

Language Attitudes toward Philippine English: A Comparative Study among Thai Undergraduate Students with and without Exposure to Philippine English Teachers

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Abstract

The aim of the present study is to investigate the current attitudes of Thai undergraduate students toward Philippine English based on a comparison of attitudes between students with experience studying with Filipino teachers and students without this experience. The subjects of this study were 20 Thai undergraduate students: 10 participants with experience of studying with a Filipino teacher and 10 participants without. Data were collected from a Verbal Guise Test (VGT) and semi-structured interviews. The results show that Thai undergraduate students overall have a less positive attitude toward Philippine English than in previous studies. Despite a marked difference found in the dimension of linguistic quality (3.03 for this current study compared with 3.63 for a relevant previous study), the status and competence dimension (3.50 compared with 3.53), and social attractiveness dimension (3.35 compared with 3.43) failed to present a significant shift in overall language attitude. Moreover, the findings reveal that the dimension of status and competence (3.98 for the participants without experience and 3.78 for participants with experience), out of the three attitudinal dimensions investigated, is more negatively rated by the participants with experience. However, the other two dimensions of attitudes, namely social attractiveness (3.93 for the participants with experience and 3.70 for participants without experience) and linguistic quality (3.13 for the participants with experience and 2.93 for participants without experience) are more negatively rated by the participants without experience.

Keywords: Philippine English, language attitudes, language learning, Filipino teachers, language exposure

Introduction

Considered one of the largest groups of foreigners working as teachers in Thailand (Knell, 2017), Filipinos, with their generally high English proficiency level, are being hired in increasing numbers to teach many subjects, among them English, mathematics, science,

and computers, at all levels, ranging from kindergarten to university (e.g., Jindapitak & Teo, 2012; Ulla, 2018; Wongsamuth, 2015). The Thailand Foreign Workers Administration Office reports that the number of Filipino teachers in Thailand doubled in just the last 4 years, from approximately 7,000 in 2016 to 12,000 in 2019.

With respect to the growing number of Filipino teachers across Thailand, Philippine English, among other English varieties, has been the subject of studies pertaining to language attitudes specifically conducted in Thai contexts. Over for the past decade, for example, a number of studies on language attitudes of Thai people toward varieties of English where Philippine English is included have been conducted to elicit language attitudes of university students. The results show that Philippine English is frequently ranked as neutral (e.g., Jindapitak & Teo, 2012; Prakaianurat & Kangkun, 2018; Prakaiborisuth & Trakulkasemsuk, 2015; Sangnok & Jaturapitakkul, 2019) or negative (e.g., Phusit & Suksiripakonchai, 2018). However, with the recent influx of Filipino teachers into Thailand and Thai students' increased exposure to Philippine English, particularly in academic contexts, there is some reason to suspect a shift of language attitudes of Thai EFL learners toward Philippine English.

According to Foreign Workers Administration Office (2016, 2019) and Knell (2017), a review of the available statistical data confirms the increased presence of Filipino instructors in Thailand and growing exposure to Philippine English by Thai learners. In order to validate the assumption that this exposure has resulted in an attitudinal shift, a theory pertaining to language attitudes and language learning is required. Thus, this comparative study is based on the statement that attitudes and motivation have a predominant role in language learning (Gardner, 1985; Krashen; 1982). More importantly, Gardner (1985) and Krashen (1982), Liu and Zhao (2011) suggested that the attitudes of individuals to a language are probably positive if they gain access and exposure to the language and more importantly have opportunities to practice it.

In reference to both the increased exposure of Thai EFL learners to Filipino teachers and the theoretical frameworks originally developed by Gardner (1985) and Krashen (1982) and later applied in research by Liu and Zhao (2011), it can be hypothesized that Thai EFL learners have a positive attitude toward Philippine English. To test this hypothesis, the present study will explore attitudinal differences between Thai undergraduates who have studied English with Filipino teachers and Thai undergraduates who have never studied English with Filipino teachers.

Based on the two central focuses previously mentioned, this study is guided by the following two research questions:

1. What are the current attitudes toward Philippine English among Thai undergraduate students in terms of status and competence, social attractiveness, and linguistic quality, and how do these attitudes compare with previous findings?
2. Is there a significant difference between attitudes of learners who have experience studying English with Filipino teachers and learners who do not?

Literature Review

Language attitudes

The study of language attitudes has been a particular concern in social psychology and sociolinguistics for decades. Language is psychologically and linguistically viewed as a tool for identity construction and as a communication medium, respectively (Coupland, 2007; Edwards, 1999; Ladegaard, 2000; Meyerhoff, 2006). Therefore, within the framework of the study of language attitudes, language is considered a resource for the production of identity and a means for communication.

To provide an overview of language attitudes, a few of the more widely accepted definitions of the term are given. To begin, Richards, Platt, and Platt (1992) offered a straightforward definition of language attitudes: “the attitudes which speakers of different languages or language varieties have toward each other’s languages or to their own language.” In addition, Ryan and Giles (1982) defined language attitudes as “any affective, cognitive, or behavioral index of evaluative reactions toward different language varieties or speakers.” More specifically in the area of second language acquisition, especially in a school context, McGroarty (1996), based on Gardner (1985), provided the following definition:

...attitude has cognitive, affective, and conative components (i.e., it involves beliefs, emotional reactions, and behavioral tendencies related to the object of the attitude) and consists, in broad terms, of an underlying psychological predisposition to act or evaluate behavior in a certain way (Gardner, 1985). Attitude is thus linked to a person's values and beliefs and promotes or discourages the choices made in all realms of activity, whether academic or informal (p. 5).

Specific focuses pertaining to the study of language attitudes, according to Baker (1992, p. 29) vary, including, for example, attitudes to language preference, attitudes to learning a new language, attitudes to uses of a specific language, attitudes of parents to language learning, and attitudes to language variation, dialect and speech style.

In connection with research on attitudes to the varieties of English language in particular, a great number of recent studies reveal similar results. In many linguistic environments, speakers of what are considered standard varieties of English are positively rated as more confident and competent than speakers of non-standard varieties. On the other hand, non-standard speech varieties are ranked higher in integrity and attractiveness than the standard ones (Coupland, 2007; Ladegaard, 2000).

Studies of language attitudes in Thailand

Concerning language attitude studies, particularly on English, conducted in Thailand, the results have in general been in line with the results discussed in the paragraph above. Most of these studies have investigated attitudes of Thai university students toward varieties of the English language, and a smaller number have examined attitudes among Thai working adults. In these studies, General American English (GA) is the most

positively rated variety of English, closely followed by British English (BE). Conversely, the two varieties of English which are consistently the most negatively rated are Thai English (TE) and Singaporean English (SE) (Jindapitak, 2010; Jindapitak & Teo, 2012; McKenzie, Kitikanan, & Boriboon, 2017; Prakaianurat & Kangkun, 2018). In a majority of these studies, Philippine English (PE) is rated as neutral (e.g., Jindapitak & Teo, 2012; Prakaianurat & Kangkun, 2018; Prakaiborisuth & Trakulkasemsuk, 2015; Sangnok & Jaturapitakkul, 2019), notwithstanding one study where PE is negatively rated for English pronunciation (Phusit & Suksiripakonchai, 2018).

In one recent study, Prakaianurat and Kangkun (2018) examined language attitudes of 80 Thai working adults toward native and non-native varieties of English in respect to social status and competence, attractiveness, and linguistic quality through a Verbal Guise Test (VGT) (80 participants) and semi-structured interviews (10 participants). The native varieties included American and British, whereas the non-native varieties included Filipino, Singaporean, and Thai. The researchers found that the native varieties of English were perceived more positively than the non-native counterparts in every respect, while PE was rated as neutral.

In another study, Prakaiborisuth and Trakulkasemsuk (2015) investigated language attitudes of 100 Thai undergraduate students (who do not major in English) toward 10 non-native accents of ASEAN Englishes. Each participant was required to listen to an audio recording of 10 ASEAN English speakers from 10 ASEAN countries and then complete a questionnaire. The researchers found that Malaysian and Singaporean accents were favored while Lao was disfavored. The other accents were neutrally judged. Among the other seven neutral accents, the PE accent demonstrated an equal mixture of negative and neutral judgments.

A study by Phusit and Suksiripakonchai (2018) explored attitudes of 146 undergraduate students toward their preferred English pronunciation model and their interlocutor's pronunciation model. Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire. The findings revealed that Thai English, Australian English, and Singaporean English were moderately ranked, while American English and British English were positively ranked. Conversely, PE, Indian English, Chinese English, and Korean English were all negatively ranked. In addition, it was found that the participants had moderate attitudes toward interlocutors who were Thai, Filipino, and Singaporean. In contrast, the participants had positive attitudes toward interlocutors who were American, Australian, and British, and negative attitudes toward interlocutors who were Indian, Chinese, and Korean.

Philippine English (PE)

According to Llamzon (1997, as cited in Tayao, 2008), PE is classified into three sociolinguistic varieties: an acrolectal variety, a mesolect variety, and a basilectal variety. The first variety is used by broadcasters and is close to GA. The second variety is used by professionals, and its phonological aspect deviates from GA. The third variety is referred to as an ethnic language of speakers forming a substratum.

At the segmental level, the consonants which appear in GA and the three varieties of PE are as follows: the stops /p, b, t, d, k, g, ʔ /; the nasals /m, n, ŋ/; the lateral /l/; the glides /w, y/; the fricative /h/; and the phoneme /r/ (Tayao, 2008). In addition, it should also be noted that the retroflex liquid /ɻ/ in the acrolectal style is shared with GA, and that the aspirated voiceless stops /p, k, t/ found in syllable-initial stressed position are rare in the acrolectal style.

For other cases, the labiodental fricatives /f, v/ are found in acrolect and mesolect. /f/ and /v/, however, are replaced by /p/ and /b/ at the level of the basilect. The interdental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ are rendered /t/ and /d/, respectively, in mesolect and acrolectal groups. The sibilants /s, z/ are present in the acrolect (Tayao, 2008).

In the case of vowels, it is of note that the vowels of the acrolectal variety are the same as in GA. However, there are certain salient features; to illustrate, the low front vowel /æ/ is the free variation of the low central vowel /a/. For the mesolect, there is merely one high front vowel /i/ as opposed to the existence of both /i/ and /I/ in GA. In the same way, there is only one high back tense vowel /u/, rather than having /u/ and /ʊ/. The last variety, the basilect, has only three vowels, which are /i/, /a/, and /u/.

At the suprasegmental level, there are some words whose stress in all three PE varieties deviates from that in GA. To illustrate, certain words, such as *colleague*, *govern*, and *menu*, are stressed on the second syllable in PE, but on the first syllable in GA. Conversely, certain words, such as *thereby*, *dioxide*, and *percentage*, are stressed on the first syllable in PE, but on the second syllable in GA. In addition to the stress, it should be noted that Philippine languages, where PE is counted, are syllabled-timed, instead of stress-timed. Last, final rising intonation is consistent in all types of questions across all three varieties of PE.

Language attitudes and language exposure

Research has found that motivation and attitude play a major role in language learning since they are significantly related to each other. The attitudes of learners toward language learning and teachers can considerably influence the expected results of classroom participation (Gardner, 1985; Krashen, 1982).

This correlation was confirmed in a study by Liu and Zhao (2011) on the language attitudes of 302 Chinese students studying English as a foreign language toward English and Chinese. The study of language attitudes was conducted in relation to students' learning motivation and awareness of their own ethnic identity. The methodology employed was a 22-item Language Attitudes Questionnaire and four open-ended questions. The study suggested that the subjects were positive about English, resulting in the desired learning motivation and positive attitudes toward the English-speaking community in which they were involved. Plus, the study claimed that the more exposure to English an individual has, the more positive an individual's attitudes toward English becomes.

Based on the theoretical frameworks of Gardner (1985) and Krashen (1982) and the empirical evidence from Liu and Zhao (2011), two hypotheses were formulated in this

present study: (1) due to the increasing number of Filipino teachers in Thailand, there is a change in current attitudes among Thai undergraduate students toward PE compared with previous studies; and (2) students with exposure to Filipino teachers tend to have a more positive attitude toward PE than those without exposure. To test the hypotheses, the current research was conducted employing the methodology explicated in the following section.

Methods

Participants

The participants in this study were 20 Thai undergraduate students (10 males and 10 females) from four universities: 15 from Chulalongkorn University, three from Thammasat University, one from Srinakharinwirot University, and one from the University of Auckland. Participants studied in a wide range of faculties including Arts (10 participants), Engineering (3), Education (2), Science (1), Medicine (1), Economics (1), Commerce and Accountancy (1), and Political Science (1). In terms of academic standings, there were four freshmen, three sophomores, eight juniors, and five seniors. Their ages ranged from 18-24 years old (born between 1996 and 2002). In order to be qualified and able to listen to the verbal guise of PE, 20 participants were required to communicate in English similar to a language user with intermediate English proficiency, compared to a B1 of CEFR levels. That is to say, participants must have a minimum CU-TEP score of 57, a minimum IELTS score of 4, a minimum TOEFL iBT score of 57, or a minimum TOEFL ITP score of 460 (Wudthayagorn, 2018).

Procedure

There were two phases in this study: a perception task (VGT) and semi-structured interviews. The first phase was completed in a week in order not to affect the reliability of the findings. In the first phase, 24 participants were recruited and asked to present their evidence of English proficiency test score. Seeing that the study focused on the attitudes of those considered independent learners of English (at least B1 of CEFR levels) (Council of Europe, 2001), only participants who scored at least 35 out of 120 on the CU-TEP, at least 4 out of 9 on IELTS, at least 57 out of 120 on TOEFL iBT, or at least 460 out of 677 on TOEFL ITP were qualified to participate in the first and second phases of the study. After their English proficiency levels were verified, the 24 participants were asked to complete a perception task (VGT) to elicit their attitudes toward PE. To maintain the validity and reliability of the research instrument, the participants were not informed that they were listening to PE.

In the last stage, four participants who have experience studying English with Filipino teachers and four participants who have never experienced studying English with Filipino teachers were asked to take part in a semi-structured interview to further examine their attitudes toward PE. Before each semi-structured interview was conducted, the participants were informed that they had listened to PE in the perception task (VGT). This

would allow them to understand the research focus and more fully express their perception of PE in the interview. In the next section, the details of both the perception task and the semi-structured interviews are explained.

Due to the outbreak of Covid-19 during the data collection process and the order for everyone to stay at home to reduce the risk of contracting the coronavirus, the procedures were completed on Zoom, a computer software application used extensively as an online classroom by university lecturers and educators, or on Line, a freeware application for instant communications on electronic devices such as smartphones and computers. In terms of the quality of all processes, however, the researcher was in charge of overseeing each step.

Perception task

A verbal-guise test (VGT), produced by a native speaker of PE, was conducted to elicit participants' attitudes toward PE. VGT was chosen as one of the methods to investigate participants' attitudes in this current study since this approach is academically regarded as a valid means to elicit genuine attitudes of people, unlike observation and direct interview (Garrett, Coupland, & Williams, 2003)—alternative approaches to language attitude studies which explore the socio-cultural and political backdrop of society and self-analysis reporting on language attitudes, respectively (Garrett, 2010).

To produce the VGT, the researcher decided to take some parts of a video titled *Finding f(x): Why I teach for the Philippines / Delfin Villafuerte / TEDxXavierSchool*, which is available on YouTube. The video lasts 15.02 minutes, but the excerpt used in the perception task lasted only 1.15 minutes (from 4.18 to 5.33), and it was converted into an MP3 recording file which each participant listened to. In the excerpt from the video, the speaker, a full-time public school teacher under the project Teach for the Philippines, spoke the acrolectal variety of PE, which is spoken by those whose native or home language is English, and whose profession entails considerable use of English (Tayao, 2008). More importantly, acrolectal PE is considered the English variety of most educated Filipinos (Leitner, Hashim, & Wolf, 2016). Therefore, it can be assumed that most Filipino English teachers in Thailand speak acrolectal PE.

To categorize participants into two groups—one group having experience studying with Filipino English teachers and the other group without—and thereby answer the second research question of this current study, the 24 participants were asked to complete a questionnaire which required each to provide personal information: gender, age, nationality, current undergraduate level, faculty and university, major, the total duration of learning English, experience studying with English teachers of many nationalities, and overseas experience.

Next, to elicit attitudes, the participants were asked to listen to the stimulus guise of PE and rate it on 10 semantic labels on a scale of 1 (the lowest) to 5 (the highest) right after the end of the recording. The 10 semantic labels were written in Thai in order to ensure that the participants understood them. Based on Prakaianurat and Kangkun (2018), the 10 semantic labels were selected and classified into three perspectives: status and competence,

social attractiveness, and linguistic quality. The first group included intelligence, education, leadership, and social status; the second group included reliability, friendliness, and attractiveness; and the last group included aesthetic quality, model of pronunciation, and medium of instruction. This last semantic label “Medium of instruction” was modified from the last semantic label “Good for job seeking” used in the work of Prakaianurat and Kangkun (2018).

Because examination of the questionnaire results found that 14 participants had experience studying with Filipino English teachers whereas 10 participants did not, the last four participants with experience who completed the questionnaire were cut in order to equalize the number of participants in both groups.

The VGT includes one speaker of PE. The speaker is a male full-time public school teacher under the educational project Teach for the Philippines. He was approximately 24-27 when he gave the TEDTalk speech called *Finding f(x): Why I teach for the Philippines*. In the selected part of the stimulus guise, he shared his thoughts before joining Teach for the Philippines, and his perspectives on the school where he taught. The content of this part was purposely selected in order to provide participants with a familiar context in which to experience PE.

In terms of phonological variables, the representative features of PE, especially acrolectal PE, found in his speech were the unaspirated voiceless stops /p, k, t/. These were found in the following words: *pool*, *Philippines*, *classroom*, *teaching*, *thinking*, and *matter*

Semi-structured interviews

In the second phase, eight participants—four having experience studying with Filipino English teachers and four without—who took part in the perception task were randomly asked to participate in the semi-structured interview two days after the VGT process had been arranged. The semi-structured interview concerned PE, its status and competence, social attractiveness, and linguistic quality. There were four semi-structured interviews in all: each semi-structured interview was led by the researcher and joined by one participant with experience studying with Filipino English teachers and another participant without. In the semi-structured interview, the researcher asked five questions to elicit perceptions toward PE. The participants took turns answering each question, expressing their ideas, and posing their own questions (Prakaianurat & Kangkun, 2018). The five questions were:

1. What do you think about Philippine English?
2. Do you want to sound like a native speaker of Philippine English as long as other people can understand you, or do you want to sound like certain native speakers of other English varieties? Why?
3. Do you think you would feel comfortable speaking Philippine English with your friends who come from other English-speaking countries? Why?
4. Do you think a classroom presentation given in Filipino English would present any challenges to you or your classmates?

5. Do you think speakers of Filipino English can communicate effectively with other speakers of English generally?

It is of note that all semi-structured interviews were recorded with the consent of the eight participants. Parts of the semi-structured interviews were transcribed and appear in the results and semi-structured interviews section which follows.

Results

This section reports the results and provides a discussion of the language attitudes elicited from the two tasks, namely the VGT and the semi-structured interviews. The results and discussion from both tasks were arranged in accordance with the research hypotheses.

Results from the perception task (VGT)

In this part, all results from the perception task are presented through explanations as well as figures. The four figures include (1) the mean dimension scores for overall attitudes toward PE concerning three main dimensions, (2) the mean dimension scores for overall attitudes toward PE concerning each separate semantic label, (3) the mean dimension score for attitudes toward PE among students with experience studying with Filipino teachers, and (4) the mean dimension score for attitudes toward PE among students without experience studying with Filipino teachers.

As explained in the methodology section, the semantic labels were grouped into three categories: status and competence (Intelligence, Education, Leadership, and Social status), social attractiveness (Reliability, Friendliness, and Attractiveness), and linguistic quality (Intelligibility, Good model of English, and Good medium for instruction). These three semantic label groups were rated by the participants by means of a VGT, and the results can be seen in Figure 1, which shows the overall attitudes toward PE among Thai undergraduate students, regardless of whether or not they have experience studying English with Filipino teachers.

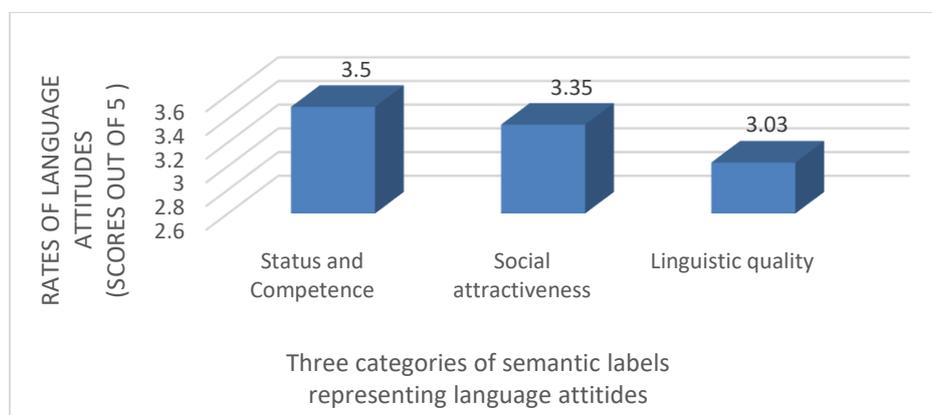


Figure 1. Mean scores for attitudes toward PE grouped by three semantic categories

To be more specific, the mean dimension scores for overall attitudes toward PE concerning each separate semantic label are illustrated in Figure 2. The semantic labels include intelligence, education, leadership, social status, social attractiveness, reliability, friendliness, attractiveness, intelligibility, good model of English, and good medium for instruction. It is of note that the dimensions of intelligence and leadership were positively rated 4 and 4.25, respectively. Conversely, the dimensions of attractiveness and acceptable model of English were negatively rated 2.9 and 2.5, respectively, compared with the remaining dimensions. The other dimensions were neutrally rated.

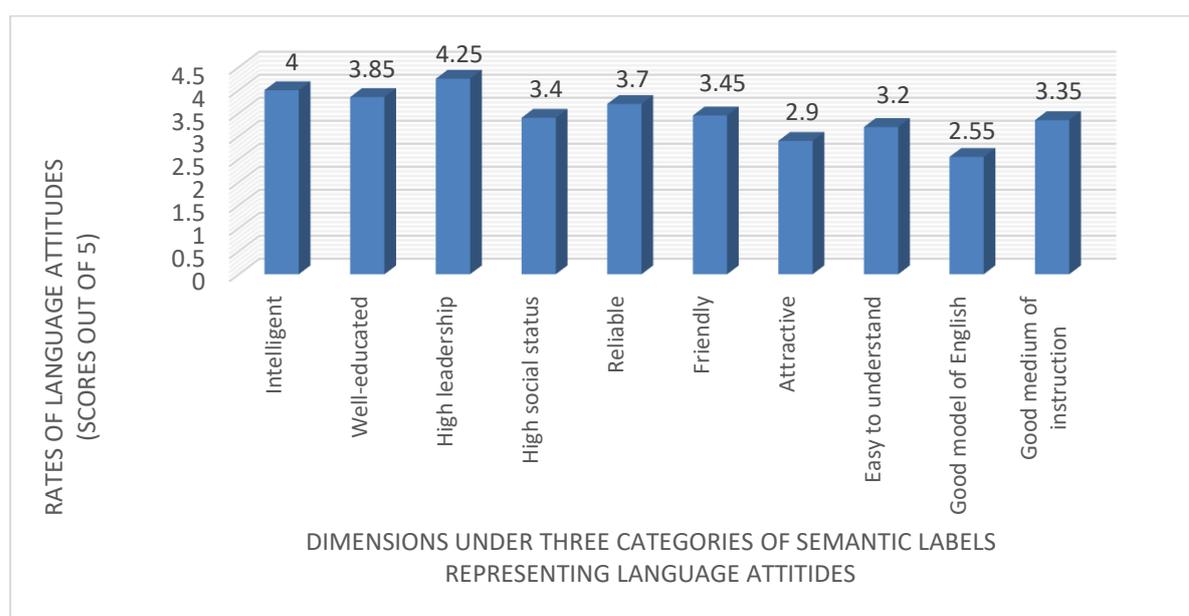


Figure 2. Mean dimension scores for attitudes among Thai undergraduate students toward PE in terms of status and competence, social attractiveness, and linguistic quality

While the first two figures represent the overall attitudes of Thai undergraduate students toward PE, the other two figures show the mean dimension scores for the attitudes among Thai undergraduate students with experience studying English with Filipino teachers (Figure 3) and Thai undergraduate students without experience (Figure 4).

Figure 3 shows the mean dimension scores for attitudes among Thai undergraduate students who have experience studying English with Filipino teachers toward PE in terms of status and competence, social attractiveness, and linguistic quality. It should be mentioned that the dimension of linguistic quality was rated the most negatively when compared to the other two dimensions, at 3.13% compared to 3.78% and 3.93%, the rates for status and competence and social attractiveness, respectively.

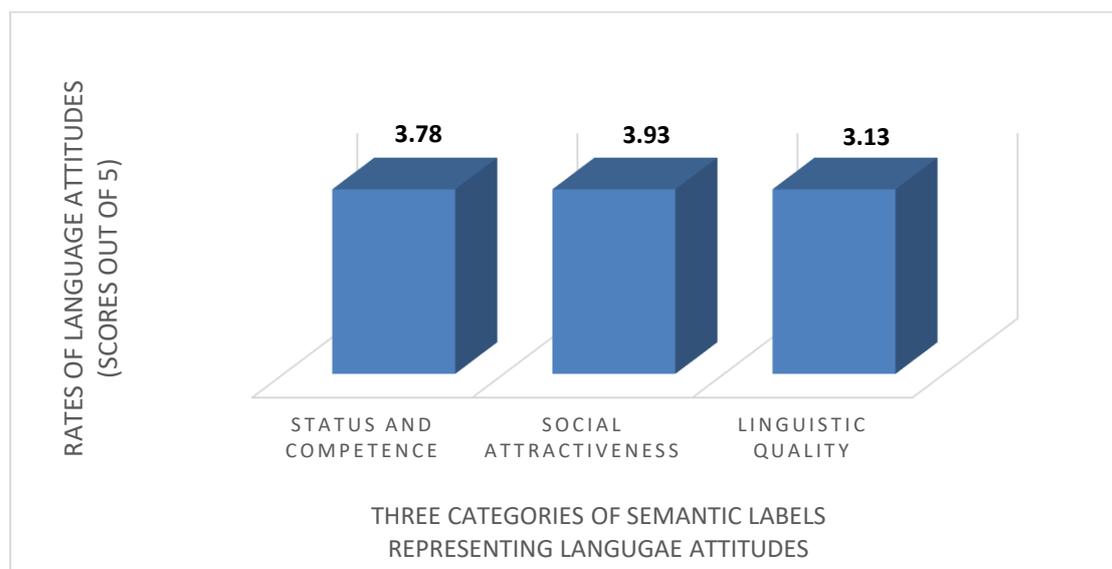


Figure 3. Mean dimension scores for attitudes among Thai undergraduate students who have experience studying English with Filipino teachers toward PE in terms of status and competence, social attractiveness, and linguistic quality

Lastly, Figure 4 illustrates the mean dimension scores for attitudes among Thai undergraduate students who do not have experience studying English with Filipino teachers toward PE in terms of status and competence, social attractiveness, and linguistic quality. It is noticeable that the dimension of linguistic quality was rated the most negatively when compared to the other two dimensions, at 2.93% compared to 3.98% and 3.7%, the rates for status and competence and social attractiveness, respectively.

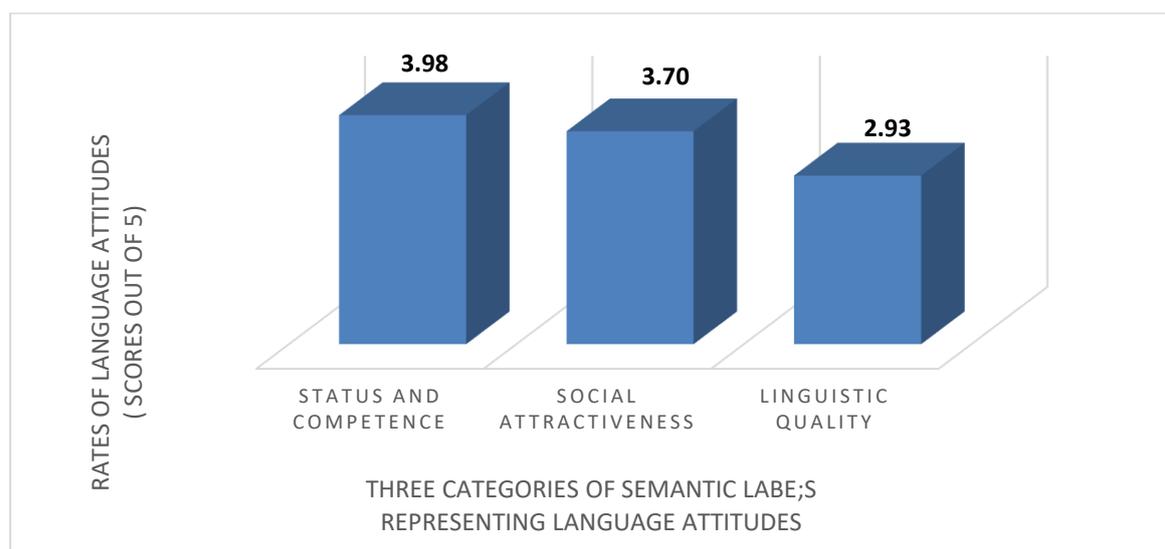


Figure 4. Mean dimension scores for attitudes among Thai undergraduate students who do not have experience studying English with Filipino teachers toward Philippine English in terms of status and competence, social attractiveness, and linguistic quality.

In accordance with the three figures (1, 3, and 4), it is worth emphasizing that the dimension of linguistic quality shows a similar trend where the scores are rated the lowest.

Though the speech employed in the perception task contained certain phonological features which are characterized as acrolectal PE—most representative of GA—as mentioned in the literature review and methodology sections, the mean scores for the linguistic quality dimension in the three figures are still rated the lowest—3.03 from Figure 1, 3.13 from Figure 3, and 2.93 from Figure 4.

Results from the semi-structured interviews

Two days after the VGT task, semi-structured interviews about the status and competence, social attractiveness, and linguistic quality of PE were conducted. Each interview was led by the researcher and joined by one participant with experience studying with a Filipino teacher and one other participant without. There were four semi-structured interviews and eight participants in total. The following section consists of excerpts from the four semi-structured interviews.

The first semi-structured interview. Participant no. 1 is an English major, with experience and participant no. 2 is an English major, without experience.

What do you think about Philippine English?

“I think a Philippine accent is like other accents. Some Thais may think that it is not a standard accent, but actually it is like American or British accents.” (Participant no. 1, with experience)

“Personally, I do not have any positive or negative bias toward some particular accents. Intelligibility matters more than accents do.” (Participant no. 2, without experience)

Do you think you would feel comfortable speaking Philippine English with your friends who come from other English-speaking countries? Why?

“I do not see any problems with that at all. Seeing that English is an international language, we can communicate in English.” (Participant no. 1, with experience)

“I agree with participant no 1. By speaking about feeling comfortable, I feel uncomfortable with myself when speaking with Philippine English because I am not [get] used to it.” (Participant no. 2, without experience)

Do you think speakers of Filipino English can communicate effectively with other speakers of English generally?

“I studied English with Filipino teachers since I was a lot younger. Also, I saw my Filipino teachers communicate in English with other people fluently and effectively.” (Participant no. 1, with experience)

“Yes, they can. Their pronunciation may be a bit deviant from standard[ized] American English; however, they are definitely able to communicate in English with other speakers of English.” (Participant no. 2, without experience)

Based on the information provided in the first interview with participant no. 1 (with experience) and participant no. 2 (without experience), it can be seen that:

Participant no. 1 had positive attitudes toward PE, as the participant mentioned that PE is similar to native English varieties, resulting in a willingness to use PE in public. Moreover, participant no. 1 had positive attitudes not only toward PE, but also toward speakers of PE especially Filipino teachers. It is thus evident that the attitudes expressed by participant no. 1 are in line with Liu and Zhao's argument (2011). On the other hand, participant no. 2 focused on the matter of effective communication, offering a more neutral perspective on PE. Not having studied with Filipino teachers, the participant maintained that PE can be used as a means of communication, despite some deviations from GA.

The second semi-structured interview. Participant no. 3 is an English major, with experience and participant no. 4 is an English major, without experience.

Do you want to sound like a native speaker of Philippine English as long as other people can understand you, or do you want to sound like certain native speakers of other English varieties? Why?

"To me, to sound like any varieties of English does not matter. Each accent is unique." (Participant no. 3, with experience)

"I do not prefer any accents in particular. What matters is an addressee whom we talk to. I would love to adjust my accent to make my addressee feel comfy when conversing with me." (Participant no. 4, without experience)

Do you think you would feel comfortable speaking Philippine English with your friends who come from other English-speaking countries? Why?

"My concern is my addressees. If they are from [an] English speaking country and have no experience in listening to non-standard varieties of English, speaking with them in Philippine English may lead to difficulty in communication." (Participant no. 3, with experience).

"I have no problem at all." (Participant no. 4, without experience)

Do you think a classroom presentation given in Philippine English would present any challenges to you or your classmates?

"There might be issues of cultural appropriation, or classmates need to take some amount of time to familiarize [themselves] with [a] Philippine accent." (Participant no. 3, with experience)

"My classmates who are students in the Faculty of Arts can for sure understand the presentation." (Participant no. 4, without experience)

Based on the comments given by participant no. 3 (with experience) and participant no. 4 (without experience) in the second interview, it would appear that:

Participants no. 3 and no. 4 accentuated the benefits of effective communication. Also, it is intriguing that participant no. 4 realized the uniqueness of each language variety, which shows a positive attitude toward language in general, not specifically toward PE. Overall, these two participants stressed communication, rather than PE.

The third semi-structured interview. Participant no. 5 is a Russian studies major, with experience and participant no. 6 is a marketing major, without experience.

What do you think about Philippine English?

“I think this variety of English is understandable and easy to listen to. I think Filipinos still make mistakes, but their English is better than Thais’.” (Participant no. 5, with experience)

“I have never studied with Filipino teachers, but I think Philippine English is different from other varieties of English in terms of pronunciation.” (Participant no. 6, with experience)

Do you want to sound like a native speaker of Philippine English as long as other people can understand you, or do you want to sound like certain native speakers of other English varieties? Why?

“I prefer to sound like native speakers of English, such as American. When it comes to using English in academic contexts, for example, I think other types of English are better” (Participant no. 5, with experience)

“I prefer to sound like British or American English. I think these two varieties are better in terms communication.” (Participant no. 6, without experience)

Do you think you would feel comfortable speaking Philippine English with your friends who come from other English-speaking countries? Why?

“I do feel comfortable. If communication is a key here, I think there is no problem here. It is like when we speak Thai dialects, Thais tend to understand each other more easily. However, if I talk to friends in professional contexts or workplace, such as the UN, I might be less comfortable speaking Philippine English because of accent discrimination” (Participant no. 5, with experience)

“I also feel comfortable. I focus on communication. However, if it comes to academic contexts, there might be some issues that need to be improved” (Participant no. 6, without experience)

Answers provided in the second interview with participant no. 5 (with experience) and the participant no. 6 (without experience) indicate the following:

Participant no. 6 had a positive attitude toward PE in general and also mentioned Filipinos’ English proficiency; however, this participant raised concerns over the possibility that PE would be inappropriate in formal contexts. Participant no. 5 expressed a similar concern. Notwithstanding his focus on communication, participant no. 6 felt that PE could be problematic in academic contexts.

The fourth semi-structured interview. Participant no. 7 is an economics major, with experience and participant no. 8 is a political science major, without experience.

What do you think about Philippine English?

“I understand that the Philippine[s] was once colonized by Spain and America, and the local language of the country shows its heritage. Their English is understandable.” (Participant no. 7, with experience)

“To be honest, I do not like this accent. If I have to choose one variety of English as a model, Philippine English is not my choice.” (Participant no. 8, without experience)

Do you want to sound like a native speaker of Philippine English as long as other people can understand you, or do you want to sound like certain native speakers of other English varieties? Why?

“I prefer British accent, not Philippine English.” (Participant no. 7, with experience)

“I do not want to sound like Philippine English. Whether it is a tone, a style, or pronunciation, it is not the good one.” (Participant no. 8, without experience)

Do you think a classroom presentation given in Philippine English would present any challenges to you or your classmates?

“I think it does challenge. We might need to speak a variety of English which our addressee feels familiar with.” (Participant no. 7, with experience)

“I think there will be a problem. Even if I never study with Filipino teachers, I strongly believe that it is difficult to communicate with that accent.” (Participant no. 8, without experience)

Based on the interview with the participant no. 7 (with experience) and the participant no. 8 (without experience), the following conclusion can be drawn:

Even though participant no. 7 has experience studying with Filipino teachers and has background knowledge of the Philippines, this participant took a negative attitude toward PE, which is against Liu and Zhao’s argument (2011). For participant no. 8, the participant expressed an even more negative attitude toward PE, providing the reasons that communication would probably be difficult.

Discussion

Hypothesis 1 posited a positive change in language attitudes due to the doubling of Filipino teachers in Thailand, in comparison to previous studies. However, this current study found that the language attitudes toward PE among Thai undergraduate students changed, by comparison with Prakaianurat and Kangkun (2018), only slightly, and where they did vary, attitudes appeared to be more negative. In detail, the mean scores for overall attitudes among Thai undergraduate students toward PE in each dimension were 3.50 (status and competence), 3.35 (social attractiveness), and 3.03 (linguistic quality).

For the purpose of comparison, the mean scores for the semantic labels in each dimension used in the study by Prakaianurat and Kangkun (2018) were tallied and then divided by the number of labels. For example, the dimension of status and competence consisted of four semantic labels: Intelligence (3.6), Education (3.7), Leadership (3.4), and Social Status (3.4), on a scale of 5. These scores—3.6, 3.7, 3.4, and 3.4—were added, and the total 14.1 was divided by 4—the number of semantic labels in the dimension—to obtain the mean score: 3.53. This then was compared with the mean score of 3.50 obtained in the present study. When the mean scores for the other two dimensions (social attractiveness: 3.43 and linguistic quality: 3.63) were similarly calculated and compared, it was found that

the results obtained by Prakaianurat and Kangkun (2018) were likewise significantly higher than found in the present study, suggesting that current Thai attitudes toward PE are less positive.

Hypothesis 2, based on Liu and Zhao (2011), posited that the attitudes of individuals to a language are likely to be positive if they gain access and exposure to the language and more importantly have opportunities to practice it. This hypothesis was partially confirmed in the present study. To be clear, the findings showed that students with experience rated PE in terms of the dimension of status and competence at 3.78; social attractiveness at 3.93; and linguistic quality at 3.13. On the other hand, students without experience rated PE in the same three dimensions at 3.98, 3.70, and 2.93, respectively. The attitudes of the two student groups can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Attitude scores of undergraduate students with and without experience studying with Filipino teachers

Dimensions	Attitude scores of undergraduate students with experience studying with Filipino teachers	Attitude scores of undergraduate students without experience studying with Filipino teachers
Status and competence	3.78	3.98
Social attractiveness	3.93	3.70
Linguistic quality	3.13	2.93

In relation to the findings of the two student groups, hypothesis 2, based on Liu and Zhao (2011), was only partially confirmed: on the dimension of status and competence, students with experience rated PE at 3.78, which was more negative than the rating of their counterparts without experience, at 3.98. In contrast, however, the two dimensions of social attractiveness and linguistic quality were ranked higher by students with experience, at 3.93 and 3.13, respectively, than by their counterparts without experience, at 3.70 and 2.93, respectively.

One possible explanation for this partial refutation of hypothesis 2 is offered by Shvidko (2017), who investigated language attitudes toward English among students in an intensive English program. She found that although students had high exposure to English and ample opportunities to practice the language, which according to Liu and Zhao (2011) can be expected to promote a positive attitude toward the language learned, other factors such as teachers' reactions to students speaking their L1 and the punishments given out for doing so, as well as the requirement that students speak English at all times, and even the perceived ineffectiveness of such a rule in boosting English language proficiency, contributed to negative attitudes among some of the subjects in her study. These factors could also have contributed to the relatively low rating given on one dimension, namely status and competence, by some students with experience with Filipino teachers.

In addition, data from the semi-structured interviews of the present study can also explain why the second hypothesis was only partially confirmed. The following excerpts represent participants' perspectives on PE in relation to the dimension of status and competence. For example, participant no. 5 with experience said, *"I prefer to sound like native speakers of English, such as American. When it comes to using English in academic*

contexts, for example, I think other types of English are better.” This participant then added, *“If I talk to friends in professional contexts or workplace, such as the UN, I might be less comfortable speaking Philippine English because of accent discrimination.”*

This indicates that in spite of the experience of having studied English with Filipino teachers, participant no. 5 would feel less confident using PE in a place where language can help construct positive identity regarding education and social status.

In line with participant no. 5, participant no. 7 with experience ascribed prejudice against PE to others and not to themselves in terms of status and competence, stating, *“People always judge our accents. We may be considered uneducated if we use Philippine English, or other English varieties which are not British or American.”* It seems likely that PE caused worry to participant no. 7 in terms of social status, which resulted in the participant’s assumption that other people may be prejudiced against PE.

Moreover, participant no.1 with experience said, *“I prefer to keep my accent neutral. I mean I do not want to sound like Philippine. I see no point in doing that.”* This could also explain the relatively low rating given to PE on the dimension of status and competence.

As noted above, the results from the semi-structured interviews of these three participants with experience indicate a negative attitude toward PE in terms of status and competence and may account for why hypothesis 2 is only partially confirmed.

Conclusion

This study aimed at investigating the differences in language attitudes toward PE between students with experience studying with Filipino teachers and students without experience, and examining the current attitudes of Thai undergraduate students toward PE in three dimensions. The mean scores out of five of the two participant groups’ language attitudes in respect to the three dimensions can be summarized as follows: the group with experience rated the three dimensions at 3.78 (status and competence), 3.93 (social attractiveness), and 3.13 (linguistic quality), and the group without experience rated the three dimensions at 3.98 (status and competence), 3.70 (social attractiveness), and 2.93 (linguistic quality). This reveals that students with experience have a less positive attitude in terms of status and competence than those without experience whereas they have a more positive attitude in terms of social attractiveness and linguistic quality than the participants without experience of PE.

Additionally, the mean scores which represent the current attitudes of Thai undergraduate students overall toward PE were 3.50 (status and competent), 3.35 (social attractiveness), and 3.03 (linguistic quality), which were more negative than the scores of Prakaianurat and Kangkun (2018): 3.53 (status and competent), 3.43 (social attractiveness), and 3.63 (linguistic quality). It is apparent that despite the increased presence of Filipino English teachers in Thailand and direct exposure to Filipino English teachers, attitudes toward PE have not significantly shifted.

As for the pedagogical implications, based on the attitudinal comparison of the two groups of participants in the current study, students with exposure to Filipino teachers have a more positive attitude in the dimensions of social attractiveness and linguistic quality, in line with the second hypothesis based on Liu and Zhao (2011). It is thus suggested that PE should be accepted as a medium of instruction in academic contexts in Thailand. Consequently, Thai EFL learners can familiarize themselves with PE and communicate with Filipinos using PE as a medium of communication in the future.

In terms of the limitations of the study, due to the Covid-19 pandemic during the research implementation, the researcher faced difficulties in recruiting the desired total number of participants, which resulted in the limited number of subjects. Thus, the researcher would suggest that future researchers recruit more participants after the end of the pandemic in order to strengthen the reliability of the research and to gain more insight into language attitudes toward PE.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into two parts:

Part I Background information

Part II Perception Task

Part I. Background Information

*Please write or circle **only one** answer in the questions below.*

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Age: _____

3. Nationality: _____

4. English proficiency Test Score

TOEFL IPT _____ CU-TEP _____

TOEFL iBT _____ IELTS _____

5. Your Level: Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4

6. What faculty are you in? _____

7. What is your major? _____

8. How long have you been learning English?

Less than 5 years 9 – 12 years

5-8 years more than 12 years

9. Please put a tick mark on nationalities of English teachers you (have) studied with and indicate the amount of time you (have) studied with each.

American _____ day(s)/month(s)/year(s)

British _____ day(s)/month(s)/year(s)

Australian _____ day(s)/month(s)/year(s)

Canadian _____ day(s)/month(s)/year(s)

Filipino _____ day(s)/month(s)/year(s)

Singaporean _____ day(s)/month(s)/year(s)

Others _____ day(s)/month(s)/year(s)

APPENDIX B

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. What do you think about Philippine English?
2. Do you want to sound like a native speaker of Philippine English as long as other people can understand you, or do you want to sound like certain native speakers of other English varieties? Why?
3. Do you think you would feel comfortable speaking Philippine English with your friends who come from other English-speaking countries? Why?
4. Do you think a classroom presentation given in Philippine English would present any challenges to you or your classmates?
5. Do you think speakers of Philippine English can communicate effectively with other speakers of English generally?