

## Re: How close is Vietnamese to Mandarin or Cantonese?

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2005-05/msg00850.html>

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- *From:* Lee Sau Dan <[danlee@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:danlee@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* 20 May 2005 00:41:26 +0800
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>>>> "ekkilu" == ekkilu <[ekkilu@xxxxxxxx](mailto:ekkilu@xxxxxxxx)> writes:

ekkilu> Lee Sau Dan wrote:

>> A lot of people suffer from typhoons. This includes speakers  
>> of Cantonese, Hokkien, Hakka, Hoklo, ... So, which one it is  
>> from where English got this word? You have an answer?

ekkilu> Of course. It's Cantonese. The modern form is recorded and  
ekkilu> traceable to one source, with name and date. That's not a  
ekkilu> problem.

Then, how come the Cantonese word [fUN55] would be spelt as "phoon"?  
The final consonant is /-N/, not /-n/, which are phonemically  
different in both Cantonese and English.

ekkilu> The problem is that people tried to ascribe Greek origin  
ekkilu> to this word, and many Chinese people even believed that  
ekkilu> typhoon was imported from English into Chinese. That's the  
ekkilu> silly part. Your -ng -> -n is answered as well in the  
ekkilu> following:

ekkilu> "The modern form of typhoon was influenced by a borrowing  
ekkilu> from the Cantonese variety of Chinese, namely the word  
ekkilu> taaifung, and respelled to make it look more like  
ekkilu> Greek.

Really? Why do they spell the Cantonese syllable [t'Oi] as "tai" or  
"ty", rather than "toy"?

FYI, "typhoon" is [t'Oi22 fUN55] in Cantonese. So, if you think  
"typhoon" came from Cantonese, you not only have to explain the  
discrepancy in the final "n", but also the wrongly spelt diphthong in  
the first syllable.

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ekkilu> Taaifung, meaning literally "great wind," was  
ekkilu> coincidentally similar to the Arabic borrowing and is  
ekkilu> first recorded in English guise as tuffoon in 1699. The  
ekkilu> various forms coalesced and finally became typhoon, a  
ekkilu> spelling that first appeared in 1819 in Shelley's  
ekkilu> Prometheus Unbound."

By spelling that Cantonese word as "taaifung" instead of "toifung",  
the author of this paragraph has lost his creditability to speakers of  
Cantonese.

ekkilu> See: <http://dictionary.reference.com/search?q=typhoon>

ekkilu> You've been missing this information a long time?

No. I've already point out IN THIS NEWSGROUP a few months ago, that I  
don't find this paragraph a reliable source of information, because it  
spelt the Cantonese word [tOi22 fUN55] as "taaifung".

Further, that paragraph didn't explain why "typhoon" is spelt with a  
final "n", not "ng" if it were to meant to transcribe the Cantonese  
pronunciation [tOi22 fUN55].

So, no, it's not me who misses information. It is you who didn't read  
this group carefully a few months back.

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Lee Sau Dan

E-mail: danlee@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Home page: <http://www.informatik.uni-freiburg.de/~danlee>

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• *Follow-Ups:*

- ◆ **Re: How close is Vietnamese to Mandarin or Cantonese?**  
    ◇ From: Harlan Messinger
- ◆ **Re: How close is Vietnamese to Mandarin or Cantonese?**  
    ◇ From: ekkilu
- ◆ **Re: How close is Vietnamese to Mandarin or Cantonese?**  
    ◇ From: Peter T. Daniels

• *References:*

- ◆ **Re: How close is Vietnamese to Mandarin or Cantonese?**  
    ◇ From: ekkilu
- ◆ **Re: How close is Vietnamese to Mandarin or Cantonese?**

Re: How close is Vietnamese to Mandarin or Cantonese?

◇ *From:* Lee Sau Dan

◆ ***Re: How close is Vietnamese to Mandarin or Cantonese?***

◇ *From:* ekkilu

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