle”	/ʔaa/ /k <sup>h</sup> ɔɔpk <sup>h</sup> uun/ /k <sup>h</sup> rap/ อา ขอบคุณครับ “Ah! Thank you,” (TM)	
/cáʔ/ “female final particle”	/jaj/ /p <sup>h</sup> aasaa/ /sadəj/ /cáʔ/ ยัยภาษาสะเดยจะ “Which language do you speak?” (TF)	Questioning

In the examples above, the NK speaker chooses the Thai final particle of politeness to add to Thai phrases and sentences in two situations: expressing greetings and appreciation. Moreover, the NK speaker adds the Thai polite particle /cáʔ/ จ๊ะ after the NK question word /sadəj/ สะเดย ‘what’ as in the NK question /jaj/ /p<sup>h</sup>aasaa/ /sadəj/ /cáʔ/ ยัยภาษาสะเดยจะ “Which language do you speak?” as a way of expressing the speaker’s attitude and feelings toward the listener.

4) Telling information

The NK speaker chooses to mix the Thai language in NK conversation when he or she wants to give either general or specific information.

4.3 Telling general information

The NK speaker chooses various categories of Thai words to convey the general information in the conversation as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. The examples of code-mixing in the situation of giving general information

Code-mixing	Part of speech	Sentence examples
/p <sup>h</sup> akp <sup>h</sup> ɔɔn/ พักผ่อน ‘rest’	Verb	/ʔanaa/ /ηaj/ /ʔaatit/ /kɔ̄/ /baan/ /p <sup>h</sup> akp <sup>h</sup> ɔɔn/ /nuu/ /patiaʔ/ อนางัยอาติดักบ้านพักผ่อนนุปะเตียะ “On Sunday, I can rest at home.” (MF1)
/neɛʔnam/ แนะนำ ‘introduce’	Verb	/ʔɔj/ /ʔom/ /neɛʔnam/ /kluun/ /sadəj/ /câa/ อยอมแนะนำคลุนสะเดยจ้า “Introduce yourself, please.” (TF)
/súuənmâak/ ส่วนมาก ‘most’	Quantifier	/mani/ /súuənmâak/ /kɔ̄/ /k <sup>h</sup> ameɛr/ มะนี้ส่วนมากก็เขมร์ “Most people are Khmer” (MF)
/yàan/ อย่าง ‘as’	Conjunction	/yàan/ /ʔaraa/ อย่างอะรา “As who.” (TF)
/wàan/ ว่าง ‘free’	Adjective	/pliiə/ /wàan/ /kɔ̄/ /kɔ̄/ /man/ /saw/ /baan/ /wàan/ /tee/ /t <sup>h</sup> ɔɔ/ /kaa/ เปลี่ยว่างก็ กิมันเซาบานว่างเตเทอกา “As for free time, I don't have much free time, only working.” (MF)

In the sentence /ʔanaa/ /ηaj/ /ʔaatit/ /kɔ̄/ /baan/ /p<sup>h</sup>akp<sup>h</sup>ɔɔn/ /nuu/ /patiaʔ/ อนางัยอาติดักบ้านพักผ่อนนุปะเตียะ “On Sunday, I can rest at home”, the Thai verb /p<sup>h</sup>akp<sup>h</sup>ɔɔn/ พักผ่อน ‘rest’ is mixed in the verb position of the NK sentence to express the speaker’s habitual behavior. In the second sentence /mani/ /súuənmâak/ /kɔ̄/ /k<sup>h</sup>ameɛr/ มะนี้ส่วนมากก็เขมร์ “Most people are Khmer”, the Thai quantifier /súuənmâak/ ส่วนมาก ‘most’ is used to expand the number of people who are talked about. The Thai conjunction /yàan/ อย่าง ‘as’ is used to give an example. The Thai adjective word /wàan/ ว่าง ‘free’ is used to modify the NK noun /pliiə/ เปลี่ย ‘time’.

4.2) Giving specific information

When the NK speaker needs to give specific information, he or she chooses a Thai proper noun to specify what he or she intends to say, as shown in Table 9.



Table 9. Code-mixing for specific information

code-mixing	part of speech	Sentence examples
/p <sup>h</sup> leɛŋluukt <sup>h</sup> ùŋ/ เพลงลูกทุ่ง “country music”	Noun	/c <sup>h</sup> ɔɔp/ /sadap/ /p <sup>h</sup> leɛŋluukt <sup>h</sup> ùŋ/ ชอบสดับเพลงลูกทุ่ง “(I) like to listen to country music.”
/pɔɔhòk/ ป.6 “grade 6”		/koon/ /kɔ̌/ /nuu/ /taʔ/ /pɔɔhòk/ โกนกินตะ ป.6 “My son is in Grade 6.”

The Thai noun phrases /p<sup>h</sup>leɛŋluukt<sup>h</sup>ùŋ/ เพลงลูกทุ่ง “country music” and /pɔɔhòk/ ป.6 “grade 6” are chosen by the NK speaker to specify what he or she intends to say. The word /p<sup>h</sup>leɛŋluukt<sup>h</sup>ùŋ/ เพลงลูกทุ่ง “the country music” specifies only one type of Thai music, and the word /pɔɔhòk/ ป.6 “grade 6” specifies only one class in the educational system of Thailand. Both phrases are mixed in the NK conversation in the situation of giving specific information.

5) Indicative mood

The Thai conjunction /kɔ̌/ ก็ (no equivalent in English) is used in NK conversation to indicate the speaker’s mood, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Code-mixing in the situation of the indicative mood

Code-mixing	Category	Examples
/kɔ̌/ ก็	Conjunction	/pliiǎ/ /wàaŋ/ /kɔ̌/ /kɔ̌/ /man/ /saw/ /baan/ /wàaŋ/ /tee/ /t <sup>h</sup> ɔ̌/ /kaa/ เปลี่ยว่างก็ ก็มันเซาบานว่างเตเทอกา “I don’t have much free time. I’m always working.” (MF)

On the sentence level, the conjunction /kɔ̌/ ก็ occurs in the middle of the NK sentence to indicate the speaker’s mood. In the sentence example in Table 10, /pliiǎ/ /wàaŋ/ /kɔ̌/ /kɔ̌/ /man/ /saw/ /baan/ /wàaŋ/ /tee/ /t<sup>h</sup>ɔ̌/ /kaa/ เปลี่ยว่างก็ ก็มันเซาบานว่างเตเทอกา “I don’t have much free time. I’m always working”, the conjunction /kɔ̌/ is placed in two positions, after a mixed noun phrase (NK + Thai word) /pliiǎ/ /wàaŋ/ “free time” and before a clause /man/ /saw/ /baan/ /wàaŋ/ /tee/ /t<sup>h</sup>ɔ̌/ /kaa/ “I don’t have much free time”. It expresses the hesitation and uncertainty of the speaker.

6) Borrowing

One English loanword, a nickname borrowed from Thai, is found in the NK conversation, as shown in Table 11:

Table 11. Code-mixing in the situation of Borrowing

Code-mixing	Category	Examples
/p <sup>h</sup> âŋ/ เปิ้ล ‘Ple’	Noun	/ʔom/ /samʔ/ /p <sup>h</sup> âŋ/ อมชะเมาะเปิ้ล “My name is Ple.” (MF)
		/cɔʔ/ /ʔom/ /p <sup>h</sup> âŋ/ /baan/ /t <sup>h</sup> ɔ̌/ /seɛr/ เจาะอมเปิ้ลบานเทอแซร “Does Ple (name) do agriculture?” (TF)

One method of borrowing from a language is a transliteration, in which the loan word is pronounced with receptor language (here Thai) pronunciation. This method of borrowing is very common in many languages. The word /p<sup>h</sup>âŋ/ is an English loanword borrowed by Thai, which is truncated from the English word ‘apple’. Only the final syllable is pronounced as [p<sup>h</sup>âŋ], following the Thai sound system in which the final [-l] is pronounced as [-n]. This word is used by Thai people as a nickname and in turn, it is also borrowed by the NK speaker from Thai as an NK person’s nickname. Therefore the word ‘เปิ้ล’ /p<sup>h</sup>âŋ/ is also pronounced according to the rules of Thai pronunciation [p<sup>h</sup>âŋ] in the NK conversation.

To sum up, the NK speakers used code-mixing with the Thai language in their conversations in six different situations as follows: (1) Greeting (2) Appreciation (3) Expression of politeness (4) Telling information (General and Specific) (5) Indicative mood and (6) Borrowing.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

This study examined the linguistic performances of code-mixing by NK teenagers in Buriram Province when they speak to middle-aged NK people in their community. It particularly focused on types of linguistic units or categories of code-mixing that occur in the NK conversation and on the various situations in which that linguistic unit occurs. It is found that code-mixing with the Thai language occurs on three linguistic levels: which are morphological, syntactic, and discourse. On the morphological level, words found in Thai belong to seven different parts of speech. They are a noun, a verb, an adjective, final particles, quantifiers, conjunction, or exclamation. Three types of code-mixing are found at the syntactic level: Inter-Sentential, Intra-Sentential, and Extra-Sentential. On the discourse level, code-mixing occurs in the middle and at the end of the NK discourse. There are six different situations in the NK conversation in which these types of code-mixing occur: (1) Greeting (2) Appreciation (3) Expression of politeness (4) Telling information (General and Specific) (5) Indicative mood, Lexical meaning, and Sentence structure, and (6) Borrowing English word via the Thai language.

Besides the three types of syntactic level code-mixing described by Sankoff and Poplack (1981), three significant characteristics of Thai language code-mixing into NK conversation were found in this study. First, the NK speaker chooses a Thai word to insert into a

functional position in an NK sentence, functioning as the same part of speech as it would in Thai. For example, a Thai verb is placed in the position of an NK verb in an NK sentence. Second, the NK speaker did not borrow foreign words from languages such as English directly from the original language; instead, she chooses the English loanword as borrowed by the Thai language. Thus the pronunciation of the loanword follows Thai, not English or NK, pronunciation. The last prominent characteristic of code-mixing in NK conversation is that it can occur as a part of a sentential construction, for example in a serial verb construction. Sudmuk (2005) stated that all serial verb construction in Thai is composed of at least two verbs or two verb phrases in the series. When one of the NK speakers uses serial verb construction in NK conversation, he chooses one Thai verb to place adjacent to an NK verb to convey the meaning of two verbs happening simultaneously.

Even though this study is more focused on the linguistic performances of code-mixing in a conversation between NK teenagers and NK middle-aged people in the NK community, its findings might indicate a language shift and language endangerment among the NK speakers in Thailand, as the young generations tend to mix the Thai language in their conversations with the NK speakers in all three main linguistic levels, morphology, syntax, and discourse. Since the NK teenagers used the Thai language more widely, both in their education and in daily life among their friends, the role of the NK language in their conversation will be gradually shrinking and ultimately will be replaced by the Thai language. With the increase of the NK young generations' language shift, the NK language might become endangered in the future to come.

Since the scope of this study is limited to the code-mixing in NK conversation between teenage NK speakers and middle-aged NK speakers in Buriram Province of Thailand, the findings are not inclusive. There are still various dialects of the NK language spoken among NK speakers in the other parts of Thailand, for example, Surin Khmer, and Sankha Khmer (Premsrirat 1996). The code-mixing of Thai words, phrases, and clauses into the NK language by NK speakers in Thailand remains an open field for further research.

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Note:

1 The slash marks /-/ are used to show the boundary of the NK transcription in the data examples.

2 There are two kinds of transcription for the NK data: a phonetic transcription in /-/ followed by a Thai alphabet transcription.

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