

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Attitudes toward English Varieties

As stated by Ahn (2014) “Attitude is an umbrella term of common usage and most people hold attitudes about a particular language to some extent” (p. 197). She added that the examining of attitudes towards a language can offer greater understandings of issue regards stereotype to attitudinal object which may be the result from particular attitude toward a particular language. Triandis (1971, as cited in Dwyer, 1993, p.2) noted:

The definition of attitude proposed by Triandis suggests that attitude has three components: (a) a cognitive component (the idea or beliefs), (b) an affective component (the emotions), and (c) a behavioral component (the action). The cognitive component of attitude was described by Triandis (1971) as the ideas or beliefs that subjects have about an attitudinal object, the object, in this context, being the focal point of attention. The affective component was described as the emotions or feelings about the attitudinal object, while the behavioral component was described as predisposition to action with regard to the same object.

Attitude therefore is defined in three components, first is cognitive component as the ideas and beliefs that pre-services teachers have about the varieties of English. Second is affective component refers to feelings that owned by pre-service teachers when they interact or hear their students speak

varieties of English. And the final is behavioral component deals with the action, in what way the pre-service teachers act or react to varieties of English. To have a better understanding about attitude, Garret (2010) gave an example case for each component of attitude, cognitive component (students believe that learning a language will give her a deeper understanding of its culture), affective component (students are very enthusiastic when reading literature written in language they love), behavioral component (students are saving money to join in language course they want).

There have been numerous studies concerning attitude toward variety of Englishes in Expanding Circle countries. In Korea, Ahn (2014) explored 204 Korean and Non-Korean English teachers towards Korean English in two main regions of South Korea. The data collected by using mixed-method approach which are questionnaire and interview. She pointed out that a great number of English teachers had negative attitudes toward Korean English (KoE), they felt 'embarrassed' when they spoke (KoE). It is also evident that KoE viewed as not 'real' English. However, majority of English teachers believed that KoE was a 'practical' and 'useful' language for communication. Ahn interpreted this finding as not because they intrinsically believed that AmE (American English) was more correct than KoE, but because students' goal in learning English to achieve a good score in the high stakes English American test in South Korea. In her further research, Ahn (2015) showed that most Korean EFL teachers had negative attitudes toward Asian Englishes in Singapore, India, China and Japan and they thought those Englishes were

far from American and British English. Their attitudes result of their lack of awareness of Asian Englishes.

2.2 Thai English

According to Concentric Circles introduced by Kachru (1985), Thailand belongs to expanding circle, which indicates that Thailand has never been colonized by Western countries, yet Thailand puts English as great role in Thai society. Thailand formal education has entered English as the compulsory object. Thai schools require English to be taught from Grade 1 to Grade 12 and minimum 12 credits of English studying at university level (Trakulkasemsuk, 2018). In addition, they learn English to their career opportunities, especially in related to science and technology, business administration, and tourism (Watakholar, 2005). Moreover, English in Thailand is used as lingua franca. Thai people are certainly eager to learn English to have a successful communication with others who also use English (Chamcharatsri, 2013).

The distinctive role of the English language in Thailand has gathered World Englishes (WEs) researchers' attention for investigating on how Thai people use English in different system (Kim, 2018; Chamcharatsri, 2013; Sarmah et al., 2009; Watakholar, 2005). In the study from Watakholar (2005), investigated the writing style in novels written by Thai novelists, the use of Thai English is as Thai-English bilingual authors. And the perception of Thai English from Thai people' perfectives was examined by Chamcharatsri

(2013), in this study the term Thai English is defined as the use of code mixing and code switching between Thai and English language.

Thai English has potential to develop in the future, moreover, English is increasingly used as part of Thai people's daily life, thus it is possible that Thai English could be developed into another nativized variety in Southeast Asia (Watakholarm, 2005; Chamcharatsri, 2013). However, the further research into the use and practice English in Thailand from many context (such as in business, education, media, and tourism industry) is needed to reveal the legitimacy codification since the term of Thai English is still in its early stage when compared to Singaporean English or Indian English in the expanding circle (Chamcharatsri, 2013).

The distinctive features of Thai English were collected from literature and phonological features. The distinctive characteristics found in Thai English shifted from their first language background, culture, rhetorical style, and norm of communication, thus Thai speakers use English as their ways in presenting their identity (Trakulkasemuk, 2012). Distinctive features of Thai English obtained from autobiography as the literature written in English by a native Thai has been explored by Watkhaolarm (2005). He mentioned language contact process that affected Thai English, *videlicet* transfer, translation, shift, lexical borrowing and hybridization. 1) Transfer, this process transferred the social and culture element into the use of English, the example for culture element is 'Cousin Chinn', they use the term of kinship with names. For social element, they address people by titles, birth rank, and social

status, for example *Kroo Nil*, *Kroo* means teacher. 2) Translation, the translation features found are very common in the Thai literature. Translation from Thai into English leads to a different collocation from native English writing. An example is given below:

The Abbot was pleased with Father's service; he often referred to him as "*white elephant from the jungle.*" (p. 149).

In Thai Buddhism, white elephant is related to the ability to attract such divine beings. 3) Shift, the Thai writer shifts a Thai writing style to English. This feature uses Thai proverbs and old sayings. An example of shift is as follow:

His folks used to tell their children that if someone stole food, after he had died and been reborn *his mouth would be as small as a needle hole.* (p. 150)

4) Lexical borrowing, lexical borrowing used to give an authenticity, however, lexical borrowing also followed by translation to add clarity to the story:

'Friday is the annual *Poy Tai Kwa Suk* ceremony at Homong, and Khun Sa has asked me to invite you and Mandy to attend.' "Jimmy, I know Burmese, but I don't know what ceremony you're talking about," Mandy interrupted. "*It means 'sending the brave ones off to battle' in the Shan language,*" replied Jimmy. (p. 153)

5) Hybridization, there are Thai terms of hybridized items. For example, the term "farang" is used for Caucasian or something Western.

Furthermore, the phonological features of Thai English were provided by Tsukada (2008). He investigated the comparison of phonetic characteristics

of English vowels, four monophthongs, /ɪ ʊ ʌ æ/, and two diphthongs /eɪ oʊ/ spoken by Australian English speakers and Thai English speakers lived in Australia for an average of 3.2 years. The results pointed out that in term of the vowel quality, there was no significant difference from the Australian speakers for monophthongs, proven by formant measurement. Nonetheless, the distinctive difference found in their production of diphthongs, Thai speakers associated the English diphthongs /eɪ oʊ/ with the long /e: o:/. In the further study Tsukada (2009), he explored the monophthongs /ɪ/ and /i/ used by Thai speakers, in term of the duration. The words chosen are beep, beat, beak, feet, seep, seat, seek for /i/, kit, kick, lip, lit, lick, sip, sit, sick for /I/. The study highlighted that there was different durational differentiation between /ɪ/ and /i/ for Australian and Thai speakers. Thai speakers produced /ɪ/ shorter than Australian speakers do, contrastively, vowel /i/ produced longer. Although Thai English speakers produced dissimilar with the Australian speakers, it did not lead the pronunciation of Thai English to become totally unintelligible for other varieties speakers, it only might lead the Thai English speakers sound distinct and foreign to the speakers of native English (Trakulkasemuk, 2012).

The great distinction of feature of Thai and English lie in the consonants. In the pronunciation of Thai English speakers, the consonants sound significantly different due to there are numerous English consonants that are not produced in Thai and even Thai speakers replace the consonants with the ones that exist in Thai (Trakulkasemuk, 2012). The main distinctive

characteristic in pronunciation of English consonants in Thai English has been discussed by Kuatracue (1960, as cited in Trakulkasemuk, 2012). He stated that English consonants such as /tʃ/, /θ/, /ð/, /ʃ/, /dʒ/, /ʒ/, do not exist in Thai. “Therefore, /tʃ/, /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ are normally found substituted by Thai /tʰ/ “. “Also, Thai speakers usually substitute the Thai consonants /t/, /tʰ/, or /s/, for /θ/”. Afterward, in Thai English, /d/ is used for /ð/. Furthermore, “/v/ is usually substituted with /w/ and /z/ with /s/.

2.3 International Teaching Practicum in Thailand

Thailand places English as a foreign language, which is oriented to the model and standard of native English (Trakulkasemsuk, 2018). He pointed out that English is considered in important position hence Thailand formal education has entered English as the compulsory object. Thai schools require English to be taught from Grade 1 to Grade 12 and minimum 12 credits of English studying at university level. Additionally, there have been increased programs in Thai school such as ‘English bilingual schools, International schools as well as private English language schools’. British or American English as the model of assessment and evaluation of English proficiency, it can be concluded that Thailand enacts native standard as the benchmark of good form of English.

Given the crucial role of English in ELT and rest on native speakers, study from Snodin & Young (2015) showed that Thailand is one of the Expanding Circle countries in Southeast Asia which focus on ‘mother tongue’ education as result ‘many schools, especially in urban areas, have hired

foreigners to teach English to their students. Foreign teachers include those whose mother tongue is English, e.g. British people, Americans, Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, and others whose second language is English, e.g. teachers from the Philippines, Malaysia and Myanmar'. The 'native-speaker' model has been emphasized by the Thailand English Teaching Project (TET) initiated by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with British Council Thailand. However, there are still plenty of teachers from other Inner Circle countries teaching in Thailand, among them Peace Corps volunteers and Fulbright scholars. The teacher recruitment program is the strategy in solving the problem of lacking English language teachers in Thailand (Wall, 2008).

It can be concluded that from the Circle model concept introduced by Kachru (1985) Thailand is included expanding circle. English is placed important position and in the education system, Thailand rests on English native speakers. However, due to in solving the problem of lacking English teacher, hence there has been a number of programs of recruitment English teachers from other countries include Indonesia.