



IDENTITY MAINTENANCE IN LANNA (NORTHERN THAI)

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Abstract

The identity of the Lanna people in northern Thailand is remarkably maintained through the northern language “Kam Mueang” in a context of cultural hybridity. This study was conducted in Chiang Mai, known as the capital of Lanna to investigate the maintenance of Lanna identity through the use of Kam Mueang words on signage. Signage of any possible forms in public, composed with words from single to large strings either permanent or contemporary, especially on the side roads was collected as data used in this study. Four pattern repertoires of signage are found including signs in foreign languages, signs in different mixed languages, signs in Thai only, and signs in Kam Mueang, mixed and non-mixed, respectively. Five Kam Mueang words including “Mueang”, “Huean”, “Doi”, “Kat”, and “Kham” on signs in public spaces reflect identity maintenance of Lanna people. Kam Mueang in public signage though found at a low rate compared to the frequency of all utterances types, currently and remarkably displays salient phenomenon of social identity.

Key words: identity, maintenance, Northern Thai

ISO 639-3 language codes: nod

1. Introduction

Lanna-Northern Thailand has maintained its unique society and culture through signage highlighted in public spaces under various political, social and cultural circumstances until the present era of Globalization. Northern Thai also known as Lanna language or more properly as “Kam Mueang” is not mutually intelligible with Central Thai. The vocabulary and pronunciation are different. Hence, the presence of Kam Mueang words in public places where Central Thai would normally be used is a reflection of pride in local identity. Identity is expressed through the language used in public spaces as seen on signage in northern Thailand. Words or other kinds of linguistic units on signage (such as, phrases and sentences) are communication system in society, which changes over time and reflects social and cultural phenomena. Language and society are reciprocally related, and language and identity are ‘ultimately inseparable’ as language is an identity marker at a group level and the most salient distinguishing characteristic of human beings (Edwards, 2009). People in northern Thailand, confronted with changing lifestyles, recognize their ethnic, social and cultural identity and express this sentiment in their public written language.

The written signage in Kam Mueang or the language of Lanna is written using the Central Thai alphabet mixed with other languages (including English) or in Kam Mueang only points to a multilingual community. The display of Kam Mueang with and among other languages, especially English which is extensively spread in the same community is evidence of the interaction between the local and the global resulting in Glocalization (Robertson, 1992). Meanwhile local language – Kam Mueang being expressed in the context of hybridity reinvigorates the socio-cultural identity and sheds light on change and maintenance of Lanna identity and language in the global culture of communication.

2. Signage Data

Data used in this study were signage in public, especially on side roads. Signs in public spaces include shop names, place names, advertisements, and announcements given on boards made of several kinds of materials such as, metal (e.g. zinc), cotton, wood, artificial wood, plastic, and paper, and also small and large stickers.

2.1 Data Collection

The data was collected from the places I travelled to following my weekly and daily itinerary in Chiang Mai province for about six and a half months, from October 2009 to mid April 2010. This whole region is the Kam Mueang speaking area. Chiang Mai city is the cultural capital of Kam Mueang speaking area. Notes of

written signage data together with some hundreds of photos were collected from the Mueang district, or the city of Chiang Mai, and seven other districts including Chom Thong, Doi Lo, San Pa Tong, Hang Dong, San Sai (especially at Mae Jo, its sub-district), Mae Rim and Chiang Dao. These are all smaller towns and municipal areas near to Chiang Mai City and still in Chiang Mai Province.

2.2 Data Analysis: Types and Characteristics of Signage

The data of single to large strings of linguistic units, that is from words to sentences of both permanent and contemporary types of signage were analysed by classifying all signs into types, and contrasting them in number and percentage. The most frequently used signs in Lanna language or “Kam Mueang” were taken into consideration.

Signs found in this study were those of both permanent and temporary types. Place names and business shop names were permanent, whereas most of the advertisements and announcements were temporary. The former type could be made of metal (e.g. zinc), wood, artificial wood and plastic, whereas the later of cotton, paper, plastic, and artificial wood, and also small and large stickers.

Signs were written in Thai (the official language of Thailand), English, and other languages, such as Chinese, Japanese, French and German. Some signs were given in two languages, mostly Thai and English. A mix of two, and even three languages were found on only one sign.

Linguistic units in several languages used on signage ranged from single to large strings, that is, word, phrase and sentence, as shown below.

Single words:

ชาว saw ‘twenty’
 หมวย mǔaj ‘a female’s name’

Phrases :

บ้านเฮาคาราโอเกะ bānhāuka:ra:ʔo:kèʔ ‘our home karaoke’
 คும்พญาการ์เด็นโฮม khúmphaʔna:ka:dênhom ‘residence of the great head of state (former time)’

Sentences:

มาแ่วเชียงใหม่ ต้องมาไนท์ซาฟารี ma:ʔə:wɛtɕhiangmàiʔŋma:náitsa:fari:
 ‘when (you) Visit Chiang Mai, you must visit Night Safari’

Signs were classified into four types including signs in foreign languages, signs in different mixed languages, signs in Thai only, and signs in Kam Mueang, mixed and non-mixed

3. Contrastive Use of All Signs

The total number of 3,825 signs was classified by way of contrast and four types of frequencies were found. Signs in foreign languages were used the most frequently, 31.00 %, mixed signs followed with little difference, 29.52 %, Thai signs were used 26.64 %, or 4.36 % less than the highest number of all used signs, and Kam Mueang signs were used the least, 12.84 %, or 18.16 % less than the highest use, respectively. The pie diagram below shows the contrastive use of all signs in this study.

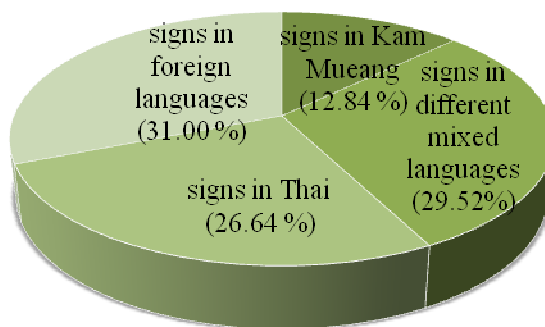


Figure 1: Contrastive use of all signs

3.1 Signs in foreign languages

Signs in foreign languages, which were found most frequently among all types of signage, and were classified into three types including 1) signs in foreign languages in Thai (with and without English transliteration), 2) signs in English only, and 3) signs in other languages.

3.1.1 Signs in foreign languages in Thai with and without English transliteration

Signs in foreign languages in Thai were divided into two types, exemplified as shown below, including signs in foreign languages in Thai without English transliteration, and signs in foreign languages in Thai with English transliteration. Most words were from English; a few other languages appeared, including Chinese and Japanese.

1) Signs in foreign languages in Thai without English transliteration:

โค้ก kó:k ‘Coke’
 แลนด์ แอนด์ เฮาส์ læ:ʔæ:nháu ‘Land and House’
 ฟุจิซังซุชิ fu:ʈəiʔsanʈu:ʈhíʔ ‘Fujisang Shushi’

2) Signs in foreign languages in Thai with English transliteration.

It is noted that signs in English characters were obviously given, whereas most of signs in Thai characters were much smaller in size.

L Top Salon แอล ท็อป ซาลอน
 คาวบอยมาร์เก็ต COWBOY’S MARKET
 The Airport Greenery ดีแอร์พอร์ตกรีนเนอรี



Figure 2: L Top Salon แอล ท็อป ซาลอน



Figure 3: คาวบอยมาร์เก็ต COWBOY’S MARKET

3.1.2 Signs in English only

Signs in English only, that is, without Thai transliteration, have increased more and more in public. English names for business shops (shop, hotel, restaurant, coffee shop, etc.), advertisements, and announcements are found in English everywhere. Some data examples are given below.

Bake & Bite
 McDonald’s
 Natural Wellness Resort and Spa
 Taxi Services To Every Where
 HANA CHRISTIAN International Kindergarten
 Your car we care

3.1.3 Signs in other languages

Signs in other languages including Chinese, Korean, Japanese, French, and German were recognized. They were written in those languages' characters and sometimes accompanied with transliteration in Thai, and English words.

In Chinese: เจ ๓๕: 'vegetarian food', ฮั่น จื้อ กง (with Chinese characters) hântɕũ:kɔŋ 'Han Jue Kong – a name', ชุนเส็ง (without Chinese characters) ɕhunsɛŋ 'Chun Seng – a name'

In Korean: Kanzen-Kenko

In German: Bosch (Service), HÄFELE, Osram, Würth, Hofmann, Schenker

In Japanese: ซูชิ ใคไซ surɕhĩ'khaíso: 'Sushi Kai So', TOYOTA, Isuzu

In French: CARREFOUR, Amitié



Figure 4: HÄFELE



Figure 5: CARREFOUR

3.2 Signs in different mixed languages: Thai mixed with other languages

Two types of mixed signs were found, 1) signs in a mix of Thai and English, which was the most dominant mixing, and 2) signs in a mix of Thai and other languages.

3.2.1 Signs in a mix of Thai and English

The mix of words on signage which was found most frequently among all types of mixing was the mix between English and Thai. These signage words were sometimes accompanied with English transliterations.

1) The mix written in Thai with English transliteration:

อินทนนท์ริเวอร์ไซด์ รีสอร์ท INTHANON RIVERSIDE RESORT

แวนบิวตี้ฟูล Beautiful Optical

ยินดีต้อนรับสู่...เชียงใหม่ไนท์ซาฟารี Welcome to...Chiang Mai Night Safari



Figure 6: อินทนนท์ริเวอร์ไซด์ รีสอร์ท INTHANON RIVERSIDE RESORT

2) The mix written in Thai without English transliteration:

อินทนนท์คอฟฟี่โรด ʔinthanonkhǒʔfi:rót ‘Inthanon Coffee Road’
 แจ่มฟ้าซูเปอร์มาร์ท tɕə̀mfa:súpphǒ:mà:t ‘Chaem Fa Supermart’
 บ้านรุ่งเรือง ควอลิตี้เฮาส์ bā:nrǔŋruŋkhoa:líʔtí:háu ‘Ban Rung Rueang Quality House’

3) The mix written in Thai and English

This type of mixing was given in Thai and English alphabet together on the same signage. Data examples are shown as in the following.

ร้านแว่นตา I LOVE U OPTICAL rá:nwæ:nta: I LOVE U OPTICAL ‘I LOVE U Optical shop’
 Dr. com ซ่อมคอมฯ อัปเกรด Dr. com sǒ:mkhǒ:mʔápkrè:d ‘Dr.com repair & upgrade computer’
 เชียงใหม่ 89 plaza tɕhiaŋmài 89 plaza ‘Chiang Mai 89 plaza’



Figure 7: ร้านแว่นตา I LOVE U OPTICAL rá:nwæ:nta: I LOVE U OPTICAL ‘I LOVE U Optical shop’

4) The mix written in English, with or without Thai transliteration

The Nature Home Chiangmai
 CENTRAL AIRPORT PLAZA
 Light up your world to over 70 cities with THAI



Figure 8: The Nature Home Chiangmai



Figure 9: Light up your world to over 70 cities with THAI

3.2.2 Signs in a mix of Thai and other languages: Chinese, Japanese, Italian, French, and German

Following are some data excerpts shown the mix between several other foreign languages except English in signs.

Chinese + Thai: จุล่ง สุกี & กุ้งกระทะ tɕu:lŏŋsùʔkí: & kŭŋkràʔtháʔ ‘Chulong shuki & pan grilled scrimp’
 Japanese + Thai: วาซาบิแม่โจ้ wa:sa:bìʔmǎe:tɕò: ‘Maejo wasabi’
 Japanese + English: ฮิตาชิแฟร์ 2010 híʔta:tɕhíʔfæ: 2010 ‘Hitachi Fair 2010’
 Italian + Thai: สปาเก็ตตี้ซี่เม้าหมู sàʔpa:kéttí:khi:maumǔ: ‘Spaghetti with spicy pork’
 French + Thai: Le โค lə:kho: ‘the buffalo’, กุลพันธ์วิลส์ kunlaphanwil ‘Kulpan Ville’

German + Thai: Würth เทคโนโลยีจากเยอรมัน Würth thékno:lɔj:ɬà:kjə:raman ‘Würth Technology from Germany’

3.3 Signs in Thai only

Most signs in Thai only can be considered “old fashioned” or not-up-to-date. The material of those signs looks old; the words on such signage were written a long time ago as seen in the following examples.

สระอุ	sàʔrâʔu: ‘vowel /u:ʔ’
ขอบคุณที่ไม่สูบบุหรี่	khɔ:pkhunthî:mâisù:bbùʔrî: ‘Thank you for not smoking’
รัตนผล	ráttaʔnáʔphô:n ‘Rattana-pol’

Although many signage words look old fashioned, they have English translation as shown in a few examples below.

เปิด	OPEN
ศูนย์อาหารเทศบาลตำบลจอมทอง	Chom Thong FOOD CENTER

Some shop names’ signs connote the owners and location of the shops, as seen in the excerpts given below.

เกรียงไกร	kriangkhrai ‘Kriangkrai’
แม่โจ้เภสัช	mâe:ɬô:phe:sàt ‘Mae Jo Pharmacy’
ชาญชัย	ɬha:ntɬhai ‘Chanchai’



Figure 10: เกรียงไกร kriangkhrai ‘Kriangkrai’

A few Thai signs were written in English, that is, without Thai alphabet at all as shown in the following data excerpts.

Baan Thapae ‘Tha Pae house’ (a shop)
SAMART ‘Samart’ (a television satellite product’s name, which can be translated as ‘be able’)



Figure 11: Baan Thapae ‘Tha Pae house’ (a shop)

3.4 Signs in Kam Mueang, mixed and non-mixed

Kam Mueang in this study meant only those signs that are written in Thai alphabet involving original sounds as much as possible. In the case of mixing, signs in Kam Mueang are mostly mixed Thai and English, only a few with French. Three types of signs in Kam Mueang are found on signage.

3.4.1 Signs in Kam Mueang mixed with Thai

Kam Mueang words written in Thai alphabet are mixed with Thai in various situations and places, both permanent and contemporary signage. Some excerpts of underlined words below are Kam Mueang.

เฮือนสบู่	huansà?bù: ‘house of soap’
กาตฝรั่ง	kā:tfā?rāŋ ‘Market of Foreigners’
กาตไมริมคลอง	kā:tmáirimkhloŋ ‘Wood market on the canal’
เชียงใหม่ ฮอต ดอยเต่า อมก้อย	tɕhiaŋmài hò:t doj:tāu ?omkǔj ‘Chiang Mai Hot Doi Tao Om Koi’
เทศกาลของดีศรีเชียงใหม่	thê:tsà?kankhǔ:ŋdi:sĩ:tɕiaŋmāimūntɕāihápĩ:māimuan ‘Chiang Mai Honourable Objects Festival, welcome to Mueang New Year with Joy’
มหกรรมผ้าฝ้ายดอมือ ๑๐๙ ปี ของดีจอมทอง ครั้งที่ ๓	má?hà?kamphā:fāitǔ:mur: 109 pĩ: khǔ:ŋdi:tɕǎ:mtǔ:ŋ khrāŋtĩ:sǎ:m ‘The Third 109 Years of Chom Thong Hand-Woven Cotton Festival’

3.4.2 Signs in Kam Mueang mixed with foreign languages

Mueang words on signage are mixed with foreign languages, mostly with English. A few are mixed with Chinese, French, Japanese, and Korean. Some mixes between Mueang and foreign languages mentioned are written in Thai alphabet only, some are written in Thai and English alphabet together, and a few are written in English only. Some excerpts of underlined words in the examples below are in Kam Mueang.

Examples of Kam Mueang mixed with English:

BCC ANTIQUES 1976 Ban Chang Come	“Come”, that is “Kham – gold” combined as an adjective with Chang ‘elephant’ to mean ‘golden elephant’
บ้านไม้คำ Restaurant	bā:nmāikham Restaurant ‘Golden house restaurant’
บินม่วนแต่กับแอร์เอเชีย	binmūantǎ:kàb?æ:ʔe:tɕhia ‘Fly joyfully with Air Asia’
แมนๆ ใจ ๆ ที่เอื้อน मदเลย	mæ:nmæ:ntɕāitɕāi hū:pū:nmótlǔj ‘The whole Gentlemen’s heart for friends’
ดอกเอื้องบานที่กาตจริงใจ เจเจมาร์เก็ต	dǔ:k?nūaŋba:nthĩ:kā:ttɕiŋtɕaitɕe:tɕe:ma:kê:t ‘Orchids shown at Kat Ching Chai JJ Market’
เขิงดอย OPEN CUP	tɕhǔ:ŋdǔ:i (foot hill) OPEN CUP ‘Foot hill open cup’

Examples of Mueang mixed with French:

Café de Klang Wiang (“Klang” ‘middle’; “Wiang” ‘capital’) ‘Coffee shop at the city center’
เลอกองคำ lǔ:kǔ:ŋkham ‘Le Kong Kham’ (“Kham” ‘gold’)

An example on Mueang mixed with Chinese:

อยุธยา ก๋วยเตี๋ยวเรือ ข้าวซอย	ʔà?jútthaja:kǔajtǎawrua khāusǔj
‘noodle on boat in Ayutthaya’s style and Khao Soi’	

“Kuay Tiaw” are originally Chinese noodle dishes. “Khao Soi” is a popular dish in northern Thailand, made of yellow noodles with rich milky curry. It was a Muslim dish and was introduced by the Chinese Muslims known as Ho in Thailand (Rattana, 1999) and Hui in Yunnan China.

An example on Mueang mixed with Japanese:

บ้านเฮาคาราโอเกะ	bā:nhaukha:ra:ʔo:kè? ‘Ban Hau (our house) Karaoke’
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An example on Mueang mixed with Korean:

ร้านคังเขน –เคนโก-หลังมีน rá:nkanṣe:nkhe:nkô:lîṅmû:n ‘Kanzen-KenkoLing Muen’
(Ling Muen is an area in a sub-district of San Sai district)

3.4.3 Signs in Kam Mueang, non-mixed

The words of the type “Mueang” only refer to those that are written in Thai alphabet and can be pronounced as the original Kam Mueang sounds. Some excerpts show Kam Mueang only on signage, which are used as shop names, products and also in temporary signage as announcements. Two photographs below are examples of Kam Mueang signs.

ช่วงบ้าน	khūaṅbā:n ‘house’s ground’
สะหลดดอก	sà?lǎṅdō:k ‘flowery silverware bowl’
เฮือนแม่คำผง	huanmā:khamphōṅ ‘house of Mrs. Kham Phong’
เฮือนน้ำปิง	huannā:mpīṅ ‘house of Ping River’
ไส้อั่วป่าคำ	sāi?ùapā:kham ‘Aunt Kham Sai Ua’ ¹
ม่วนกัันหน้ากาด	mǔankānnā::kāt ‘be joyful in front of the market’
ดีใจยิ่งแล้ว แยกแก้วมาเยือน บ่ลืมบ่เลือน เตือนกันบ่เมา	di:ṭǎi?jīṅlǎ:w khǎ:kā:kā:wma:juan bō:lēi:mbō:lēi:n tūankānbō:mau
‘(We) are so pleased that honourable guests come to visit us, please remind ourselves not to get drunk’	
สืบฮีต สานฮอย ผ่อกอย ป่าเวณี่ปีใหม่เมืองหางดง	sūi:bhī:t sǎ:nhō:i phǎ:wō:i pǎ:wē:ni:pi:māimuanṅhǎ:ṅdōṅ
‘extend the rite, maintain traditional New Year festival of Hang Dong’	
ตามฮีต ตามฮอย ตามผ่อ ตามกอย ปี่ใหม่เมืองจอมทอง	tā:mhī:t tā:mhō:i tā:mphō: tā:mkwō:i pīmāimuanṅṭṭō:mtoṅ
‘Follow the rite, come maintaining traditional New Year Festival of Chom Thong’	



Figure 12: สะหลดดอก sà?lǎṅdō:k ‘flowery silverware bowl’

¹ “Sai Ua” is spicy Northern Sausage, roasted sausage made from pork and spices.



Figure 13: ดีใจยิ่งแล้ว แยกแก้วมาเยือน บลีมบ่เลือน เตือนกันบ่เมา di:ʔəj̄j̄iŋlɔ̀w kh̄ɛ:k̄k̄ɛ:wma:j̄wan b̄w:l̄n̄i:m̄b̄w:l̄n̄ian t̄w̄i:ank̄nb̄w̄:mau

‘(We) are so pleased that honourable guests come to visit us, please remind ourselves not to get drunk’

4. The Contexts of The Five Most Frequent Use of Kam Mueang Word Elements

“Mueang” (regional inhabitants), geographic settlement/location in “Doi” (mountain), symbolic prestige of financial status on place of living in “Huean” (house), local market as trading place as well as place of social interaction in “Kat” (market), and social norm on precious thing in “Kham” (gold). Five most frequent use of Kam Mueang word elements according to the contrastive analysis of all Kam Mueang word elements in this study include เมือง /muan̄/ ‘regional inhabitants’ (61 times), ดอย /d̄w̄:i/ ‘mountain’ (50 times), เฮือน /huan̄/ ‘house’ (40 times), กาด /k̄ā:t/ ‘market’ (39 times), and คำ /kham/ ‘gold’ 38 times, respectively. The table below shows the statistic frequency of use of those five Kam Mueang word elements.

Word Elements Word element Contexts	เมือง muan̄ (61)	ดอย d̄w̄:i (50)	เฮือน huan̄ (40)	กาด k̄ā:t (39)	คำ kham (38)
Place	9	42	35	39	-
Language	10	-	-	-	-
Characteristics	42	8	5	1	23
Precious things	-	-	-	-	15

4.1 Contexts of the use of เมือง /muan̄/

The word element “MUEANG”/muan̄/ used in the context on characteristics of several things was found the most frequently, that is, 42 out of 61 times. “เมือง” /muan̄/ is used in the context of place, language, and characteristics of several things. This highest and widespread use of “MUEANG” /muan̄/ shows the pride of local inhabitants in holding onto their prestigious social status. “Khon” means people and “Mueang” specifies those people who are civilized and live in the city (Udom, 2006) “Khon Mueang” formerly referred to the local people, who were distinguished from Burmese during the Burmese occupation for about two hundred years in the past and were called “เมือง” /muan̄/ (Sanguan, 1969: 189 – 190). Kam Mueang belongs to the Tai language family (Diller, 1990), whereas Burmese belongs to Tibeto-Burman language family (Suriya, 1988). However, during Burmese’s occupation (1558 – 1777), some Burmese words were borrowed, such as ปลาย /p̄w̄:i/ ‘fair or celebration’, which was borrowed from /p̄x̄:w/ and กะบอง /k̄àʔb̄w̄:ŋ/ from /p̄aut̄ɔ̀:/ which means fried pieces of pumpkin mixed with flour (Udom, 2004), แกงฮังเล or แกงฮินเล /k̄æ:ŋhan̄le:/ or /k̄æ:ŋhin̄le:/ ‘Hungle curry - a spicy and fatty pork curry’ and /n̄á:m̄ph̄r̄íkʔw̄:ŋ/ ‘chili paste with chopped pork and tomatoes’ (Sanguan, 1969).

Because central education mandates the use of central Thai in all school education as the medium of instruction, many local people have begun to replace commonplace words, such as /t̄ē:w/ with /k̄ă:ŋk̄é:ŋ/ ‘trousers’ when people speak Kam Mueang. In the last decade, Kam Mueang courses have been offered in universities, such as Chiang Mai University, Maejo University, Rajabhat Chiangmai University, and selected

schools and at local temples such as Wat Suan Dok, and a few isolated local groups throughout northern Thailand (Chayutpat – oral primary source, 2012). A group of people are hoping to provide teaching of Kam Mueang in primary schools in northern Thailand. There has also been a resurgence of Lanna identity as demonstrated by wearing of “Mueang” style clothes at special festivals and on every Friday in schools, universities, government offices and banks, and by practice of rites and decorations on festival occasions. These innovations appear to be gathering momentum and can be regarded as signs of success in the resurgence of Lanna Identity. If the promotion of Kam Mueang in schools succeeds, the Lanna identity should be assured in the era of globalization.

In the context of use of Mueang, the word element /muan/ is used as an adjective in a combination to form compound nouns, as in the following examples.

มาแ่วงาน บดี้ลีมแต่งชุดพื้นเมืองมาตวย รางวัลเครื่องแต่งกาย ยังรอท่านอยู่ เน้อเจ้า
 ma:ʔæ:wŋa:n bō:di:lɯ:mtæ:ŋtɕhútɕu:nmuanma:to:j ra:ŋwankhrúataæ:ŋka:j jaŋro:thâ:nju:
 nî:ɕəu
 ‘Joining the party, please do not forget to dress in local suits, dressing award is waiting for you’
 ของกินคนเมือง khǔ:ŋkî:nkhonmuan “Khon Mueang”- local food’

The most frequent use of the word element “Mueang” is incorporated with the word ปีใหม่ /pî:mai / ‘New Year’ to be “ปีใหม่เมือง” /pî:maimuan/ ‘Northern Thai New Year, or New Year of Khon Mueang’ among the elements /muan/ “MUEANG”, which is used 18 times out of 42. That is one-third of its use in the earlier mentioned contexts. The use of the element /muan/ found in “contemporary” signage, is often used before and during the period of “ปีใหม่เมือง” /pî:maimuan/ or “Song Kran” festival, that is traditional New Year. This popular use indicates that “Khon Mueang”, people of the North, value traditional Thai New Year as the most important custom or rite. /pî:maimuan/ ‘Mueang-Northern Thai New Year Festival’ has been the most cherished occasion for all families. It’s a time for great making-merit at the temple, showing respect to the elderly relatives who give traditional wishes in return. Traditionally typical things such as food, utensils and dress, are used to celebrate, and extend good wishes for the coming “new” year. Some contemporary signs show the extensive use of “ปีใหม่เมือง” pî:maimuan ‘Mueang-Northern New Year Festival’.

Examples:

ตามฮีต ดวยฮอย ป่าเวณีปีใหม่เมืองส่วมกันสร้งน้ำพระ
 ta:mhî:t tuajhō:i pǎ:wē:nî:pî:maimuanŋhūamkǎnsǎŋná:mphrá?
 ‘Following the rite, following “Mueang” New Year Festival, please spring water to the statue of Buddha together’
 ต๋ามฮีต ต๋ามฮอย ต๋ามผอ ต๋ามกอย ปีใหม่เมืองจ๋อมตอง
 tǎ:mhî:t tǎ:mhō:i tǎ:mpho: tǎ:mkwō:i pî:māimuan
 tǎ:w:mtō:ŋ ‘Following the rite, following Chom Thong New Year Festival’
 ป่าเวณีปีใหม่เมือง pǎ:wē:nî:pî:maimuan Chiang Mai Song Kran Festival ‘Chiang Mai New Year Festival’
 ม่วนอ๋กม่วนใจปีใหม่เมือง muanʔō:kmanjǎipî:maimuan ‘Joyful Chiang Mai New Year Festival (Song Kran)’



Figure 14: ต๋ามฮีต ต๋ามฮอย ต๋ามผอ ต๋ามกอย ปีใหม่เมืองจ๋อมตอง
 tǎ:mhî:t tǎ:mhō:i tǎ:mpho: tǎ:mkwō:i pî:māimuan tǎ:w:mtō:ŋ
 ‘Following the rite, following Chom Thong New Year Festival’

The element “MUEANG” /muan/ connotes the socio-cultural norm of the “prestigious” ethnicity of the inhabitants of the North; being “Mueang” connotes being ‘civilized’. People of the North retain pride in being “Khon Mueang” and also in everything representing the “Mueang” character. The use of “Mueang” in compounds is associated with several other cultural markers of identity such as festival, ethnicity (also

include a specific occupation, “sla”-craftsman), food, and dress, respectively. The concrete three cultural markers, festival, food and dress and their unique characteristics, style and form will be discussed below.

The element “Mueang” denoting food was found as frequently as that used to connote ethnicity, that is, 8 times. However, the use in these two contexts is 10 times less than that used in the context of “New Year”. ของกินคนเมือง /khǎ:nkhn:mnuaŋ/ ‘local northern food’ is mostly spicy and made using pork and local vegetables, and a few are Burmese in origin. Some data excerpts on Mueang food are shown in the examples below.

- ข้าวซอยกะโหล่ง khāusɔj:kàʔlɔŋ ‘Khao Soi in coconut bowl’²
 ลาบไก่เมือง la:bkāimuaŋ ‘“Mueang” chicken chop mixed with spices’
 แกงอ่อม kə:ŋʔwɛ:m ‘Pork or Beef Curry Soup - spicy flavoured stewed pork or beef combined with chillies, shrimp paste, a few lime leaves and sweet basil’
 ใส่วัว sāiʔwā ‘Spicy Northern Sausage-roasted sausage made from pork and spices’



Figure 15: ลาบไก่เมือง la:bkāimuaŋ ‘“Mueang” chicken chop mixed with spices’

The “Mueang” style of dress is traditionally hand-woven cotton with its unique patterns. Men dress in “Thia or Theo (at present it can be called “Kang Keng”), which is a loose trouser dressed in combination with a local shirt, being probably tied with “Pha Tong or Pha Kha Ma”, having multiple functions of use. Women dress in hand-woven cotton “Pha Thung”, a kind of long skirt with several unique patterns and a blouse with embroidery or other decoration. A few data excerpts show the use of the element “Mueang” connoting typical dress.

- มาแฉ่งงาน บดี้ลีมแต่งชุดพื้นเมืองมาตวย รางวัลเครื่องแต่งกาย ยังรอท่านอยู่น้อเจ้า
 ma:ʔsɛ:wŋā:n bɔ̃:di:lɛ:mtæ:ŋtɕhútɕhu:nmuaŋma:to:j ra:ŋwankhrúata:ŋkaj jaŋro:tá:nju:
 nǎ:tɕáu
 ‘Joining the party, please do not forget to dress in local suits, dressing award is waiting for you’
 ศิลปศาสตร์ร่วมใจแต่งกายชุดพื้นเมืองทุกวันศุกร์ตลอดเดือนเมษายนน้อเจ้า...
 silpasà:thú:mtɕáitæ:ŋkajitɕhútɕhu:nmuaŋtúkwansùktalò:duanne:sǎ:jonnǎ:tɕáu
 ‘Members of the Faculty of Liberal Arts, please participate in dressing in Mueang style every Friday throughout April...’

Two examples of “Pha Thung” of Mueang patterns are a pattern called “Lai Nam Lay”, and another one “(Sin) Tin Chok”. “Lai Nam Lai” refers to a typical pattern, which looks like flowing rivers especially known as heritage of Tai Lue (in Phayao and Nan provinces). “Sin (intertwine word for Pha Thung) Tin Chok” refers to the long skirt having at its bottom a hand-woven cotton together with cotton embroidery showing very complicated patterns having specific names; each pattern on the same piece is usually named according to the natural environment of each village, either flowers or animals.

4.2 Contexts of the use of ดอย /dɔi/

The word element dɔi, the local word for mountains is most dominant in naming of places. This use of ดอย /dɔi/ represents the particular geographical settlement of the North having a “mountainous” characteristic.

² “Khao Soi”: yellow noodles with rich milky curry topped with crispy fried noodles served with a side dish of lemon sliced, pickled cabbage and small red onion

The second most frequent use of this Mueang element can be explained by the fact that the inhabitants take pride in their mountainous home. Moreover, other people including those who have moved to live in the region and tourists recognize and appreciate the attractive mountainous region of Lanna-northern Thailand.

According to the traditional belief, the mountains should be to the west of the town or city to be “fortunate”. Early in the morning, the sun rises in the east in the front of the mountain and sets behind the mountains in the west. Hence, the geographic site of Chiang Mai, the capital of Lanna which is situated in front of Doi Suthep with the Ping river at its front shows an ecological wisdom (Saratsawadi, 2006: 133). Situated in between Doi Suthep and Ping river, the region of Chiang Mai always receives water and is also surrounded by water resources.

The use of DOI reflects the appreciation, affection and attachment that people of the northern regions have towards the mountains. Many local places are named with the element ‘doi’ depending on each region. Some mountains received their names according to their history, e.g. ‘Doi’ as ดอยอินทนนท์ ‘Doi Inthanon’ - the name of a former King of Lanna (King Inthawitchayanon), Doi Suthep – the name of a hermit. Though the Thai word “Phu Khao” is used for the word “Doi” in Lanna language, all geographic signs are written with “Doi” in Thai alphabet. Hence, both the inhabitants and the state officers authorized for making those public signs recognize and respect this typical and “attractive” element of Lanna. Examples:

Doi Chang	ดอ:itçhá:ŋ ‘elephant mountain’
Doi Angkhang	ดอ:i?à:ŋkhǎ:ŋ ‘pot basin mountain’
Doi Lo	ดอ:iลว: ‘the slighted mountain’

The element “Doi”, moreover, indicates other things including products as in a sign found, ข้าวสาส์ดอย ‘mountainous corn’. “Doi” also symbolizes the mountainous site of the institution as in a contemporary signage สาธิตบึงกุดดอย /sǎ:thítpíkdo:i/ ‘Back to The Demonstration School of Chiang Mai University’. In addition, people living in the mountainous areas call themselves “Chao Doi”.

The mountainous location of the Lanna region is not only valued in terms of “spirit”, but also in business. The element “Doi” always implies “mountainous” characteristics for the place or thing with which it is used. Business people take advantage of this particular scenery of the region. They give their business enterprises’ names with the element “Doi”. The element ดอย /dɔ:i/ has recently been used in combination with other words to name especially tourism and accommodation business, and also other shops.

Examples:

ดอยคำรีสอร์ต	ดอ:ikhamri:sò:t ‘Doi Kham Resort’
ดอยอ่างการีสอร์ต	ดอ:i?à:ŋka:ri:sò:t ‘Doi Angka Resort’ (Crow basin Resort)
มอนฟ้าดอยคำ	มว:mfá:dɔ:ikham ‘Mon Fa Doi Kham’ (skying-golden mountain)
เอื้องดอยดีไซน์	?ni:ŋdɔ:i di:sai ‘mountainous orchid design - a shop name’
ข้าวสาส์ดอย	khǎusǎ:i:dɔ:i ‘mountainous corn’



Figure 16: มอนฟ้าดอยคำ มว:mfá:dɔ:ikham ‘Mon Fa Doi Kham’ (skying-golden mountain)

4.3 Contexts of the use of เอื้อน /huan/

The Kam Mueang element เอื้อน /huan/ ‘house’, which was found to be the third most frequently used in 40 cases prominently symbolizes prestige for the place of living in the North. Lanna inhabitants have always given importance to the settlement and the building of houses. They respect and believe in a fortunate site

and there have always been several beliefs and ceremonies concerning the house, such as specific good months for building the house, asking for “land” from Naga, the powerful god of Land who might be able to bring happiness or disaster to the house members (Sanan, 2007: 69).

A traditional rite concerning the house, both building a new house and a new house celebration is the rite of paying respect to the four Gods called “Thao Chatulokkaban”, who give happiness to and protect human beings into four directions of the world. This rite aims to ask for permission from the four Gods and also other two gods, Phra In (Head of all gods and god of Land). In order that the rite process continues without obstacle, the people ask those Gods to protect them from misfortune (unknown author copied from a damaged and ancient book, Encyclopaedia of Northern Thai Culture, 1995: 7809).

The Lanna house or **เฮือน** /huan/ has traditionally been built in a unique wooden style from teak. Every piece of the house (e.g. the pillars, the wall, the ground) is made of wood and if the owners are rich, that would be of teak. Inside the house, the big wooden “Toen” (veranda) has traditionally been used as a living area to welcome guests and has had a big functional terrace to do several things, e.g. to dry crops, rice, seeds and relax in the evening and even sleep in during the hot season.

The **เฮือน** /huan/ ‘house’ is therefore valuable and became a symbol of financial status and also political power. The big-typical **เฮือน** /huan/ especially in Lanna style symbolizes pride and power of the owner. Having such a wooden house, especially that is made of teak shows the head of the family’s financial ability, who is probably a respected and powerful person of the region or village. The study found that among 40 contexts of use, for 35 of “Huean” were used to connote “house”. The element **เฮือน** /huan/ ‘house’ has recently been used in combination with other elements as the name of restaurants, resorts, shops, dormitory, residence, hotel, and office. The element **เฮือน** /huan/ makes the guests or customers at those business places take “pride” and as if they are coming to stay, relax or eat in their own “Huean”, in a privileged place of living. Below are examples on the use of “Huean” in underlined words for several place names and other purposes of use.

Restaurants:

เฮือนสถาปนิก huansàʔthǎ:paník ‘House of architects’
เฮือนห้วยแก้วสังการแห่งล้านนานคร huanhúajkǎwʔàʔlan̄ka:nhǎeŋlá:nna:náʔkhɔ:n
 ‘Huean Huay Kaew, Luxor of The City of Lanna’

Shops:

เฮือนสปา huansapa: ‘Spa House’
ร้านเฮือนแปโบราณ rá:nhuanpǎe:bo:ra:n ‘Old raft-house shop’

Office:

เฮือนเนติกร huanne:tiʔnáʔkhɔ:n ‘House of lawyer’
แวะเฮือน เฮือนบ้านป่ากันหมูเฮา wǎʔjuanhuanbā:npáʔkǎnmu:hau ‘visit old school, have a meeting’

Resort:

เฮือนดอกแก้วรีสอร์ท huandō:kǎw:wri:sō:t ‘House of Dok Kaew Resort’

Hotel:

เฮือนหลวงพระบาง huanlǔaŋphráʔba:ŋ ‘Hotel Huean Luang Phrabang’

Residence:

เฮือนผู้กำเนียงใหม่ huanphū:kǎ:ntɕiaŋmāi ‘House of Police Headquarter’s Chiang Mai’

Dormitory:

เฮือนพวงคราม huanphuwaŋkhra:m ‘House of Phuang Kham’
เฮือนบัวระวงที่๕ huanbuarawŋthí: 5 ‘House of the fifth Buarawong’³

Persons:

ประกวดธิดาผ้าฝ้าย, แม่เฮือนงาม, บ่าวหล่อ, ป้อเฮือนไร่ฟุง
 práʔkūatthíʔda:phǎ:fǎi, mǎe:huanŋa:m, bǎ:wlǎ:, bǔ:huanráiphuŋ
 Beauty contest of Miss Cotton, beautiful Married Lady, Handsome Boy, non-fat Married Man’

³ “Buarawong” is a kind of lotus

Other:

โชตนาไม้เฮือนเก่า t̚hɔːtana:máihwankāu ‘Old house wooden Chotana’



Figure 17: เฮือนสถาปนิก huansà?thǎ:paník
‘House of architects’



Figure 18: เฮือนเนติกร huanne:ti?ná?kho:n
‘House of lawyer’

4.4 Contexts of the use of กาด /kǎ:t/

The element กาด /kǎ:t/ ‘market’, used (39 times), connotes the place of trading everywhere in the North, both in the city and the village. Among the total number of use of กาด /kǎ:t/, 30 contexts refer to daily markets. However, กาด /kǎ:t/ is not known only as a place for trading, but also and especially as a place of socially spontaneous interaction at various times, daily or weekly. It is the name for a popular place where people come to trade, bargain, relax and entertain themselves.

Northern people value กาด /kǎ:t/ - the market as an important part of life. Beside other ways of earning a living such as agriculture, clothes, and ceramics, the market is an important place to support other ways of earning. Big cities in Lanna had circular trade, and in every five days, there was a big appointed market (Penth, translated by Sirirat, 2009). Since recorded history of Lanna, during 1296 – 1355, “กาด” /kǎ:t/ or the market of Chiang Mai was settled at a part of “Khuang Luang” or large square in the city centre of Chiang Mai, which was at the intersection, “Klang Wiang” where King Mang Rai, the first King of Lanna Kingdom died (Saratsawadi, 2006: 143). This place is still be used nowadays as a part of the most popular Sunday walking street. The market has not only been the place where people trade, but also the place where they have social interaction.

Accordingly, กาด /kǎ:t/, from the oldest places of trading in traditional style to the new and modern ones have been widely been established in the North until nowadays. In the North, three main types of “Kat” have been found, which include “Kat Ngai or Kat Chao” ‘early morning market’ “Kat Laeng” ‘late afternoon market’, and “Kat Nat” ‘appointed market’.

The most traditional markets of the local people are “Kat Ngai or Kat Chao” ‘early morning market’ and “Kat Laeng” ‘late afternoon market’, and a special market called “Kat Ngua” ‘oxen market’, which was the place where people particularly bought and sold buffaloes and oxen. The “Kat Ngua” became “Kat Tit or Kat Sao” ‘Sunday or Saturday market’, that is week-end market, or in other words, “Kat Nat” ‘appointed market’. The word “Nat” means “to have an appointment”. It may be called “Kat Mua”, “Mua” means ‘mix’, which refers to a kind of a single market where people sell and buy many different things. Kat Nat are mostly open from late afternoon to late evening. Recently, there are numerous “Kat Nat” including daily markets, “Kat Phat” ‘Thursday market’, “Kat Suk” ‘Friday market’, or sometimes, such the specific market is called according to the organized place’s name, such as “Kat Ruam Chok” (on Monday and Tuesday, as well as daily) at a place called Ruam Chok, “Kat Cowboy” at Maejo University on Monday and Wednesday, open from late afternoon till evening. Recently, “Kat Nat” or appointed market have become more and more popular in the North. A few examples show the signs on “Kat Nat”.

กาดรวมโชคหรือคั้งสตรีท kǎ:truamt̚hɔ̃:kwǎkk̚ŋsatriːt

‘Walking Street Ruam Chok Market’

ดอกเอื้องบานที่กาดจรัญใจ เจเจ มาร์เก็ต dɔ̃:k̚?w̚aŋba:nthi:kǎ:t̚t̚ɕiŋt̚ɕai JJ market

‘Opening Orchids at Ching Chai J J Market’

กาดนัดโลตัสค่าเที่ยง kǎ:tnátlo:tátkhamthiŋ ʔ ‘Lotus Kham Thiŋ appointed market’

The element กาด /kã:t/ easily and naturally reminds people of the market at a particular place. It is therefore used as the name of other places beside the market place itself. These imply the related location of each business. The following data show the use of กาด /kã:t/ for several places including massage shop, medical clinic and car park.

กาดหลวงนวดเท้า kã:tluaŋnũattháu ‘Kat Luang Foot Massage’
 คลินิกกระดูกและข้อกาดรวมโชค klinikkrà?dù:kklæ?khô:kã:truamtçhò:k
 ‘Kat Ruam Chok Orthopedic Clinic’
 จอดรถกาดนัดมีโชค tçò:trótkã:tnátmi:tçhò:k ‘Kat Ruam Chok Car Park’

As discussed, “Kat” has always been a beloved place of the local people. It isn’t only the place where people trade but also where people socialize and spontaneously interact at various time, from early morning till late evening. In 39 contexts with the element กาด /kã:t/ ‘market’, 30 contexts represent daily markets. Most of them are named according to the place. A few are named according to the particular products or occasion. The element กาด /kã:t/ is also used for a big department store. A market imitated from the “oldest” market of the city popularly called “Kat Luang” (official name is “Warorot Market”) to a place in the big department store, Central Airport Plaza, and its name is กาดหลวงแอร์พอร์ต /kã:tluaŋ?æ:põ:t/ ‘Kat Luang Air Port’. Recently, more market places have been created and are named in mixed words, with Kam Mueang กาด /kã:t/ and English as seen in the data example below.

กาดหลวง kã:tluaŋ ‘Kat Luang - Warorot Market’
 กาดหลวงแอร์พอร์ต kã:tluaŋ?æ:põ:t ‘Kat Luang Airport’
 กาดไมริมคลอง kã:tmáirimkhlo:ŋ ‘Kat Mai Rim Klong wood market on the canal’



Figure 19: กาดหลวงแอร์พอร์ต kã:tluaŋ?æ:põ:t
 ‘Kat Luang Airport’



Figure 20: กาดไมริมคลอง kã:tmáirimkhlo:ŋ
 ‘Kat Mai Rim Klong wood market on the canal’

4.5 Contexts of the use of คำ /kham/

The element คำ /kham/ as an adjective ‘golden’ and also noun ‘gold’ is used 23 out of 38 times in combination with several things. It was used together with other word elements in compound words to describe places, things and people. The element คำ /kham/ is used the most frequently for places, 36 out of 38 times as in the following examples.

วัดพระธาตุดอยคำ wátphrá?thâ:tdo:ikham ‘Wat Phra That Doi Kham – a Buddhist temple’
 บ้านแก้วเฮือนคำ bā:nkã:whuankham ‘Ban Kaew Huean Kham – a restaurant’
 โรงแรมเชียงใหม่ภูคำ ro:ŋræ:mtçhianjmaìphu:kham ‘Chiang Mai Phu Kham Hotel’

Only a few cases is it used in combination with a person’s name including อูสะคำ ?ũ:sã:kham ‘Usakham’ (a stone and sand shop) ร้านป้าบัวคำ rá:npã:buakham ‘aunt Bua Kham shop’. In others “kham” is used with the object elements, แท่น thã:n ‘altar’, ไม้ mái ‘wood’ and ริน rin ‘gutter’ to characterize what each object is made of. However all 5 signs having elements แท่น thã:n and คำ kham refer to a village, แท่นคำ thã:nkham “Thaen Kham” ‘golden altar’ in Chom Thong district, Chiang Mai. The data found are:

ริมน้ำแท่นคำ rimná:mthã:nkham ‘on the river’s bank of Thaen Kham’
 เชียงใหม่ – จอมทอง แท่นคำ tçhianjmai-tçò:mtçhò:ŋ thã:nkham

‘Chiang Mai – Chom Thong, Thaen Kham’

ทางไปวัดแท่นคำ tha:n̄paiwátthâ:nkham ‘the way to Wat Thaen Kham’

สวนอาหารริมน้ำแท่นคำ s̄an?a:hâ:nrimná:mthâ:nkham ‘garden restaurant at the river’s bank of Thaen Kham’

กลุ่มทอผ้าเกษตรกรบ.แท่นคำ klùmtho:phâ:kasèttako:nbo:thâ:nkham ‘group of agriculturist hand-woven of Thaen Kham’



Figure 21: สวนอาหารริมน้ำแท่นคำ s̄an?a:hâ:nrimná:mthâ:nkham
‘garden restaurant on the river’s bank of Thaen Kham’ (the one with the word Coca-Cola)

A few other examples found in data show the use of the element “Kham” as an adjective used in combination with nouns including mái ‘wood’ and rin ‘gutter’, as in บ้านไม้คำ Restaurant b̄ā:nmáikham Restaurant ‘house of golden wood restaurant’, กาดรินคำ k̄ā:trinkham ‘Rin Kham market’, and โรงแรมอมารีรินคำ roŋræ:m?ama:ri:rinkham ‘Amari-Rin Kham Hotel’. Only one utterance is found with “Kham” used with a flower plant which is yellow and called ฝ่ายคำ f̄āikham “Fai Kham”, but it is used as the name of a frog farm, hence its name is ฟาร์มกบฝ่ายคำ fa:mkòb f̄āikham ‘Fai Kham Frog’s farm’.

Some old people in the North have the first name “Kham”, which means ‘gold’ in a single noun or monosyllabic word only. Sometimes those people have “Kham” in their first name as a noun in combination with another word element as found in place name data below.

ศิลปินแห่งชาติ พ่อครูคำ กาไว s̄inlapinhâ:ŋtchâ:t phô:khrukham ka:wai
‘national artist named teacher-father Kham Kawai’

ไส้อ้วบ้ำคำ s̄āi?n̄apā:kham ‘Sai Ua-northern roasted sausage of aunt Kham’

กาดก๋อมก๋องคำ k̄ā:tk̄ō:mk̄w̄:ŋkham ‘small market of a person named Kong Kham’ (“kongkham” means a pile of gold)

คำแปงคำไม้ khampæ:ŋkhá:mái ‘Kham Paeng trading wood’



Figure 22: ไส้อ้วบ้ำคำ s̄āi?n̄apā:kham ‘Sai Ua-northern roasted sausage of aunt Kham’

As the element คำ /kham/ ‘gold’ is one of the most frequently used elements on signs, this scientific element or object can be considered the most precious and valuable thing in the North. People of Lanna believed that gold represents financial status, makes the owner respected and is a holy object. It was made into jewellery, and “natural gold” found in water resources when it was hung above the altar for the statues of Buddha in the house would bring happiness and prosperity to the family’s members (Pan, 2011: oral-primary source). Since the recorded history of Chiang Mai, gold-makers were included among other craftsmen of the city, which responded to the needs of the community (Saratsawadi, 2006: 220). Some places’ names have คำ kham as their combination such as วัดพระธาตุดอยคำ wátphrá?thâ:tdo:ikham ‘Wat Phra That Doi Kham’ or ‘golden mountain temple with relic of the Buddha’. People naturally think of the place, other things and also names of the person as being “precious and valuable” in terms of both price and value. Following are some examples presenting places and objects having คำ kham as important element utterance.

Places:

บ้านกอบคำ bā:nkōv:bkham ‘Kop Kham (as a female’s name) House’
 เข็ญชมและซื้อสินค้าราชทัณฑ์ ณ ตลาดคำเที่ยง
 t̄hə:m̄t̄həml̄é?sú:sínkhá:râ:tt̄hâ?than ná? t̄à?lâ:tkhamth̄an
 ‘Please visit and buy goods from prisons at Kham Thiang (a name) Market’
 วังค่านวดแผนโบราณ wāŋkhamnúatph̄æ:bo:ra:n ‘Wang Kham Traditional Massage’

Objects:

ทองคำ kō:ŋkham ‘Kong Kham - golden mass’
 เลอกทองคำ l̄ə:kō:ŋkham ‘Le Kong Kham - the golden mass’
 บ้านช่างคำ bā:n̄t̄hâ:ŋkham ‘house of gold craftsmen’

5. Conclusion

Kam Mueang word elements in signage including Mueang, Doi, Huean, Kat and Kham connote identity maintenance of Lanna, and have been maintained since the establishment of this former Kingdom until the present times of globalization. Those local linguistic properties, which are used in combination with words in national and other global languages, especially English highlight the uniqueness of social, cultural and natural heritage of the old northern Land. Lanna identity is expressed through several markers, namely “Mueang” (name for people), “Doi” (mountain), “Huean” (house), “Kat” (market), and “Kham” (gold). In fact, the process of globalization actually revitalizes local identity marked in language as a core value. There is the interaction and compromise between local and global power resulting in ‘glocalization’. Different languages are freely expressed, either mixed or non-mixed in written Thai, a little in Kam Mueang, and sometimes in other languages with or without Thai transliteration including Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese and Korean in the same social area. This makes the northern Thai community a multilingual one. This recent linguistic and socio-cultural phenomenon of the Chiang Mai community reflects its past and also involved the mixing of different ethnic groups in Southeast Asia. The use of Kam Mueang in signage under the context of Globalization identifies the attempt of “Khon Mueang”, Lanna inhabitants in maintaining their socio-cultural identity.

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