An Attitudinal Study of Varieties of English:

Voices from Thai University English Learners

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

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ชื่อวิทยานิพนธ์	การศึกษาเชิงทัศนคติของนักศึกษามหาวิทยาลัย ต่อความหลากหลายของภาษาอังกฤษ
ผู้เขียน	นายนราธิป จินดาพิทักษ์
สาขาวิชา	การสอนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษานานาชาติ
ปีการศึกษา	2552

บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษานี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาทัศนคติ ความสำเหนียก และความนิยม ของนักศึกษาวิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษต่อความหลากหลายของสำเนียงภาษาอังกฤษ ภายใต้กรอบแนวคิดเกี่ยวกับภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษานานาชาติ ซึ่งพิจารณาภาษาอังกฤษจากมุมมองพหุรูปแบบมากกว่ารูปแบบเดี่ยวซึ่งผูกติดกับเจ้าของภาษาเพียงอย่างเดียว ผู้วิจัยใช้แบบสอบถามในการเก็บข้อมูล โดยมีนักศึกษาวิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษชั้นปีที่สาม จากมหาวิทยาลัยทักษิณ วิทยาเขตสงขลา จำนวน 52 คน เป็นกลุ่มตัวอย่าง ข้อมูลที่ได้นำมาวิเคราะห์ทั้งในเชิงปริมาณและเชิงคุณภาพ ผลการศึกษาสามารถสรุปได้ดังนี้

1. นักศึกษาวิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษส่วนใหญ่ มีทัศนคติต่อสำเนียงภาษาอังกฤษในกลุ่มวงใน (ภาษาอังกฤษแบบอเมริกัน และแบบอังกฤษ) ดีกว่าสำเนียงภาษาอังกฤษในกลุ่มวงนอก (ภาษาอังกฤษแบบฟิลิปปินส์ และแบบอินเดีย) และสำเนียงภาษาอังกฤษในกลุ่มวงขยาย (ภาษาอังกฤษแบบญี่ปุ่น และแบบไทย) อย่างมีนัยสำคัญ โดยผู้พูดจากกลุ่มวงใน ถูกมองว่า มีคุณสมบัติ (เช่น สถานะ ความสามารถ และบุคลิกภาพ) ที่ดีกว่าผู้พูดที่ไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษา (กลุ่มวงนอก และวงขยาย) ผลการวิจัยครั้งนี้สะท้อนให้เห็นว่าทัศนคติต่อคุณสมบัติของผู้พูดที่นักศึกษาได้แสดงออกมาผ่านสำเนียงบ่งบอกถึงการเหยียดภาษา

2. นักศึกษามีความสำเหนียกต่อความหลากหลายของสำเนียงในภาษาอังกฤษน้อย เนื่องจากนักศึกษาส่วนใหญ่ ไม่สามารถจำแนกสำเนียงที่ได้ยินได้ว่าผู้พูดมาจากประเทศใด ผลการศึกษาพบว่า นักศึกษาสามารถจำแนกผู้พูดที่มาจากประเทศไทยได้มากที่สุด ซึ่งจำนวนนักศึกษาที่จำแนกสำเนียงนี้ได้ เป็นครึ่งหนึ่งของนักศึกษาทั้งหมด สำหรับสำเนียงอื่นๆ นักศึกษาสามารถ

จำแนกได้น้อยมาก อย่างไรก็ตาม นักศึกษาสามารถจำแนกสำเนียงของเจ้าของภาษาและสำเนียงที่ ไม่ใช่ของเจ้าของภาษาได้ดีมาก ในส่วนของปัจจัยที่ทำให้นักศึกษาสามารถจำแนกสำเนียงต่างๆได้ อย่างถูกต้อง พบว่า ความแตกต่างทางสัทศาสตร์ของสำเนียงต่างๆ ความคุ้นชินกับสำเนียง ความ เชื่อเกี่ยวกับความมีมาตรฐาน ความถูกต้อง และความสามารถเข้าใจได้ดีของสำเนียงต่างๆ เป็นปัจจัย สำคัญที่ทำให้นักศึกษาสามารถจำแนกได้ว่าผู้พูดมาจากประเทศอะไร

3. ในด้านความนิยมต่อสำเนียงต่างๆของภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะต้นแบบสำหรับการ เรียนรู้และการใช้ พบว่า สองในสามของนักศึกษานิยมสำเนียงจากกลุ่มวงใน (เช่น ภาษาอังกฤษ แบบอเมริกัน แบบอังกฤษ แบบแคนาดา และแบบออสเตรเลีย) โดยนักศึกษากลุ่มนี้ให้เหตุผลว่า สำเนียงภาษาอังกฤษจากกลุ่มวงใน มีมาตรฐาน มีความเป็นสากล และเป็นที่เข้าใจได้ดี ในทาง ตรงกันข้าม นักศึกษาประมาณหนึ่งในสามต้องการเรียนและใช้สำเนียงภาษาอังกฤษจากกลุ่มวง ขยายและวงนอก โดยให้เหตุผลว่า สำเนียงเหล่านี้ เป็นที่เข้าใจได้ดี ทันสมัย เหมาะสมสำหรับการใช้ ในท้องถิ่น และสะท้อนอัตลักษณ์ของตนเอง (กรณีนักศึกษาที่นิยมสำเนียงภาษาอังกฤษแบบไทย)

ผลการศึกษาดังกล่าว ชี้ให้เห็นถึงความสำคัญของการนำกรอบแนวคิดเกี่ยวกับ ภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษานานาชาติ มาใช้เป็นแนวทางในการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ ใน ประเทศไทย ซึ่งมีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อเตรียมความพร้อมนักศึกษาสำหรับการสื่อสารสากล และเพื่อตอบ รับกับจุดประสงค์ดังกล่าว ผู้วิจัยได้นำเสนอข้อเสนอแนะทางการศึกษาและการนำผลการศึกษาไป ใช้ที่หลากหลาย เช่น ความจำเป็นในการเสริมสร้างความตระหนักรู้เกี่ยวภาษาอังกฤษในบริบทวง กว้าง ความจำเป็นในการให้นักศึกษาได้สัมผัสกับความหลากหลายของภาษาอังกฤษ และข้อเท็จจริง เกี่ยวกับภาษาศาสตร์สังคม นอกเหนือจากนี้ ผู้วิจัยยังได้เสนอแนวทางในการสอนการออกเสียง ภาษาอังกฤษที่มุ่งเน้นการการสื่อสารภาษาอังกฤษในบริบทสากลอีกด้วย

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ABSTRACT

The purposes of the present study were to investigate Thai university English learners' attitudes towards, awareness of and preferences for varieties of English, in relation to the ideology of English as an international language, which sees English in its pluralistic rather than the monolithic nature. 52 third-year English majors from Thaksin University in Songkhla were recruited in this study. Data were collected through a questionnaire and were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The results of the study can be summarized as follows:

1. The English majors, in general, held significantly more favorable attitudes towards mainstream inner-circle Englishes (American English and British English) than towards the English varieties in the Outer (Filipino English and Indian English) and Expanding Circle (Japanese English and Thai English). In detail, the inner-circle speakers were perceived to possess better attributes (e.g., status, competence and personality) than non-native speakers. The findings suggest that the English learners, in the present study, were linguistically prejudiced as they stereotyped others based on accent.

2. The learners did not have sufficient awareness of varieties of English since the majority of them failed to identify the speakers' country of origin from the speakers' voices they listened to. It was found that the Thai English voice was the only stimulus that was successfully recognized by half of the informants whereas the other varieties were poorly identified. However, it was found that the learners, by and large, were capable of distinguishing native and non-native accents.

Concerning the factors determining the informants' correct identification of each accent, it was found that the differences in the speakers' phonological features, familiarity, beliefs about standardness-nonstandardness, correctness-incorrectness and perceptions of intelligibility-unintelligibility of certain varieties seemed to be major factors in the informants' recognition of varieties of English.

3. Regarding the learners' preferences for varieties of English as models for learning and use, it was discovered that inner-circle accents of English (e.g., American English, British English, Canadian English and Australian English) were preferred by approximately two-thirds of the informants. These informants believed that an inner-circle variety was representative of "standard" or "international" or "intelligible" form of English. On the other hand, approximately one-third of the informants preferred to learn and use expanding- and outer-circle varieties, mainly giving the reasons that these varieties were "intelligible", "trendy", "suitable" for local use and "representative" of their own identity (Thai English).

Based on the main findings, the study points out the importance of adopting the concept of English as an international language as an approach to English language learning and teaching in Thailand, which aims at preparing English learners for international lingua franca communication. To this end, pedagogical suggestions and implications such as the need to raise learners' awareness of the larger context of English, the need to expose learners to a wide range of varieties of English and English sociolinguistic profiles and the proposal of the lingua franca approach to English pronunciation teaching are also discussed.

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She has been my role model since the first time that I studied with her in the coursework of 'English in the Global Context and Second Language Acquisition'. Whenever I got academically lost or had hardships on my study, she always helped me get out of these academic burdens and encouraged me to keep walking gently but firmly through this long journey of MA study (2 years is like 20 years for me). I always became academically secure when being taught and supervised by her. She lectured, instructed, coached, demonstrated, illustrated, clarified and proved. What she did was to see me in pursuit of knowledge. She was such a big impact on my attainment of this degree and, most importantly, the completion of this laborious thesis.

Recalling the time when I was with her in her lively class, I want her to know that, without her instruction on the topic of 'Teaching English as an International Language, I would have been no difference from a stupid frog in a coconut shell blindly striving for native-speaker likeness and, at the same time, stigmatizing my own status of being a non-native speaker. Thank you very much for broadening my mind, inspiring me to view the world from different perspectives and, of course, releasing me from the native-speaker (colonial) construct in the world of

ELT which is not only unrealistic but also unattainable in general sense. Without her effort, I could not have realized the positive side of being a non-native speaker. Ajarn Adisa, speaking from my heart and my true feeling, this accomplishment is not as meaningful and significant as I getting to know you, my "supervisor" whom I call "super teacher".

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Fourth, I could not express my appreciation enough toward Dr. Sirirat Sinprajakpol (Ajarn Yok) who has been for me another role model and a second mom. Her deep affection toward me is like the bright moon that never fades from the sky. I would like to forward my deepest thanks for her academic and emotional support throughout my academic life in both BA and MA programs. Without her support, I could not have been what I am today. She is the best teacher that I have ever known because she always uses her heart to teach her students. Rather than

giving her students fish and feeding them for a day, she teaches them how to fish and feeds them for a lifetime. Her significant contribution to her students really makes teaching profession an honorable one. On this page of acknowledgement, I am really glad I am able to convey how glad I am that I get to know her and I have her in my life. Ajarn Yok, I am thankful for all you show me about how to be intellectually and academically mature. In countless ways, you have tugged and pushed and led me to the next bright plateau. Your motherly love and tireless support will remain with me through the rest of my life.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

EIL: English as an International Language

ELF: English as a Lingua Franca

ELT: English Language Teaching

ENL: English as a Native Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

MGT: Matched-guise Test

NS: Native Speaker

NNS: Non-native Speaker

VGT: Verbal-guise Test

Varieties of English

AmE: American English

BrE: British English

FiE: Filipino English

InE: Indian English

JpE: Japanese English

ThE: Thai English

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this chapter is to present introductory information of the study. It consists of five main parts: first, rationale of the study; second, aims and research questions; third, scope of the study; fourth, significance of the study; and fifth, definition of key terms.

1.1 Rationale of the study

English is the language "on which the sun never sets" (Kachru, 1998, p. 90). This quote illustrates the fact that globalization has brought English to a position that other languages can hardly rival, in terms of its extensive use in several domains of life (Graddol, 1997). It is appropriate to say that English is unquestionably the most effective widespread language for international communication. It is a survival tool that many people learn and use to achieve success and mobility in modern, pluralistic societies. Undoubtedly, the worldwide diffusion of English during this globalized age has made international tourism, business, science and technology, and education possible. The language has been used as a lingua franca by its speakers to communicate both internationally and locally within their own communities, serving a wide range of communicative purposes (Crystal, 1997, 2000b, 2001; McKay, 2002, 2003a, 2003b). It should be noted that English has shifted from being a language that was traditionally used in particular native-speaking nations to serving as a wider communicative medium for innumerable organizations and individuals around the world. Apart from being spoken by approximately 380 million native speakers (e.g., American, British, Canadian, Australian, New Zealander, Irish, etc.), non-native speakers who are, in fact, greater in number than native speakers, also use English to communicate among themselves in a wide variety of forms and functions (Canagarajah, 2007; Crystal, 1997; Graddol, 2000; Erling, 2004; Kachru, 1992;

Jenkins, 2000; Medgyes, 1992; Modiano, 1999; Seidlhofer, 2006; Strevens, 1980; Widdowson, 2003).

As the world has become more internationally connected, it is without doubt that Thailand has the opportunity to welcome millions of foreign visitors who are both native and non-native speakers (Todd, 2006). The language, that is most utilized in interactions between Thais and the foreign visitors, is unquestionably English. Hence, Thai people now encounter many varieties of English use and many types of English users, such as Indian tourists, Filipino teachers, Chinese investors, British holidaymakers and Russian businessmen.

When English is used as a medium of communication, one of the most conspicuous markers that distinguishes these English speaking people to the ears of a nation's inhabitants, in this case, Thais, is allegedly the *accent* (Munro, Derwing & Sato, 2006). The fact that English speakers use different phonological birthmarks (e.g., stress, rhythm, pitch, tone, assimilation and intonation) in their speech is considered a natural phenomenon (Munro et al., 2006) for two main reasons. Firstly, extensive research has demonstrated that second language learners acquiring a target language after their puberty period are likely to possess their first language accents in pronunciation (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Mayo & Lecumberri, 2003; Scovel, 1988, 1998). Secondly, world English speakers speak English differently depending on where they were born and raised. In other words, different English speakers possess their phonological traits; for this reason, it is biologically natural for one who belongs to a particular society to use a particular phonological pattern of his/her mother tongue when speaking in English (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992; Kenworthy, 1987; Jenkins, 2000; Lippi-Green, 1997; Pennington, 1996; Wolfson, 1989). Put most simply, everyone has an accent.

It is sensible to say that people with different accents tend to be estimated and judged differently by listeners. This phenomenon is well-characterized by the following quote: "Language has more in common with height and weight than is readily apparent" (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 5). This means that, similar to human beings' physical appearances, accent of English is one's linguistic outlook which is considered as the most observable feature in spoken production. Socially and psychologically speaking, one's accent can mark a speaker as being fluent, slightly

intelligible, competent, very diligent, very annoying, in the eyes of the listeners, to name just a few. Moreover, an accent also reflects one's mother tongue, identity and culture. Thus, when people get involved in communication, "it seems to be accent that most enables people to index who they are…" (Jenkins, 2008, p. 2). It can also be said that accent determines how speakers are subjectively seen by others. According to Sifakis and Sougari (2005), accent and/or pronunciation is related to an individual's sociocultural identity which is often interpreted by perceivers to be in association with social classification, solidarity, integrity, personality and so forth. Sociolinguistic studies on varieties of English accents in various parts of the world have revealed that differences in speech styles are a major factor in how a listener categorizes a speaker as, for example, belonging to a particular social class, socio-economic status or having a particular kind of personality or competence. A particular accent may bring about several negative consequences; for example, it may reduce intelligibility in both interactions between native and non-native speakers (NS-NNS) and interactions between non-native speakers (NNS-NNS) themselves. Furthermore, it can cause linguistically-based discrimination, such as social inferiority, undemocratic hiring practice or linguistic ridicule (Holliday, 2005; Lippi-Green, 1997; Marklay, 2000; Munro et al., 2006).

In the context of education in Thailand, there have been several debates over which English accents should be prioritized in language teaching and learning. In fact, on the basis of the researcher's prior observation from several educational web-boards (e.g., Pantip.com, OKNation.com, Dekdee.com, Bloggang,com and EduZone.com) and pronunciation-related literature, accent has long been the subject of hot discussion. Some parties argue that students should be provided more exposure to input from native speakers or drill native-speaker segmental and suprasegmental phonological features, believing that that will help them to develop native-like English pronunciation (see e.g., Pengbun, 2006; Pratumthong, 2005; Tankitikorn, 2009; Wongbiasaj, 2003). However, the question arises as to which native-speaker model should be adopted since there are multiple varieties of native-speaker English scattering in different parts of the world. Other parties feel that accent is not as important as speech intelligibility, and non-native English varieties can also be attractive and safely utilized in the educational system if

the speakers are fluent and educated (see e.g., Ali, 2008; Natheeraphong, 2004; Phothongsunan & Suwanarak, 2008).

The situation regarding English use in the world has been changing dramatically in the sense that English has dispersed into many new Englishes. Many scholars have questioned the *native-speaker-teacher-only* school of thought as the most appropriate model for ELT and have called for the development of a new model that makes use of a greater variety of English in order to expose second language learners to a wider range of sociolinguistic contexts (Mauranen, 2003). In the Thai context, it has been found that most Thai learners of English will more often than not use English with other non-native speakers rather than with native speakers (Todd, 2006). However, the pedagogical practice is not geared towards or corresponds with the current situation of language use. Forman (2005) observes that English in Thailand is taught as though the fundamental need of learners is based on the assumption of being able to converse only with native speakers and assimilate the way they use the language, especially in the aspect of English pronunciation. This is because teaching materials are enormously based on native speaker orientation (Forman, 2005; Methitham, 2009).

To comply with the principal role of English today as a lingua franca, the teaching and learning of English should take into account contextual realities of language use (Kachru, 1992, 1997, 1998) and should be based on an entirely different set of pedagogical assumptions than that of *English as a foreign language* (EFL) (McKay, 2002). That is to say, the traditional model of EFL, that lies in the pedagogical assumption that English learners have to conform to or act in accordance with native speaker norms when learning English, should be seriously questioned (Abercrombie, 1949; Avery & Ehrlich, 1992; Cook, 1999; Dalton-Puffer, Kaltenbock & Smit, 1995; Derwing, Rossiter & Munro, 2002; Jenkins, 1998, 2000, 2002a, 2006d, 2008; Kenworthy, 1987; Kramsh & Sullivan, 1996; Levis, 2005; Matsuda, 2003a; Medgyes, 1994; Sifakis & Sougari, 2005; Seidlhofer, 2001, 2003).

In Kirkpatrick's (2007b, p. 23) words: "If English in … Asia is used primarily for communication between non-native speakers of English, then the way those people speak English becomes more important than the way native speakers

speak English." Simply put, instead of adopting a native-speaker model to be unquestionably used in the Thai context of ELT, we need to critically consider the possibility of incorporating or using regional varieties of English in classroom to broaden language learners' linguistic capacity as well as strengthen their international-minded perspectives on the role of English in the world.

In agreement with Kirkpatrick's (2007c) pedagogical suggestion, Todd (2006) articulates that the focus of English language teaching in Thailand should be presenting *English as an international language* (EIL) based approach that incorporates many varieties of English into language classroom and touches upon the changing role of English in the world. The ideology of EIL promotes a paradigm shift in the approach to English from a monolithic Anglo-American or British English to the pluricentric framework of world Englishes, or in the words of Seidlhofer (2001, p. 135), from "correctness to appropriateness, from parochial domesticity and exclusive native-speaker norms to global inclusiveness and egalitarian [*sic*] to speak in ways that meet diverse local needs."

What Thai English learners think about the above issues still remains largely unexplored. In this regard, this study attempts to measure the attitudes of Thai university English learners towards different varieties of English in relation to the ideology of English as an international language. As EIL has begun to challenge and take the place of the traditional role of English in the world, many scholars (e.g., Crystal, 2000; Graddol, 2006; Holliday, 2008; Jenkins, 2000; Kachru, 1992; Modiano, 1999; Widdowson, 1994) have called for the need to be social-psychologically and linguistically aware of linguistic multiplicities. It is, thus, imperative to investigate Thai English learners' attitudes towards, their awareness of and preferences for varieties of English, in order to understand how these varieties are stereotypically placed in society, recognized and prioritized by the English learners. Their attitudes may provide a clearer understanding as to what extent EIL gains ground in the Thai context.

1.2 Aims and research questions

The aim of this study was to investigate Thai university English learners' attitudes towards varieties of English in relation to the ideology of English as an international language. The focus was on English majors from the Faculty of Education, and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Thaksin University in Songkhla, Thailand. Their attitudes towards, awareness of and preferences for the different varieties of English were explored and interpreted to determine the extent to which they adopted the EIL perspective. It was also considered important to examine whether their beliefs were consistent with sociolinguistic profiles in the context of globalization as well as with sociolinguistic realities in Thailand. To achieve this goal, the research questions were formulated as follows:

1. What are the Thai English learners' attitudes towards varieties of English?
2. Do they have awareness of varieties of English?
3. What are their preferences for varieties of English as models?

1.3 Scope of the study

1. This study aims to investigate attitudes towards varieties of English held by the third year English majors from the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Thaksin University, Songkhla Campus. It should be made clear that although the informants (English majors) were selected from the two faculties, the researcher did not attempt to analyze the data obtained from the two groups of informants separately and comparatively. The focus was, rather, on English majors' attitudes towards varieties of English as a whole.

2. As mentioned above that the aim of this study is to explore Thaksin University's English majors' attitudes towards varieties of English, generalization and interpretation of data was to be made with considerable care. That is, the outcomes

may not represent all Thai university English learners at the same educational level across Thailand.

3. Varieties of English selected in this investigation were based on Kachru's (1992) three concentric circles of English use: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle (see section 1.5 for a brief description). This study covers six varieties of English comprising American English (AmE), British English (BrE), Filipino English (FiE), Indian English (InE), Japanese English (JpE) and Thai English (ThE). It should be noted that two varieties are chosen from each concentric circle.

4. The term *varieties of English* in this study refers to only *accent* not *dialect.* Giles (1970, cited in Hiraga, 2005, p. 69) mentions that "accent merely implies manner of pronunciation" while dialect refers to "variations from the standard code at most levels of linguistic analysis". Thus, in the present study, the term accent and variety are to be used interchangeably.

1.4 Significance of the study

An investigation into English learners' attitudes towards varieties of English may contribute to the understanding of what stereotypical or prejudicial or discriminatory constructs ascribe to each English accent. It is also possible to see what varieties are perceived favorably and unfavorably. This study also probes to generate a better understanding of to what extent the English learners are aware of varieties of English prevalent in the Thai context and what pattern of recognition are associated with their awareness. Their preferences for varieties of English are reflections of what they believe as good accent models that they want to learn and use. Knowing the learners' sense of accent priority may reveal a clearer understanding of the extent to which non-native varieties gain acceptance as English models and whether the rationales advocating their preferences are consistent with the ideology of English as an international language.

It is hoped that this study can help all parties involved in ELT to reflect on the significance of tolerance of linguistic diversity that has emerged as a common sociolinguistic phenomenon in international contexts and see the exposure of varieties of English as a relevant ELT approach. The inclusiveness of world Englishes, as this study suggests, may be significant in providing theoretical and practical framework for teaching EIL with the focus on preparing students for both intra- and international interactions where interlocutors use different varieties of English.

Finally, the exploration of attitudes towards varieties of English in the Thai context may lead to a clearer understanding of the role of English in Thailand, which is one of the expanding-circle countries where English has no official status but has gained a high rank in almost every domain of life, from government leaders to bar girls (Masavisut, Sukwiwat & Wongmontha, 1986). Most importantly, as the recent trend/framework towards English as an international language suggests that second language learners should not direct their energy in approximating native-like competence as closely as possible (Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Cook, 1999; McArthur, 2001; Shin, 2004; Widdowson, 1994), the empirical discussions of the current study based on the theoretical framework of English as an international language may lend implications for ELT, offering (students to be taught through) a new pedagogy that involves decentering native speaker superiority in ELT, and preparing students for international or diversified contexts of English. Future English users, as Kumaravadivelu (2003, p. 544) discusses, should be able to "appropriate the English language and use it in their own terms according to their own values and visions."

1.5 Definitions of key terms

Four key terms, i.e., English as an International Language (EIL), three concentric circles of English, varieties of English and accent, used in the current study, are defined below:

1. English as an International Language (EIL): This term was originally coined by Larry Smith in 1974 and was heavily influenced by Strevens in 1980 and Kachru in 1992 to touch on the present state of English that is used as a

global language for wider communication. To put it another way, English is considered the world's lingua franca which is most utilized to serve both intra- and international communicative purposes. Providing similar ground to Srevens', McKay (2002) acknowledges that the function of EIL can be in both global and local sense. In a global scale, it is used as an international lingua franca between speakers from different mother tongue backgrounds. In a local sense, it is, on the other hand, used as a communicative tool to cater meaningful interactions between local speakers within one country.

2. Three concentric circles of English: Kachru (1992) describes the way English is used in the world in the form of three concentric circles. The "Inner Circle" refers to native speaking countries (e.g., USA, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, etc.) where English is used as a mother tongue or as a first language. The use of English in this circle is reflected in very sphere of life. Simply put, people in this circle extensively use English as a means to cater every communicative dealing. "The Outer Circle" refers to former colonial countries (e.g., The Philippines, India, Singapore, Malaysia, Ghana, Nigeria, etc.) where English is used as a second or institutionalized language. People in this circle use English alongside their mother tongue for official or institutionalized communicative dealings. As many outer-circle English varieties have the history of the colonial past and have institutionalized role within local contexts, they are often called nativized, institutionalized or indigenous Englishes. The last circle is called "Expanding Circle" which refers to such countries as Thailand, China, Japan, Germany and France, where English is used as a foreign or an additional language. Even though English in this circle does not share the sense of colonization and has no official role in daily-life interactions, it is given special priority as an important foreign language that is dominant in several domains of life (e.g., academia, business and commerce, higher education, media, science and technology, etc.).

3. Varieties of English: "Most linguists prefer to use the term varieties to refer to the differences which set one group's speech habits off from those of another" (Wolfson, 1989, p. 213). A single language can have more than one variety

if such a language is spoken in diverse linguistic and political locations. In case of English, its varieties are characterized by recognizable distinction facing other varieties in such features as accent, lexicon, structure and so on (Lippi-Green, 1997). In the context of this study, different varieties of English are classified by phonological and regional variations. Besides, geography is also a bit of useful information for marking off the boundary of each English variety (Lippi-Green, 1997). In other words, varieties of English are associated with ones living in particular places or geographical regions and having salient features of English pronunciation interfered by their structure. For example, English spoken by Thais is labeled 'Thai English' while those who are born and raised in America are said to speak 'American English'.

4. Accent: Put most simply, accent is the way people in particular linguistic and cultural groups pronounce words. Accents as defined by Lippi-Green (1997) are "loose bundles of prosodic and segmental features distributed over geographic and/or social space" (p. 42). Prosodic features involve rhythmic and intonational patterns of a language, while segmental features include the phonological structure of consonants and vowels.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this section is to provide background information on the sociolinguistic profiles of English, as well as on the notion of English as an international language. This section reviews the following issues: first, the international status of English; second, the spread of English in the world and the emergence of world Englishes; third, the new hegemony of English; fourth, the notion of standard English; fifth, linguistic discrimination and social-psychology relating to English accent; sixth, the ownership of English; seventh, the question of intelligibility; and last, a review on attitudinal studies of varieties of English.

2.1 The international status of English

English has, without doubt, acquired an international status and has become a truly international language (Brutt-Grifler, 1998; Crystal, 1997; Graddol, 1997; Kirkpatrick, 2007a; McKay, 2002; Modiano, 1999; Widdowson, 1994, 2003). To highlight the international role of English, many scholars have tried to introduce *English as …* with the focus on the language in its worldwide role (Erling, 2000, 2005) such as English as a global language (Crystal, 1997; Graddol, 1997); English as a 'glocal' language (Pakir, 2000); English as a lingua franca (Jenkins, 2006c; Seidlhofer, 2004); English as a world language (Brutt-Grifler, 2002) and most frequently used, English as an international language (Jenkins, 2000; Modiano, 1999; Widdowson, 1994). Even though these proposals have slight differences in descriptions and interpretations, they similarly stress the prominence of sociolinguistic realities and functional realism (Kachru, 1992) of English use in the world. In this sense, EIL has achieved general acceptance or recognition as an appropriate term to refer to most of the current uses of English worldwide, especially

in those lingua franca interactions where non-native speakers interact in English both with native speakers and other non-native speakers (Llurda, 2004).

Given that English has been referred to as the language of international communication, McKay (2002) notes that such international status of English is not merely based on a great number of native speakers; if so, Chinese, Spanish or even Arabic are clearly the leads because they are, in fact, spoken by a greater number of population as mother tongue languages. What exactly gives English international status is, instead, its unique and special role that is recognized in various countries (Crystal, 1997). Aside from being taken as an official language in public administration, education, media and business transaction in native speaking and many former colonial countries, English has also gained priority in other parts of the world where it has no official role in domains of life. It serves as a lingua franca in both global and local communication and is learned as a compulsory foreign language in school (Crystal, 1997). Providing similar ground to Crystal's, Phillipson (2008) explains how lingua franca English is inextricably connected with many special purposes in many societal domains of life. International English, in Phillipson's (2008, p. 250) opinion, is described as "a *lingua economica*" (a medium for business dealings or international trades), "a *lingua academica*" (a medium for content learning and academic publications), "a *lingua cultura*" (a medium for cultural exchange or intercultural communication) and so on.

To sum up, Graddol (2006, p. 62) notes that "English is no longer the 'only show in town'" because there are some other indigenous languages that are spoken by more native speakers. Nevertheless, English has achieved a genuinely international status while other languages are left behind because of the result of its special role that is recognized in every country; it is made an official or semi-official language in many countries and is used as a medium of communication in varied domains of life and learned as an additional (foreign) language.

2.2 The spread of English in the world and the emergence of world Englishes

According to Kachru (1985, 1992), the spread of English throughout the world can be categorized into three classical concentric circles: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Expanding Circle (see Figure 1). The three circles "represent the types of spread, the pattern of acquisition, and the functional allocation of English in diverse cultural contexts" (Kachru, 1992, p. 356).

Figure 1: Kachru's three circles of English
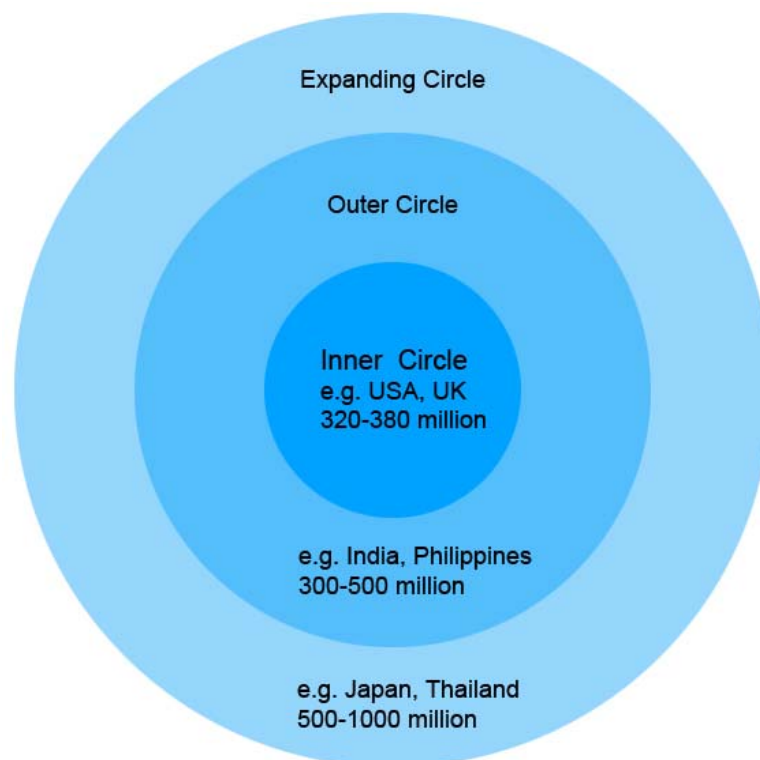
Adapted from Crystal (1997, p. 54)

The Inner Circle refers to countries where English was originally codified as a linguistic base and is primarily used as a mother tongue or native language (ENL) in every sphere of life. Countries lying in this circle include the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and some of the Caribbean and Australasian territories. The total number of English speakers in the inner-circle countries and territories around the world is estimated to be about 380

millions (Crystal, 1997). Next comes the Outer Circle. English spoken in this circle is often described as English as a second language (ESL), which means that people use English alongside their mother tongue as a second language to officially communicate in several domains or carry out various institutionalized functions (Kirkpatrick, 2007c). English used by people in this circle has a long history and developed from colonial periods (Kachru & Nelson, 2000).

The Outer Circle comprises countries like India, Malaysia, Singapore, The Philippines, Nigeria, etc. These countries were once colonized by either the British Empire or the United States (Crystal, 1997; Kirkpatrick, 2007c; Strevens, 1980, 1992). Versions of English spoken by around 500 millions in these countries are often referred to as 'new Englishes', 'nativized Englishes', 'institutionalized Englishes' or 'indigenized Englishes' (Bamgbose, 1992, 1998; Kachru, 1992, 1998, 2005; Sridhar & Sridhar, 1992).

The third and largest circle is called 'the Expanding Circle'. Broadly speaking, this circle refers to the use of English as a foreign or additional language (EFL) in countries that do not have the history of colonization by any English native-speaking countries (Kachru, 1992). That is to say, English, in this circle, has no official role to function within domestic institutions (Jenkins, 2003b). Countries like Thailand, China, Japan, the Russian Federation, Denmark or France are grouped in the Expanding Circle. Although countries in this circle do not share the sense of colonial past that the outer-circle countries do, Kachru (2005) points out that they have gradually come under the influence of the English speaking West (USA and UK) in a wide variety of English using domains such as academia, business and commerce, higher education, media, and science and technology. Regarding the number of English users in this circle, Crystal (1997) and Jenkins (2003b) maintain that it is difficult to estimate the exact number of current EFL users since much depends on how particular speakers are defined as competent language users. Jenkins (2003b, p. 15) further notes that "if we use the criterion of 'reasonable competence', then the number is likely to be around one billions". Kachru's (1996, p. 135) intention in portraying his concentric circles is to pull English users' attention towards the existence of "multilinguistic identities, multiplicity of norms, both endocentric and exocentric, and distinct sociolinguistic histories."

The spread of English has led to the pluralization or diversification of the language (Kachru, 1992; Seidlhofer, 2001); it results in the birth of many new varieties of English or 'world Englishes' which conceptualizes "the function of the language in diverse pluralistic context" (Kachru, 1997, p. 67). These newborn Englishes that are systematically used in outer- and some expanding-circle countries are somewhat different from native-speaker norms in terms of phonology, lexis, grammar, pragmatics and communication styles (Jenkins, 2003b; Kachi, 2004; Kirkpatrick, 2007; McKay, 2002). Erling (2005) notes that English has acquired new names when it comes into contact with indigenous languages and cultures around the world. Thus, it is a myth to expect that when English is spoken by non-native speakers in a certain non-native context, it has to be pure English identical with the one spoken by a native speaker in England or America. In fact, English used in various non-native settings must be multiple Englishes because they are phonologically, grammatically, lexically and pragmatically influenced by L1 structures. Widdowson's portrayal on language spread best describes how the idea of 'one-world English' or linguistic monocentricity is invalid in the nature of transmission. Below is his illustration:

> If I spread something… the assumption usually is that it remains intact. 'Start spreading the news,' as Frank Sinatra sings, 'I am leaving today,' and everybody is supposed to get the same news. Spreading is transmitting. A disease spreads from one country to another and wherever it is it is the same disease. It does not alter according to circumstances, the virus is invariable. But the language is not like this. It is not transmitted without being transformed. It does not travel well because it is fundamentally unstable. It is not well adapted to control because it is itself adaptable. (Widdowson, 1997, p. 136)

From Widdowson's statement, it can be clearly inferred that English does not represent a single shade of color; rather, it represents multiplicities or diversities known as *Englishes*. Thanasoulas (1999) supports that English must be multi-channeled, multi-variable and capable of self-modification. Thus, it should be realized that global English has become too complex to be chained to only inner-circle communities (Anchimbe, 2006). Widdowson notes, however, that the model of

language that has been available and reinforced today is that of a fixed linguistic code, which is more or less the same as the transmission of news or regulation of laws. This linguistic promotion seems to go against the fact of linguistic variations or sociolinguistic realities in many speech communities around the world (Canagarajah, 2006).

To recapitulate, the spread of English deals with the fact that the language must be diverse. This is because when English comes into contact with other indigenous languages and cultures or gets adapted by non-native users, English acquires new forms which can be labeled as Thai English, Filipino English, Japanese English, to name just a few. These new names of English suggest that English has been acculturated and transmitted to release multiple characteristics deviant from its mother originated in the Inner Circle. It should be realized that English is, in the end, no difference from a ship which is "built in Spain; owned by a Norwegian; registered in Cyprus; managed from Glasgow; chartered by the French; crewed by Russians; flying a Liberian flag; carrying an American cargo; and pouring oil on the Welsh coast" (The Independent, 1996, cited in Graddol, 1997, p. 32).

2.3 The new hegemony of English

According to Crystal (1997), the fact that English has become a truly international language was primarily the result of two factors: firstly, the expansion of the British Empire in the colonial era; and secondly, the rise of the United States as the world's superpower in the twentieth century (see also Graddol, 2006; Phillipson, 1992). Crystal believes that it is the latter factor that plays a significant role in shaping the direction of English in the today's world. Elaborating Crystal's points, Phillipson (1992) maintains that English is now entrenched worldwide because it is considered the language of the United States, a powerful economic, political and military force. He further notes that a significant figure of the whole world is now gravitated towards linguistic hegemony of the so-called *Anglo-Americanism.* Some points of current uses of English in various economic and cultural domains, bringing into focus the

relationship between the United States and the powerful status of English, need to be considered.

Crystal (1997) points out that in the mid-1990s, 85 per cent of the world film markets was dominated by the United States.

American pop cultures (known as the effect of cultural McDonaldization) have affected people's life-styles in every part of the world especially in Asia (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1997).

The USA has the most active remunerative markets and the largest economy in the world as measured in nominal Gross Domestic Product (millions of USD), according to World Bank (2008).

The United States is ranked in the top position in international travel: They are the leader in spending and earning (Crystal 1997).

Because of these influences, America has been seen by several non-American communities as a dream land where its people are elites, cultures and life-styles are to be promoted, and version of English is attractive to learn.

On linguistic ground, the assumption of how English is associated with the power of America has been empirically documented in the literature. Gibb (1997, 1999) discovered that the American English did captivate the hearts of Korean participants in her studies because of its economic advantage and prestige. Correspondingly, in the Thai context, Methitham (2009) discovered that about half of his teacher participants expressed their desire to encourage their students to cling to NS pronunciation for the purpose of gaining social image or prestige.

Phillipson (2008, p. 250) explains that "the worldwide presence of English as a *lingua americana* is due to the massive economic, cultural, and military impact of the USA" (see also Kahane, 1992). Phillipson (1992) sees this promotion of English in view of linguistic imperialism. He believes that if English continues to spread in this direction or to be only dominated by the powerful nation of America, it

will consequentially lead to cultural or linguistic inequalities between English and other languages.

However, the claim about the hegemony of English in view of linguistic Americanization as mentioned above can be partially true in the present-day world of language use. This is because "the closing decade of the 20th century marked a major change in the worldwide perception of English" (McArthur, 2001, p. 7). Crystal (1999, p. 11) adds that since "the language is going to carry on changing" and becoming detached from its contexts of hegemony (Kachru, 1992; Pennycook, 1994), attitudes to or preferences for prestige spoken communities (especially American English) may be open to alterations. Kirkpatrick (2007c) illustrates how a valued accent encounters a significant change in the perception of people. He highlights that 20 years ago, the type of English spoken by Black people were vociferously downgraded when compared to Received Pronunciation (RP), but today the prestige of RP has been reduced while Black English accent has become more common. Similarly in China, the British English was, in the past, considered as the most prestigious accent that learners wanted to emulate due to the political power that the British Empire held, but today, American English has taken the position of the British English being the most preferred accent model.

To capture the above phenomenon, Graddol (2006) calls for a paradigm shift in attitudes to the spread of English as he suggests that "it is time to understand the new dynamics of power which global English brings" (p. 112). He raises the issue of the decline of the American values by noting that "one problem with the much-heard idea that English is turning everyone into 'wannabe' Americans is that the current rapid diffusion of English is occurring at the same time as the USA is losing international prestige" (Graddol, 2006, p. 112). To support Graddol's claim, it is necessary to consider some evidence that mirrors the descent of American reputation internationally.

In 2005, the Pew Global Attitudes Project surveyed public's opinions in 16 countries towards the favorability of the five leading nations: the USA, Germany, France, Japan and China. It was discovered that the USA fared the worst of the group. Simply put, America's global approval ratings fell behind those of leading nations: Germany, France, Japan and China.

By the same token, the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press (2009) has currently released the interesting findings of the survey "America's place in the world 2009", which covered several sub-topics such as state of the world and America's global role, U.S. leadership and global strength, U.S. global image, etc. The findings manifest that America's image as the world's economic superpower has ebbed away due to the rise of many new global economic giants (e.g., China, India, Brazil and the Russian Federation). It is believed that the strength of America will, in the future, be less stable while the increasing stature of new economic giants will be more significant. It is statistically shown that 41% of the public (in 2009) believed the USA plays a less important and powerful role as a world leader today than it did 10 years ago (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Public's view of America's role as world leader
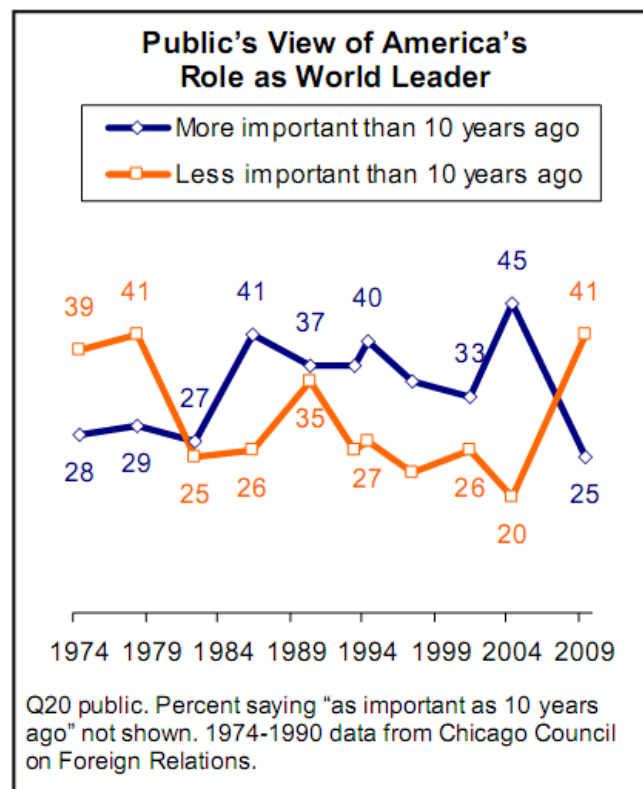
From the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press (2009, p. 2)

In terms of changing cultural flows, similar picture of the USA failing to keep possession of international prestige can also be drawn. Graddol (2006)

acknowledges that the shift or transfer of people's interests from West to East is now gathering a steady pace. A good instance can be seen in the globalization of world's media: US soap opera had earned a windfall in Chinese market and was finally out-gunned by Korean soap opera. Japanese Manga comics have been widely taken up in the USA and Europe. Many East Asian movie stars have earned reputations in many 'Hollywood' flicks. The Indian motion-picture industry known as 'Bollywood' played by Indian stars speaking English with an Indian tongue has gained a significant place in many countries. Many international news agents (e.g., Al Jazeera, CNN, Reuters, VOA News, Associate Press, CCTV, MSNBC, etc.) have posted their news videos online with the verbal reporting by many local speakers instead of native speakers.

In a nutshell, American economic and cultural priorities, that were once established firmly throughout the world, have currently been in significant decline. This signifies that the way American people spend their lives, do business, think, act and speak may be perceived as less prestigious and inconsequential to those in other countries. Thus, if economic power, social change and cultural flows are thought to contribute to the shift in prestige and people's perceptions, would not it be possible for people outside America to consider Chinese or Korean ways of thinking, life-styles or varieties of English as sources of prestige and preference in the tomorrow's world?

2.4 The notion of standard English

Since English today has metamorphosed into many new international and local Englishes, the question as to what English models should be adopted as standards for ELT in outer- and expanding-circle settings has been hotly debated in several academies. One of the most classical and liveliest debates over standard English(es) in the theme of English in the global context is between Randolph Quirk and Braj Kachru (Acar, 2007; Jenkins, 2003b; McKay, 2002; Pennycook, 1994). The debates were initiated at the 1984 conference held in London to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the British Council (Acar, 2007; McKay, 2002). These two scholars hold totally opposing viewpoints towards the issue of the standard variety of English

as an international language. Randolph Quirk (1985, cited in Acar, 2007), who is thought to be a linguistic purist, argues that there is the need for second language learners in whatever concentric circles to maintain the standards of native speakers in terms of English uses. He adds that non-native speakers are not likely to use English in a wide range of domains and purposes, so it seems logical enough to uphold "a single monochrome standard form that looks as good on paper as it sounds in speech" (Quirk, 1985, cited in Acar, 2007, p. 42). It seems clear that, according to Quirk, a certain native-speaker standard should be adopted as an unquestionable model in every educational context. On the other hand, the latter scholar, Kachru (1985) argues that since the spread of English in various sociolinguistic and sociocultural contexts (in many outer-circle contexts) is gaining gradual recognition, the traditional paradigm of standardization and an English model with the sole focus on the Inner Circle orientation needs to be reexamined. He further illustrates that the native speakers of English seem to have lost their authority or power to control the standardization of English because they have become the minority of English speakers in the world today. Thus, they tend to have little say in how standardization is shaped in the context of English as an international language. Kachru also calls for "new paradigms and perspectives for linguistic and pedagogical research and for understanding the linguistic creativity in multilingual situations across cultures" (Kachru, 1985, p. 30).

Later in early 1990s, the controversy over the legitimacy of non-native or nativized Englishes rocked the pages of the journal *English Today*. This is widely known in the field of world Englishes as the classical 'English today debate' (Jenkins, 2003b). In the discussions, Quirk's (1990) standpoint mainly indicates that non-native varieties are instable forms of English and are, therefore, invalid to be used as teaching and learning models for second language learners across the globe. Quirk strongly announces that he would feel cheated and annoyed if he were taught other forms of English instead of the standard version offered by native speakers. As he expresses:

> Certainly, if I were a foreign student paying good money in Tokyo or Madrid to be taught English, I would feel cheated by such a tolerant pluralism. My goal would be to acquire English precisely because of its power as an instrument of international communication. I would be annoyed at the equivocation over English since it seemed to be unparalleled in the teaching of French, German, Russian, or Chinese. (Quirk, 1990, p. 10)

Quirk maintains that English learners outside Britain acquire the language with little or no prior knowledge; therefore, they need to be offered standard English in order to elevate their freedom, broaden their perspectives and enhance their career possibilities. Hence, it is unquestionable that there are no such things as institutionalized varieties of English; and the duty of an English teacher is, of course, to only teach standard English. It seems clear that, to Quirk, standard English in relation to native-speaker norms should be upheld whereas other forms of English are considered as deficient or invalid versions.

On the side of linguistic pluralism, Kachru (1991) attacks the purist position vigorously as he considers Quirk's concerns to be something very far from how the language is actually used and learned in multilingual contexts. Kachru also points out that Quirk's monolingual view of the spread of English in the world denies "the linguistic, sociolinguistic, educational and pragmatic realities" of non-native or EIL settings (Kachru, 1991, p. 6). He believes that Quirk's monolithic approach to English is based on several fallacies about the users and uses of English in the globalized era (see Kachru, 1992, p. 357-358, for complete details). First, it is only partially true to say that English users in the Outer and Expanding Circle learn English to primarily interact with native speakers. English in many non-native settings, in fact, is used extensively as a lingua franca to bridge the communication gap among non-native users who have sociolinguistic and culturally-diverse backgrounds. Second, it is a misconception that English is essentially learned, in non-native contexts, to appreciate American and British cultural values or the Judeo-Christian traditions. The fact is that English is regarded as a tool to bestow local scholastic wisdoms and cultural values. Third, it is deceitful to claim that international nativized versions of English should be placed into an interlanguage or a deficient category of English use, striving to approximate native-speaker likeness. In fact, these non-native varieties are systematically used in their own rights with their own

standards rather than being false innovations on developmental stages to native-like proficiency. Fourth, it is fallacious to hold that native speakers are key models having the entire jurisdiction to inform or pave global English teaching, pedagogical policy planning and the direction of how English diffuses in the world. In reality and in the context of world Englishes, the roles native speakers play in the above domains have to be seriously questioned (Kachru, 1992) because "how English develops in the world is no business whatever of native speakers in England, the United States, or anywhere else" (Widdowson, 1994, p. 385).

Central to the debates, it should be noticed that the term *standard* has been used repeatedly by both Quirk and Kachru but what is actually the so-called standard English? Is it defined with universally acceptable meaning? Unlike other indigenous languages (e.g., Italian, Ukrainian, Korean, Japanese, etc.) that are generally used in limited geographic boundaries, English is, by contrast, spoken as an international and intranational lingua franca in an unprecedented range of contexts by many monolingual, bilingual and multilingual speakers. Unquestionably, this results in the dawn of new varieties with their own phonological, grammatical, lexical and pragmatic characteristics (see Section 2.3). These pluralistic qualities of English have made the term 'standard English' difficult to define (Jenkins, 2000, 2003b; Wolfson, 1989). However, some scholars have attempted to define it from their own perspectives. The relevant literature regarding the definition of standard English is reviewed below.

The term standard English, according to Strevens (1983), is defined as: "a particular dialect of English, being the only non-localized dialect of global currency without significant variation, universally accepted as the appropriate educational target in teaching English, which may be spoken with an unrestricted choice of accent" (p. 88). It is clearly seen that, according to Strevens, the consensus of accent is not included in the notion of standard English. His idea seems to resonate with Wolfson's (1989) proposal of standard English in which she maintains that pronunciation variation has nothing to do with the ideology of standard English. Wolfson clarifies her points:

If we accept the idea that standard speech is equivalent to the speech of educated or prestige group, we are left with the fact that educated people come from virtually everywhere in the English-speaking world and that therefore educated speakers speak in many different regional dialects. Thus, we must recognize that if we apply the notion of a standard to spoken English, we are dealing with an ideal in terms of syntax rather than with any specific model of pronunciation. (Wolfson, 1989, p. 212)

According to Wolfson, it seems clear that dialectal variations cannot be used to denote whether English speakers are educated or uneducated. This idea is assertively voiced by Cheshire and Trudgill (1989) as they claim that "speakers who would generally be regarded as 'educated' typically use the vocabulary and grammatical features that are widely known as 'standard English'" (p. 94). In contrast, accent variations should be put aside when we measure speakers' education because most educated speakers have their own tastes and choices of accents to speak. Widdowson (1994) shares similar viewpoint with the above scholars about the notion of standard English. He argues that standard English should be wisely defined in such a way that it refers to only grammar and lexis but not phonology. Widdowson continues to argue that since phonology is subject to variation, the spoken form of English can be manifested in various accents.

In brief, the statements perpetuating the definition of standard English given by these scholars seem to have one thing in common: "There is no single standard accent" (Stubb, 1980, p. 125). Thus, it should be realized that users of English whether native or non-native can speak with any forms of accent. However, linguistic extremists or purists such as Randolph Quirk seem to hardly accept the idea of letting "everyone speak as they please" (Medgyes, 1994, p. 7). To him, standard English accent must be prioritized when it comes to English language learning and teaching. What particular variety does Quirk refer to? What kind of English variety is widely regarded as possessing the standard quality? There is a need to review the concept of standard and non-standard English varieties (accents) in more depth.

John Wells, a well-known British phonetician and Esperanto expert, claims that "certain accents have a special position in that they are regarded whether tacitly or explicitly, as standard" (Wells, 1982, p. 34). To put it another way, people tend to interpret the so-called standard English as pertaining to highly valued varieties

or accents spoken by the elite groups of native speakers. In Britain, it is Received Pronunciation or RP in short (sometimes called interchangeably as Queen's English, Oxford English and BBC English) which perpetuates this status (Jenkins, 2000; Wells, 1982). In the United States, General American (GA) is perceived to rerpresent a standard English accent (Jenkins, 2000; Wells, 1982, 2005). Wells (1982, p. 34) further notes that "a standard accent is the one which at a given time and place, is generally considered correct" and is judged to have better qualities than other accents. Due to their prestige and superior qualities, these two models of accent (RP and GA) have widely been cited in pronunciation books or materials, and promoted in pronunciation courses for both L1 and L2 learners throughout the world (Jenkins, 2000). However, it is reported that less than 3 per cent of the population in Britain speak with a pure RP accent (Crystal, 1995). Said another way, the great majority of the population are said to speak with a non-standard form and a regionally-modified version of RP (Jenkins, 2000). Additionally, it does not follow that speakers of non-standard English should be labeled as uneducated speakers. Conversely, many of these speakers are educated users of English who have other tongues to speak English that reflects their geographical upbringings. In North America (USA and Canada), the situation of standard English speakers is more or less the same as in Britain. It is observed that around 33 per cent of the combined population of the two countries (American and Canada) speak English with GA accent (Jenkins, 2000). In other words, around two-thirds of the population speak with other regional varieties or vernaculars in daily-life interactions (Jenkins, 2000). To conclude, the facts about the number of standard English speakers in both Britain and North America denote that "the so-called 'standard accent' is not by any stretch of the imagination used by a majority in either geographical context" (Jenkins, 2000, p. 204).

What are, then, non-standard varieties of English accent? According to Wells (1982), any non-standard accent is often associated with lower status or unsophistication. While many people may accept such an accent on grounds of local chauvinism or self-ruling egalitarianism, others may stereotype or condemn it as incorrect, corrupt or even slovenly (Wells, 1982).

What makes certain varieties more superior than others? How come certain varieties spoken by tiny groups of people could enjoy standard status and why others could not? Why do certain varieties sound more attractive than others? Bezooijen (2002) and Giles, Bourhis, Trudgill and Lewis (1974) offer two reasons why certain varieties are perceived to be in association with high aesthetic and status qualities. First, certain varieties are thought to possess both segmental and suprasegmental sounds that are inherently or intrinsically more pleasant or pleasing to listen to than others (Giles et al., 1974). Because of this, the varieties in question become standards. This process of belief is called the 'Inherent Value or Sound-driven Hypothesis' (Giles et al., 1974). Second, it is thought that certain varieties acquire prestige and become standards because of the high status of social groups who speak those varieties (Giles et al., 1974). It should be noted that social pressures play a significant role in making speakers imitate these varieties or accents, and due to these pressures, the varieties in consideration come to be regarded as superior forms and desirable models (Bezooijen, 2002; Giles et al., 1974; Wells, 2005). Similarly, Kirkpatrick (2006) postulates that because of the historical authority that certain varieties hold, people tend to argue for their intrinsic superiority as linguistic models over recently-developed varieties. This process of thought is theoretically known as the 'Imposed Norm or Context-driven Hypothesis' (Giles et al., 1974). The latter hypothesis has received more supports than the first one in the attempt to answer the question of why a certain variety is more prestigious than others.

There has been a body of experimental evidence that validates the Imposed Norm Hypothesis while contests the Inherent Value Hypothesis. In the study conducted to test the validity of the Inherent Value Hypothesis by Giles et al. (1974), the Canadian French subjects perceived their own French as aesthetically less favorable than the European French; but when both varieties were played to the Welsh subjects (who had no prior knowledge of French), these Welsh listeners were unable to differentiate between the speech varieties. In other words, as the Canadian French subjects regarded the European French to be more intelligent, ambitious and likeable than their own French, the Welsh subjects apparently had no ideas about what version of French was superior to the other. In another study, the same researchers employed the same method as in the first study to investigate whether the British

subjects could aesthetically make distinction between the two varieties of Greek: Athenian Greek, which is considered standard Greek; and Cretan Greek, which is considered non-standard. The result confirmed the first study in that the British raters who had no knowledge of Greek were unable to make such judgment. Thus, it is appropriate to say that a standard variety or accent is widely considered as standard or a norm not because of any inherent values it may posses; rather, it is "because of an arbitrary attitude adopted towards it by society, reflecting the attitude the community implicitly hold towards its speakers" (Wells, 1982, p. 34).

Thus far, we have established, on the basis of norm-driven factors, the mystified concepts of standard and non-standard English. The way we conceive of and name standard varieties of English brings to light a good many logical and illogical justifications about language (Giles et al., 1974; Lippi-Green, 1997; Widdowson, 1994). To understand how standardization process is grounded in humans' mind, it is crucial to take a closer look at the standard language ideology that provides a theoretical framework based on arguments concerning the discourse on linguistic domination and subordination. According to Lippi-Green (1997), standard language ideology is defined as "a bias toward an abstracted, idelialized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by bloc institutions" (p. 64). Straightforwardly and apologetically, the ideological construct of standard English comes from those powerful or elite groups who disfavor and ignore the fact of linguistic diversification. The promotion of the concept of prestigious variety has been reinforced by these people and voiced by subordinates. Thus, the concept of prestigious English variety is often referred to as a linguistic ideology "which is primarily white, upper middle class..." (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 65) and educated.

It seems clear that when peripheral people produce certain linguistic forms that are not historically, politically, culturally, socially or economically mainstream, they receive subordination treatments (Lippi-Green, 1997). When these people cannot find any social acceptance and support, there is a tendency that they will disfavor, resist and marginalize their own versions of English (Buripakdi, 2008; Kumaravadivelu, 2003). In an extreme case, it is possible that they will lose their ethic identities. In fact, English speakers who do not conform to the mainstream norms suffer discrimination in all walks of life (Markley, 2000; Preston, 2005). Steps

in the linguistic subordination and marginalization process (Figure 3), as adapted from Lippi-Green (1997, p. 68), highlight some arguments which are used to flourish the status of the mainstreams and to devalue the status of peripheral varieties.

Figure 3: A model of linguistic subordination and marginalization process

►**Language is mystified.**
   You can never hope to comprehend the difficulties and complexities of the English language without a native speaker's guidance.
►**Authority is claimed.**
   Talk like me/us. We know what we are doing because we have studied language, because we write and speak well. Our norms have been codified.
►**Misinformation is generated.**
   That usage you are so attached to is inaccurate. The variant I prefer is superior on historical, political, aesthetic, economic, or logical grounds.
►**Conformists are held up as positive examples.**
   See what you can accomplished if you only try, how far you can get if you see the light.
►**Explicit promises are made.**
   Employers will take you seriously; doors will open.
►**Threats are made.**
   No one important will take you seriously; doors will close.
►**Nonconformists are subordinated or marginalized.**
   See how willfully stupid, slovenly, arrogant, unknowing, uninformed, unsophisticated and/or deviant these speakers are.

Adapted from Lippi-Green (1997, p. 68)

The mystification that the native speaker is an ideal linguistic knower has brought about the deeply-entrenched ideology that the native speaker is the flawless authority on language use (McKay, 2002). When this authority is claimed, codified and promoted, no one is going to question its validity and functionality in all domains of language use. Generally speaking, the language authorizer has the

absolute power to shape the direction of language in every domain of use: The discourse is controlled by those in power (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999). With this mystified power, people, who were born with native tongue, tend to think that their English varieties are superior to others. More specifically, misinformation about language is the reflection of the common-sense arguments rooted in the idea that standard English variety is associated with status and social class. This ideological construct has led language users to conform to a standard norm that is advantageous and attractive economically, politically, historically or even aesthetically. On the other hand, those language users, who do not conform to or acknowledge the superiority of the mainstream, will be cut off from the world of elitism. What follows is that "all the intelligence and success in the world will not open any doors" (Lippi-green, 1997, p. 69).

In closing remarks, to a fair degree, the notion of standard English may involve fixed linguistic features such as grammar and lexis but not a consensus on phonology or accent which is diverse naturally and geographically. Therefore, English speakers can have an option to use any accents in spoken language without being considered as nonstandard or unnatural. Generally speaking, however, accents spoken by elite social groups (such as RP and GA) are often associated with standard or correct forms of pronunciation. This belief, therefore, should be understood as "an abstraction rather than concrete reality" (Wolfson, 1989, p. 212). That is, there are no such things as standard or intrinsically beautiful accents; rather, it is a matter of social force that drives speakers or learners to emulate a certain accent spoken by high-status social groups. Then, what is pedagogically called for is the paradigm shift in attitudes towards and revision of the use of the traditional standard pronunciation models controlled by native speakers. Erling (2004, p. 73) remarks that "standards of English should be more flexible" when the learning and teaching of English in the Outer and Expanding Circle are involved. Similarly, Mauranen (2003) and McKay (2003a) argue that native-speaker standards should be put aside when it comes to international discourse or interactions between non-native speakers. That is, differences in rhetorical style must be perceived positively by international academic communities (Wathkaolarm, 2005). Last but not least, given the fact that the very notion of

standard is a linguistic myth (Holliday, 2008; Lippi-Green, 1997; Medgyes, 1994; Moussu & Llurda, 2008; Preston, 2005), "possessing the standard should be EARNED in the sense that it can be learned and achieved, and not born into with any form of 'native' advantage" (Holliday, 2008, p. 129).

2.5 Linguistic discrimination and social-psychology relating to English accent

> Over the course of a rainy semester, speaking English with a Thai accent was one of the most delightful topics that we students used to lampoon Thai teachers. We questioned their qualifications for being an English teacher on this basis. We graded good English teachers based on their pronunciation. Most strikingly, we equated quality English teachers with the ability to speak with a *farang*'s accent. In that generation of the 1990s, the popular English teachers among us were those who spoke English "Britishly" or "Americanly," but not "Thaily". I did not realize how much such an attitude hurt the teachers' feelings and their self-esteem. Intentionally, we devalued our local teachers; we marginalized ourselves. (Buripakdi, 2008, p. 228)

This quote excellently represents the notion of linguistic discrimination showing how one is prejudiced against some sort of phonological bundles that are considered stigmatized (Thai English accent in this case). It can be seen, from the quote, that "accent is apparently the linguistic level that arouses the strongest emotions" (Jenkins, 2005, p. 7) of hearers. The term "linguistic discrimination" or called interchangeably "linguistic prejudice" is known as the process of getting information or clues about others simply by taking in people's speech or the types of accent they have (Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994). Kirkpatrick (2007c) refers to the notion of linguistic prejudice as the social-psychological phenomenon when people construct pejorative image or oversimplified attributes in their minds and subjectively judge others (or their interlocutors) based on the stereotypical attributes they have constructed. Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) point out that the so-called discriminatory judgments may refer to the speaker's homeland, social class, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, educational status, likeability or even personalities. They maintain that it is very astonishing that we get so much information about our interlocutors merely from the language variety they utter (Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994). Lippi-Green (1997, p. 63) supports that "we use variation in language to construct ourselves as

social beings, to signal who we are, and who we are not and cannot be." Thus, it is undeniable that we tend to use the speech of others as an outward manifestation of non-linguistic information about them. Kirkpatrick (2007c, p. 15) reiterates that "if we think that one accent somehow sounds more or less intelligent than others, it shows we are linguistically prejudiced."

Many scholars (e.g., Derwing & Munro, 1997; Giles et al., 1974; Lippi-Green, 1997) have noted that arguments for discrimination against non-native or non-mainstream accents, commonly, have to do with communication. The following quote illustrates the point: *"I've got nothing against [Taiwanese, Appalachians, Blacks]* the argument will go. *I just can't understand them. So maybe they can't do anything about their accent, but I can't help not understanding them either"* (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 69). It is possible to note that this communication burden is intensified by the *I-simply-cannot-understand-you* effect. That is, people tend to forget the essence of communication and assess their own comprehension based on their interlocutors' accents. Put most simply, accent, to most listeners, will determine whether the speech is comprehensible or not, although this claim (which will be highlighted more in Section 2.7) is rather vague linguistically.

Communication, according to Lippi-Green (1997) seems to be a simple thing: One person conveys his/her message, another listens and responds; they revert the roles. When the discussion is concerned with the notion of accent, however, the simplistic characterization of communication turns out to be complicated (Derwing & Munro, 2005). As Lippi-Green (1997) notes "the social space between two speakers is not neutral, in most cases" (p. 69). When speakers encounter an accent which is alien to them, the first perseverance they have is whether or not they are going to accept their responsibility in the act of communication. The accents they hear go through language ideology filters and then come out as results of subjective evaluation. For example, in most NS-NNS interactions, a native speaker often demands a non-native speaker to carry the majority of responsibility in communicative act. This is because speakers who hold foreign accents tend to be rejected when the communication burden takes place and tend to be perceived as possessing lower competence than those mainstream ones (Derwing & Munro, 1997). On the contrary, if speakers are especially positive about the portrait of social characteristics in their listeners, or if the

communicative purposes are particularly essential to them, they will accept an asymmetric amount of the communicative burden (Lippi-Grreen, 1997). Figure 4 below presents a model for accepting or rejecting the communicative burden.

Figure 4: Model of accepting or rejecting the communicative burden

Homeland community

other mother tongue

first language acquisition
ethnicity-race-religion
gender-region-economics

second language acquisition
ethnicity-race-religion
gender-region-economics

ENGLISH

SPEAKER'S

L1 Accent

L2 Accent

Language Ideology Filters

LISTENER'S

Subjective evaluation

Neutral

Positive
[hierarchy of priority]

Negative
[hierarchy of discrimination]

Accept...Reject
The communicative burden

Adapted from Lippi-Green (1997, p. 71)

This model shows that there exists a hierarchy of accent priority and discrimination. Lippi-Green (1997) argues that people are likely to group the accents they are confronted with in different configurations. This claim can be found in

Matsuda's (2003b) study on Japanese learners' discourse on the ownership of English. She discovered that the Japanese accent was perceived as less fashionable than other accented Englishes (e.g., German accent). Similarly, Lindemann (2005) found that although her students tended to have strong discriminatory attitudes towards non-native accents, the French accent seemed to be least discriminated. To account for the reasons why some varieties are more or less discriminated or favored than others can be a very complicated task which cannot be scrutinized by linguistic process. However, it may be comprehended through the social-political perspective. The move towards social westernization, (known as the "East-looks-West" effect) in every corner of the world especially in most Asian contexts, may play a key role in making people develop the idea that the Western products including their varieties of English (e.g., European Englishes), though not native, sound more fashionable than other Asian Englishes.

As detailed previously that many people tend to use the notion of accent as the assumptions or norms in evaluating others with "varying degree of success" (Medgyes, 1992, p. 7), discriminatory practices based on accent "can be found everywhere in our daily lives" (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 73). Lippi-Green (1997) has performed a thorough investigation into how people with foreign accents have received subordinate treatments in employment in the United States context. Amongst many cases, these speakers have been denied employment simply because of their foreign accented English. It is also been documented that even native speakers whose dialects are different from the standard often find themselves trapped in the discriminatory judgment. Take the quote below as an example. During the 1992 presidential campaign, Bill Clinton, who was the Governor of the State of Arkansas, was asked by a news reporter in Chicago:

> Governor Clinton, you attended Oxford University in England and Yale Law School in the Ivy League, two of the finest institutions of learning in the world. So how come you still talk like a hillbilly?

> (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 210)

The term 'hillbilly' in this quote is applied to a person who dwells in rural or mountainous area in the southern region of USA and is thought to be stupid or have simple lifestyle by people living in town (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2000). From the quote above, it can be inferred that the reporter seems to assume that an educated elite who is schooled in top-notch institutions should speak differently from an unsophisticated countryman. Said another way, to the reporter, a person who speaks with hillbilly accent tends to be judged as having a lack of education or sophistication.

The other example that proves prominent in linguistic discrimination is drawn from the conversation between a Korean shopkeeper and a native speaker in an inner-circle context:

ASIAN: eighdy fie sen.

D-FENS: What?

ASIAN: eighdy fie sen.

D-FENS: I cannot understand you … I am not paying eighty-five cents for a stinking soda. I'll give you a quarter. You give me seventy "fie" cents back for the phone … What is fie? There is a "V" in the word. Fie-vuh. Do not they have "v's" in China?

ASIAN: Not Chinese. I am Korean.

D-FENS: Whatever. What differences does that make? You come over here and take my money and you do not even have the grace to learn to speak my language …

(Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 101-102)

This example strikingly shows how one is strongly discriminated against because of the foreign accented English that he/she holds. Lippi-Green (1997) explains that an Asian shopkeeper in the above conversation is cruelly marginalized to the edge or the periphery of social subordination by the impediment of the concept of linguistic homogeneity cemented in the mind of this native speaker (D-FENS).

Buripakdi (2008, p. 57) considers this discriminatory usage of language as "one of mankind's tragedies". The problems like what Clinton and the Asian shopkeeper in the two cases above encountered reflect people's monolingual bias (Cook, 1997, 1999) which results from the lack of the tolerance of linguistic diversity. Lippi-Green (1997) asks "what does it mean then to ask a person to give up an accent, or to suppress it?" Metaphorically, Buripakdi (2008) portrays that we, under our laws, cannot act as a "linguistic Scotland-yard" (p. 59) or "ask people to change the color of their skin, their religion, their gender" (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 63). That is, we cannot demand them to suppress or deny their roots in order to get socially accepted and to act in accordance with the construct of linguistic elitism that they do not share.

Having a foreign accent and experience of being denigrated by both native and non-native listeners may cause many people to think that L1 or foreign accents are unfavorable, funny, corrupt, inappropriate, slovenly or even broken versions of English. Kachru (1982, cited in Strevens, 1992, p. 37) speaks from his own experience: "To have one's English labeled *Indian* was an ego-cracking linguistic insult." In an extreme case, accent discrimination turns out to be the subject of *racism*. Kachru (1986, cited in Strevens, 1992, p. 37) illustrates how a second language user is never attitudinally accepted by *white* native speakers no matter how competent he is linguistically: "If he gained 'native-like' competence he was suspect; if he did not gain it he was an object of linguistic ridicule."

Given that non-native accents are prone to discriminatory judgment, many non-native speakers have been attempting to eradicate their accents from L2 speech by consulting native-speaker accent reduction therapists or pronunciation workbooks and textbooks suggesting how to successfully twist the tongue to sound native. In an extreme case, it has been reported that there are some people, in East Asia (especially Korea), who tend to go in an extreme length to remove L1 accent in spoken English by having their tongues operated which is technically known as *frenectomy* (Jenkins, 2002b; Shin, 2004). Even though, in Thailand, such an extreme case of tongue slashing procedure has not yet been evidenced, many students and teachers are very much obsessed with the idea of accent priority. The phenomenon of people's attempting to get rid of L1 accent is reflected in the rapid expansion of

tutorial institutes offering native-like accent training courses. Consider a few advertisements taken from English tuition centers below.

> Speak Up Chiangmai is the English training center with the focus on accent modification. Our goal is to train students to be more confident in speaking English as it is spoken in the real world by eliminating Thai accent. (Speak Up Chiangmai, n.d.)

> Have you ever considered why you still cannot speak English well although you have been studying English for many years? We are offering you an opportunity to learn to speak English with an American accent taught by Chulalongkorn graduates who have eight-year experiences in an English-speaking country. If you are interested in being native-like, we are the right place for you. (Jenjai, 2010)

It seems clear that people's sensitivity of L1 accent in English speech has caused accent reduction business to mushroom across Thailand and the world. Does accent therapy really work? Can non-native speakers completely eradicate their L1 accents in L2 English? To answer these questions, it is wise to review relevant literature regarding biologically-related factors in L2 accent acquisition.

Psycholinguistically speaking, accent in L2 English is naturally influenced by the L1 phonological system that language learners acquired or are exposed to during their childhood (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Field, 2003; Jenkins, 2000; Mayo & Lecumberri, 2003; Scovel, 1988, 1998). According to Scovel (1988), every second language learner possesses a maturational timetable in L2 learning. This is known, in the field of second language acquisition, as the "Critical Period Hypothesis" (CPH) which lies in the assumption that the mastery of native-like accent is conditioned to a certain critical period or a biologically optimal age (Lenneberg, 1967, cited in Singleton & Ryan, 2004). Generally, the critical period is set at close to puberty or approximately twelve years of age (e.g., Scovel, 1998). To put it in a simpler way, achieving native-like accent has proved to be more difficult (or perhaps impossible) for adult learners who acquire the language after puberty (around 12 years of age). On the other hand, it is generally assumed that young learners who acquire the language in their early childhood (pre-puberty) are likely to phonologically perform or acquire native English more successfully than adults (Lightbown & Spada,

2000). It is known that the language learning circuitry in every human brain performs more flexibly during the critical period: the unaltered neuroplasticity in children brain helps both sides of the hemisphere function jointly, and this facilitates language learning (Scovel, 1988).

The end of the critical period (post-pubertal) involves a neurological change which is reflected in the loss of neuroplasticity in human brain. When this process ends as a result of biological maturation, another process starts functioning in the brain called lateralization or hemispheric specialization (Flege, 1999). That is, both hemispheres of the brain are not functionally equal anymore after lateralization: the capacity of language learning gradually establishes in the dominant left hemisphere of the brain (Lenneberg, 1967, cited in Singleton & Ryan, 2004). This is the explanation of why adults have so many difficulties in modifying their accents, and why children tend to be more successful in producing natural English speech. Scovel (1988, p. 61) concludes: "The emergence of foreign accents arise at the same time that lateralization of cognitive, linguistic, and perceptual functions appears to be completed in the human brain, the same time that neuroplasticity appears to terminate."

It should be noted that the critical period hypothesis may not be applicable to all cases of second language learning since it is criticized by some neurolinguistic work suggesting that adult language learners who are exposed to L2 phonology after the critical period can also fully attain a monoglot native-speaker likeness. Nevertheless, it is hard to deny that a very few individuals could achieve that task.

Given the biological evidence of brain lateralization, the concept of accent reduction in second language learning seems to be unsupported and unrealistic. Jenkins (2000) argues that the whole concept of accent reduction is not consistent with the nature of second language acquisition. It is explained that second language acquisition is principally involved with gaining skills not reducing skills. Therefore, an L2 accent should be thought as an accent gained not an accent reduced: "A facility which increases learners' choices by expanding their phonological repertoires" (Jenkins, 2000, p. 208). Thus, it is irrational to say that learners have to reduce the influence of L1 phonological system in order to learn and understand a new

phonological system of the target language (Jenkins, 2000). It can be concluded that whether practically or theoretically, the concept of 'reduction' cannot be applied to L2 pronunciation learning as it is in other linguistic modalities. Consider the quote from Jenkins below:

> Interestingly, we never hear references to 'grammar reduction' or 'vocabulary reduction'. No writer of L2 pedagogic grammars or vocabulary courses would entertain the notion that learners need to reduce their L1 grammar or vocabulary in order to acquire the L2. (Jenkins, 2000, p. 208)

In closing remarks, McKay (2002) summarizes that whereas all accents of English have equal linguistic quality and validity, they are not considered having equal social status. English speakers who hold foreign, non-native or regional accents always suffer linguistic discrimination. Thus, to be more democratic, Cook (1999) and Jenkins (2006b) call for the need to treat others' foreign accents and/or pronunciation as a different variety of English rather than a failed or deficient version of native-speaker English. Moreover, foreign accents should not be seen as something that need to be prevented in spoken language. Since the capacity to acquire native-like accent tends to be biologically determined, the concept of accent reduction or an attempt to eradicate foreign accents from English does not seem rational. It is wise to treat foreign accents in view of a natural process of L2 phonological acquisition rather than an abnormal or unnatural part of learning. This is because it is impossible for most L2 learners to be re-branded as native speakers. A quote from Jenkins (2006b) finishes this section: "After all, native speakers have different accents depending on the region where they were born and live. So why should non-native speakers of an EIL not be allowed to do the same?"

2.6 The ownership of English

The assumption that native speakers are unquestionably the sole owners of English as an international language has been criticized for a number of years (Jenkins, 2000). This has been highlighted by the statistical facts that the number of non-native speakers has already surpassed that of native speakers; in China

alone, there are more English language learners than the populations of the Inner Circle (e.g., USA, UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand) combined (Kirkpattrick, 2007c). Prodromou (1997) adds that an estimated 80% of communication in English takes place between non-native speakers. Given that English has come to be spoken by so many people in diverse contexts, it has ceased to be the sole property of people with particular ethnic backgrounds or tied up with particular inner-circle communities (Widdowson, 1994, 1997, 2003). Who can actually claim ownership of English today? In agreement, many scholars state firmly that English belongs to the world (Canagarajah, 2006, 2007; Crystal, 1997, 2001; Higgins, 2003; Holliday, 2009; Jenkins, 2003, 2006a; Llurda, 2009; Seidlhofer & Berns, 2009; Widdowson, 1994, 2003). What does it mean by English being owned internationally? To seek an answer for this question, it is best comprehended through Crystal's (2001) excellent illustration of how English becomes a denationalized language. He portrays it this way:

> 'If I speak Welsh, then I am Welsh', is probably true for virtually all Welsh speakers. 'If I speak Finnish, then I am Finnish' must also be largely true. 'If I speak Russian then I am Russian' is much less true, but still predominantly so. But 'If I speak English, then I am…' well, it proves impossible to give the sentence a sensible conclusion. You could be from anywhere. (Crystal, 2001, p. 13)

Kachru (1992), echoing Crystal's (2001) concept of English as a denationalized language, points out that the language should be dissociated with the colonial past because it is not any more used as a tool to cater political purposes of the nations in power. In contrast, Kachru notes that the language should be associated with wider interactional contexts across the globe. In this sense, English functions itself as an international lingua franca which belongs to whoever uses it. Thus, since English has been used across lingua-cultural boundaries to serve different communities and serve specific or institutional purposes, the language can no longer be kept under control by native speakers (Cook, 1999, 2007; Kramsh & Sullivan, 1996; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Jenkins, 2003a, 2004; McKay, 2003a; Seidlhofer, 2009; Widdowson, 1998). That is to say, native speakers have lost their sovereignty in

English while every English speaker has been given a rightful claim to ownership of English.

When English is used outside the Inner Circle, it is exclusively *adapted* to "cultural mindsets of the people who have chosen to use it" (Crystal, 2003, p. 23) and serves speakers' communicative needs whether locally or internationally. As a result, English has come to be mingled with the indigenous or local conventions of the countries in which it is used (Crystal, 2003). To illustrate this point, English has developed new conventions of thought, customs, codes of practice (Widdowson, 1994) or even standards by non-native speakers in diverse contexts. In this case of practice, native speakers of whatever inner-circle nation seem to have no say in determining what is right or wrong in others' thoughts or ideas and no right to intervene the use and usage of English in such contexts.

One of the fundamental areas on which the controversy of English ownership has recently addressed is whether linguistic innovations emerging from systematic non-native uses will be accepted as standards? Even though many EIL scholars have stressed the autonomy of major world Englishes, it seems, however, that the idea of treating non-native innovations as their own linguistic rights has not been widely supported in the field of ELT. Most of the time, it can be seen that many types of innovations created by non-native speakers seem to be interpreted as interlanguage, learner language or deficit (Cook, 2006; Jenkins, 2000). Jenkins (2006d) brings up the issue of written-grammar-for-speech rule emerging from native-speaker lexico-grammatical creativity that has consequently been accepted as correct informal speech, whereas non-native linguistic innovations have repeatedly been penalized. As she illustrates:

> A candidate in an ELT exam would be rewarded for their knowledge of 'real' English if they were to say 'three teas' or 'two coffees' instead of 'three cups of tea' or 'two cups of coffee'. On the other hand, if they extended this use of uncountable nouns to 'wine' and referred to 'two wines' instead of 'two glasses of wine', they could be penalized for lack of competence with the countable/uncountable distinction. (Jenkins, 2006d, p. 44)

The concept of linguistic innovations as erroneous forms of language can also be traced in the Thai context. Christopher Wright (2008, 2009), a well-known native English instructor in Thailand (in his famous books) ridicules Thai learners who use innovative or L1-interfered versions of English that do not conform to native-speaker rules (e.g., the use of the word 'chill chill' to mean 'chill out' and the articulation of /lɔndɔn/ instead of /ləndən/ "London"). He notes that most Thais often use English in their own ways. Several features of English such as pronunciation and lexicon are mingled with Thai stances, and this happens repeatedly when they apply English to suit their own contexts of use. That is to say, traces of Thainess can be abundantly found in English since they often modify English words and/or pronunciation by deleting some syllables or including some odd sounds. Consequently, we get Thai versions of English frequently but incorrectly used in a wide range of contexts. Wright further notes that using this version of English (Thai English) makes the user look chic or trendy only to his/her Thai interlocutors in the Thai context. But when it comes to communicating with native speakers, confusion will definitely occur; native speakers will find his/her Thai English difficult to follow and understand. Wright concludes by suggesting that this problem will soon disappear when he/she can use English correctly like a native speaker; that is, he/she knows the spelling of each English word and knows how it is natively pronounced (Wright, 2008). Ironically, Wright may not notice that he himself unconsciously uses invented Thai-English words in his book to make his writing attractive to his target audiences.

The two cases above reflect how innovations are unfairly treated by a double standard (Jenkins, 2002a) and how the language is kept under control by native speakers who have gone unquestioned to be the sole judges of what types of English productions should be considered as right or wrong to their ears. More specifically, it is only native speakers who have to right to set standards for English language teaching and learning throughout the world.

Lowenberg (2002) notes that the creative process of linguistic innovation of native and non-native speakers is likely to be the same. This means that every English speaker on earth, whether Caucasian or Asian, white or black, Londoner or Bangkokian, is born with some amount of talented ability to use language creatively. Thus, it is no exaggeration to say that a non-native speaker can

be as resourceful, originative or creative as a native speaker when it comes to language use. However, according to Jenkins (2006d), although both types of innovation (native and non-native innovation) usually originate themselves as forms of error in the standard language, the erroneous forms innovated by native speakers gradually gain acceptance as a new standard form. For example, the word 'data' is used to replace 'datum' in the singular (Jenkins, 2006d, p. 44). On the other hand, almost all erroneous forms innovated by non-native speakers are likely to be classified as deficits, and non-native linguistic innovations have never been coded as standard.

Jenkins (2004) argues that there is no good reason to talk of stained or deficient English in lingua franca interactions when a vast majority of non-native speakers routinely use these forms to communicate intelligibly with each other. Widdowson (1994) claims that "the innovation indicates that the language has been learned, not just as a set of fixed conventions to conform to, but as an adaptable resource for making meaning." (p. 384). Thus, non-native speakers should be allowed to use their innovations without being controlled by those in power (Jenkins, 2004) or being judged vis-à-vis native-speaker benchmark (Lowenberg, 1992, 2000, 2002). To elaborate, claiming ownership to English allows non-native speakers to creatively and proficiently use the language without having to worry that their L2 production will fall short of native-speaker expertise criteria. This is because EIL treats the word *expertise* by considering "what you know" rather than "where you come from" (Rampton, 1995, cited in Jenkins, 2006c, p. 147). Crystal (2001) expresses what language learning means in the sense of linguistic right: "To have learned a language is immediately to have right in it. You may add to it, modify it, play with it, create in it, ignore bits of it, as you will" (p. 21).

Cook (1997, 2008) asserts that since L2 or bilingual users are not native speakers who speak monolingual English, the concept of language mastery should be shifted from native-like competence to multi-competence paradigm or what Brutt-Grifler (1998, 2002) calls macro-acquisition framework. In this paradigm shift, Widdowson (1994) highlights the concept of proficiency in L2 learning. As he portrays: "You are proficient in a language to the extent that you possess it, make it your own, bend it to your will, assert yourself through it rather than simply submit to the dictates of its form" (p.384). In Widdowson's words, mastering English does not

equate imitating the conventional forms of inner-circle Englishes because when ones speak English, they do not just utter words or articulate sounds intelligible to their interlocutors, and that accomplishes the job of communication. On the other hand, speakers also need to use English to project their own identity or linguistic rights in lingua franca communication (Jenkins, 2006d). For example, the Singapore ambassador to the United Nations firmly states: "I should hope that when I am speaking abroad my countrymen will have no problem recognizing that I am a Singaporean" (Strevens, 1992, p. 38-39). It can be understood that language has two main functions: it serves as a communicative tool (e.g., in lingua franca settings) and at the same time serves as a vehicle for carrying weight of the user's identity (e.g., the use of local accents) (Crystal, 1997, 2000a, 2000b; Graddol, 2000; Yano, 2009). These two functions of language must be taken into account when judgment of linguistic innovation is involved.

If innovation is seen as a threat to the use of English as a lingua franca, and the ability to mimic native speakers is paramount in the mastery of English, learners will, in the end, be able to just speak the language (or more appropriately imitate native speakers) but not speak their minds (Widdowson, 1994). They will be labeled "linguistic imitators" who possess the ability to think, act or speak in the same way as native speakers do. They are far from being labeled "linguistic nonconformists" who can play with English and make it their own (Erling & Barlett, 2006). This way, the use of language is doubtlessly tantamount to linguistic colonization (Buripakdi, 2008; Modiano, 2001; Phillipson, 1992): not in history but in the mind.

Widdowson (1994) points out that nonconformity or the ability to take possession of the language is relatively eminent when considering the proficiency of language users. To understand this point more clearly, it is best to take Buripakdi's (2008) position toward the use and perception of her Thai English as an example: "My English smells Thaily since I am thinking in Thai but write in English. This experience illustrates the notion that using English Thai-ly goes beyond strictly linguistic elements: it is the means by which I can say "I am an English speaker"" (p. 66). It is clearly seen that English as possessed by Buripakdi is a localized version of English which reflects the sociolinguistic and sociocultural reality in the Thai context.

This is similarly referred to by McKay's (2002) approach to English: the ability to think globally but act locally. Returning to Buripakdi's words, even though she is illustrating her perspective on the notion of Thai English in relation to writing modality, it could also be applied to other features of English such as speaking and pronunciation. Pennington (1996) holds positive view towards L1 accent in L2 speech as she claims that there is nothing wrong with foreign accented English since it is used primarily as a symbolic claim to identify with groups or express local identity and solidarity. Kirkpatrick (2006, 2007c) and Widdowson (1994) note that this endonormative movement of English (or locally-developed form of English) requires no native speakers to shape the direction of English or bring into conformity with prescribed linguistic rules or principles in local contexts where non-native speakers use the language authentically and creatively in their own ways for their own purposes.

However, how English has been approached in the today's world especially in Thailand is totally at variance with EIL scholars' standpoints mentioned earlier. In reality, English spreads in the world and Thailand as the phenomena of linguistic imperialism or capitalism (Buripakdi, 2008; Phillipson, 1992). To put it another way, English has been being heavily promoted as an inner-circle language as if the main goal of teaching and learning English is to clone as many native speakers as possible (Cook, 2007). Empirical data have shown that the colonial construct of native-speakerism has been deeply entrenched in the Thai context (e.g., Buripakdi, 2008; Methitham, 2009; Todd & Pojanapunya, 2009). That is, the development of a distinct form of local English (Thai English) has not received much favorable attention. By the same token, Todd (2006) and Todd and Pojanapunya (2009) found that native speakers were highly privileged and perceived as infallible English teachers by many Thais in university settings. Matsuda (2003a) and Holliday (2008) argue that this trend of belief has a consequence of linguistic inequality: non-native speakers being professionally marginalized to the inferior position. A few quotations below as cited from the literature and internet sources illustrate the issue of native-speaker authority in Thailand.

All of our English teachers are native speakers, teaching natural English as it is spoken in real conversation. (Bamgbose, 2001, p. 360)

English is not only learned to communicate internationally but also learned as an exploration to native speakers' lifestyles, ways of thought and cultures. This is the reason why we recruit only native speakers to teach our students. We hope that our students will be able to speak with a correct accent like a native speaker. (Lertlah School, 2009)

There are only two accents that can be used as the appropriate English models in the world arena: standard American and British English. Why? Accents like Indian, Filipino and Thai would only cause students to speak poor English. As for Australian one, it is regarded as a rural English accent and it is not intelligible at all. So please do not rob the bright future of our students. (Limsuwanrote, 2010, para 2)

If ones were convinced by the above sayings or advertisements, they would not hesitate adopting inner-circle Englishes as the authoritative standards for emulation, for the hope that they will be equipped with the skills to use real or natural English in an authentic or international context. Unsurprisingly, this imperialist view has been adopted extensively by many parties involved in ELT resulting in students being forced to strive for native-like competence blindly (Buripakdi, 2008). Why blindly? Common to all the quotations above, the concept of "real", "natural" or "international" English that people in general have in mind seems to be equated with the one that is used in the Inner Circle only. Such sayings do not seem to hold true in today's functional contexts of English. Widdowson (1994) argues that real English as extensively promoted by native speakers may be real and natural language in the sense that it is real for only native learners or those who want to function or blend in a native-speaking environment. In striking contrast, it is not considered real for the majority of L2 learners who primarily learn English as an international language and do not want to adopt others' identity in order to identify with a native speaker. The concept of real or natural English in this sense does not seem to authentically relate to learners' worlds but does remote them to the world of native-speakerism (Holliday, 2007; Modiano, 2009). Widdowson (1994) goes on to postulate that "if natural language learning depends on asserting some *native-speaker* [italic added] ownership over the language, this cannot be promoted by means of language which is authentic

only because it belongs to somebody else and expresses somebody else's identity" (p. 387).

In closing remarks, English as an international language should be wisely viewed through the lens of linguistic decolonization which signifies that English would be free to develop in its own way without having to conform to native-speaker norms. In this way, EIL speakers are entitled to certain linguistic rights or ownership to use their innovated English freely without being judged in relation to native-speaker correctness. The learning of English as an international language does not lie in the assumption that "soon everyone everywhere will be speaking English *like a monoglot native speaker* [italic added], wearing jeans and dancing to a disco beat" (Smith, 1983, p. 44). In contrast, when one learns English, he may speculate that "if a typical American has no wish to speak like or be labeled as a British user of English, why should a Nigerian, an Indian *or a Thai* [italic added] user feel any differently?" (Kachru & Nelson, 2000, p. 18). In other words, it does not follow that every language learner desires or has to speak American-ly or act British-ly when it comes to English language learning. Rather, he may want to bend it to suit his own will and effectively uses it as a communicative tool to intelligibly convey his thought to interlocutors of different L1s. To summarize this point, Smith's impressive illustration of how English is naturally used in the real world by international speakers should be reproduced:

> A Thai does not need to sound like an American in order to use English well with a Filipino at an ASEAN meeting. A Japanese does not need an appreciation of a British lifestyle in order to use English in his business dealings with a Malaysian. The Chinese do not need a background in western literature in order to use English effectively as a language of publications of worldwide distribution. The political leaders of France and Germany use English in private political discussions but this does not mean that they take on the political attitudes of Americans. It is clear that in these situations there is no attempt for the user to be like a native speaker of English. (Smith, 1983, p. 7)

2.7 The question of intelligibility

Crystal (1997) points out that "the need for intelligibility and the need for identity often pull people – and countries – in opposing directions" (p. 116). Intelligibility motivates learners to learn English as an international language, which is internationally intelligible in wider lingua franca communication. On the other hand, identity motivates learners to use English that reflects the sense of local community (e.g., the use of regional accents and vernaculars) where users belong to (Crystal, 1997; Widdowson, 1994).

It should be noted that allowing L1 accent in L2 speech has caused multiple concerns over whether English will fragment into mutually unintelligible variants. In other words, there is an expressed concern about standards and correctness that English will be "crumbling at its edge, becoming less and less English in the mouths … of those who (as it claimed) do not so much use it as abuse it" (Kachru & Nelson, 2000, p. 20). This concern seems to be a major reason why native-speaker Englishes have been promoted as sole linguistic or pronunciation models (Kirkpatrick, Deterding & Wong, 2008), while non-native varieties have often been considered as linguistic decay. Quirk (1990) wants one common standard form of English (inner-circle English) to be adopted not only in native contexts but also in non-native contexts so that universal intelligibility in lingua franca interactions can be reached. In a contrastive picture, EIL scholars (e.g., Crystal, 2000b; Bamgbose, 1998; Jenkins, 2000; Kachru, 1985; Kirkpatrick, 2007c) do not believe that a monolithic model for international intelligibility can exist because, in reality, varieties of English accent are widely used and widely intelligible across inter-regional and international interactions (Modiano, 1999). Widdowson (1994) highlights this point saying that if we accept that English is used for the purpose of communication in both native and non-native communities, "it follows logically that it must be diverse. […] It does not follow logically, however, that the language will disperse into mutually unintelligible varieties" (p. 385).

The above claim is reflected in Kirkpatrick's (2005) study on oral communication and intelligibility among ASEAN speakers of English. He investigated whether phonological variations of the ASEAN Englishes (e.g., Brunei,

Filipino, Malaysian, Singaporean, Thai, Indonesian English, etc.) led to mutual unintelligibility. It was found that fluent speakers who spoke varieties of ASEAN Englishes, by and large, understood each other with ease. He concludes that phonological variation in English speech does not necessarily lead to mutual unintelligibility (Kirkpatrick, 2005). In the same vein, Munro and Derwing (1999), in their correlational study on foreign accent, comprehensibility and intelligibility in ESL learners' speeches, discovered that there was no correlation between speaker's accent and listener's understanding. This finding suggests that communication is considered remarkably successful even though the speaker's foreign accent is strong in his/her L2 speech.

In EIL contexts, Jenkins (1998, 2000, 2002b) claims that native-like accent is not necessarily intelligible or an appropriate accent when a non-native speaker is communicating with another non-native speaker. Many scholars (e.g., Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Goodwin, 2007; Hung, 2002; Kirkpatrick, 2007c; Smith, 1992) provide empirical supports that speakers whose mother-tongue languages are syllable-timed (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Thai, French, Malaysian, etc.) are likely to find many syllable-timed non-native English accents more intelligible than stress-timed rhythm of inner-circle accents (e.g., American and British). To elaborate, on account of massive reduction and neutralization of unstressed syllables in the speech uttered by native speakers, non-native speakers do not often find native-like pronunciation comfortably intelligible (Hung, 2002). Therefore, Kachru (2008) argues that the question of intelligibility across the three concentric circles cannot be constructed essentially in terms of what is intelligible to only native speakers' ears. In reality, the concept of international intelligibility has become enmeshed in any meaningful interactions across linguistic boundaries. Thus, the idea of intelligibility within non-native Englishes should not be ignored.

In closing remarks, such empirical findings about international intelligibility prove useful in the field of ELT because they help inform pronunciation goal for non-native learners of English who are likely to use English as a lingua franca mostly in non-native contexts. Jenkins (2002a) and McKay (2003b) contend that as long as either a converged or diverged form of English uttered by a non-native

speaker does not impede communication or jeopardize international intelligibility, there is nothing wrong with it. Teachers and learners should be reminded that since successful communication is determined by degree of intelligibility, the goal to approximate as closely as possible the pronunciation of the dominant native-speaker accents such as Received Pronunciation and General American seems pointless. Last but not least, we must remember that being different (in accent) does not necessarily mean being unintelligible (Cross, DeVaney & Jones, 2001; Jenkins, 2002a; Jenkins, 2008). If so, who can say that Bill Clinton who has a 'hillbilly' tongue (see Section 2.5) speaks unintelligible English?

2.8 Review on attitudinal studies of varieties of English

The review on attitudinal studies of varieties of English is divided into two parts. First, the approach to the investigation into attitudes towards varieties is reviewed. Second, reviews on related research studies on people's attitudes towards varieties of English accent are provided.

2.8.1 Approach to the investigation into attitudes towards varieties of English

Since the empirical origin of language attitudes research began in the 1930s (Giles & Billings, 2004), a wide variety of methods have been utilized to measure attitudes of respondents towards language variation. However, the most effective and commonly utilized approach to eliciting informants' unconscious attitudes to varieties of language in many related studies is 'match-guise test' or the more recently verbal-guise test. The overview of this indirect approach is detailed below.

Many researchers (e.g., Dalton-Puffer et al., 1995; Giles & Billing, 2004; McKenzie, 2006) believe that an indirect elicitation is the most useful approach in language attitude research employed to measure informants' hidden perceptions, which are often masked under social façade. This method allows a researcher to tap a deeper level of perspectives held by informants. It is often seen that in measuring

attitudes towards accented speech, it is generally desirable to mislead the informants into thinking that they are being asked about the other things rather than the aspect of language. In some cases, the purpose of the study is absolutely not revealed to the informants because it is believed that such information might affect their responses (e.g., Kim, 2007; McKenzie, 2006).

The most frequently utilized technique for indirect elicitation is the matched-guise test (MGT) which was originally introduced by Lambert and his associates in Canada in the 1960s. They developed this technique to investigate the informants' privately-held perceptions of French and English in the inter-ethnic context of Canada. This was carried out by the use of speech samples of French and English produced by the same bilingual speaker (Giles & Billings, 2004). That is to say, the matched-guise technique means that speech guises are presented to the informants or listeners in a way that they feel as though they are listening to and rating the speech varieties produced by different speakers, but the fact is that they are hearing the same speaker.

The matched-guise technique is based on the assumption that when a speaker fluently produces various utterances pretending he/she belongs to a particular speech community, variables relating to the speaker's judgment such as level of education, friendliness, social class, credibility and so on are then controlled except for the dialect or accent. Giles and Billing (2004, p. 190) comment that the matched-guise technique is "a rigorous and elegant method for eliciting apparently private attitudes" of listeners who rate different varieties of the language. They also mention that the matched-guise approach is an essential factor in establishing a cross-disciplinary interface between sociolinguistic and socio-psychological analyses of language attitudes.

However, there have been several criticisms about the authenticity of the speech uttered by the same speaker. Garrett, Coupland and Williams (2003) criticize that when a speaker produces many different accents, it is very difficult to validate the study by claiming that the accents are reliable or accurate. The problem regarding the abovementioned criticism has brought about the modified version of the

matched-guise test which is known as 'verbal guise test' or what Dalton-Puffer et al. (1996) call the "watered-down matched guise technique" (p. 79). This technique has received huge attention and has been employed in many recent studies to measure informants' reactions to varieties of English (e.g., Bayard, 2003; Kim, 2007; McKenzie, 2006;). The verbal guise approach mainly differs from the MGT in that different speakers are possibly involved in creating speech samples. It is believed that the VGT dispenses with the problem of the artificiality of speech by using different speakers from original speech communities (Garrett et al., 2003).

2.8.2 Related research studies

Since the search for related literature showed a dearth of research into attitudes towards varieties of English in the Thai context, related studies could not be found. Alternatively, literature reviews were drawn from various other Asian contexts in which some details of culture and linguistic ethnography are more or less shared with Thailand. Attitudinal study has gained a lot of attention and importance in the process of communication (Zhang & Hu, 2008) since English continues to spread at a significant rate. Many outer-circle and expanding-circle countries in Asia are now concerned about the role of native and non-native varieties of English commonly found in lingua franca interactional contexts.

In Korean context, Gibb (1997) examined the attitudes held by Korean university students towards three inner-circle varieties of English prevalent in academic context of Korea: American English (AmE), British English (BrE) and Australian English (AusE). His study mainly focused on analyzing students' preferences for teachers, textbooks, culture learning and models useful for their jobs and careers. His study was carried out by resorting to the direct methodology of questionnaire which involved several close-format direct questions presented in the form of five-point Likert scales. The results indicated that the subjects preferred to learn American English. This was based on the reason that American English was considered more prestigious and useful for their future career and education plans.

In 1999, Gibb extended her study by comparing the university students' attitudes with those of full-time employees. However, English varieties used in this investigation were the same as previously included in her former research. Four objectives were identified: to replicate the previous study and to confirm the result, to find out whether there are differences in attitudes held by the two groups, to identify the reasons for preferences and lastly to evaluate the findings relevant to the impact on the Korean EFL context. The primary research instrument of her study was a questionnaire. This time she employed closed and open-ended questions plus a self-report section. Five-point Likert scales were used in the closed questionnaire while the open-ended ones allow the participants to choose the variety from the given choices. Since this study aimed to confirm the previous findings done by herself, the results clearly confirmed that Koreans preferred to learn American English the most. More specifically, the finding also showed that the two groups of the participants were exactly the same in attitudes towards varieties of English.

The study of Kim (2007) was concerned with 43 Korean adults' attitudes towards varieties of English which are the representatives of three circles of English use: Inner Circle, Outer Circle and Expanding Circle. Thus, six varieties of English: American English, British English, Indian English, Hong Kong English, Taiwan English and Korean English were considered in this study. The objective of this study was to investigate the subjects' perceptions in relation to English as an international language in Korean context. She employed both direct and indirect methods in her investigation. The verbal-guise test with bi-polar scales was used to indirectly measure the adults' perceptions of native and non-native varieties of English. Six female speakers' voices reading the same passage were recorded and used in the verbal-guise test. Accent recognition with choices of nations was also presented to let the participants guess the speakers' country of origin. As for the direct elicitation part, statements and multiple-choice questionnaires were employed to elicit the participants' direct perceptions in the relevant themes such as native and non-native speaker dichotomy and goals concerning models of learning English. The results of this examination indicated that Korean adults cited American English as their learning model but all varieties were rated equally and not discriminated against.

This finding disconfirmed Gibb's (1997, 1999) studies, which, more interestingly, revealed that the Korean adults perceived English as an international language. However, the finding showed that they had difficulty identifying English varieties.

A qualitative study by Matsuda (2000) examined the attitudes of 33 senior high school students in Japan towards inner-circle and outer-circle varieties of English. Data were collected through questionnaire, interview, and observation at a private high school in Tokyo. The findings suggested that the students, in general, held positive attitude toward North American English and its speakers. However, the students' interests in and knowledge of Englishes in outer-circle countries (e.g., Singapore) were limited. Matsuda maintained that this American-centric view of English was reflected in preferable attitudes toward the use of American English and negative attitudes towards the students' own variety of English, Japanese English, and this was felt to be problematic. Matsuda argued that because Japanese students had to learn English to function in an international context which often included both native and non-native speakers, a pluralistic view of English and modification of English teaching in Japan which prepared students for international village should be emphasized.

Also in Japanese context, McKenzie (2006) examined Japanese tertiary students' attitudes towards varieties of English in several universities across Japan. His in-depth quantitative study, employing the verbal-guise questionnaire with bi-polar semantic differential scales, investigated 558 Japanese students' perceptions of the six varieties of speech: Mid West American United States English (MWUSE), Southern United States English (SUSE), Glasgow Standard English (GSE), Glasgow Vernacular (GV), Moderately-accented English (MJE) and Heavily-accented Japanese English (HJE). The result showed that the students were able to differentiate between standard/nonstandard or native/non-native varieties of English. The most correctly identified accent was HJE followed by SUSE, MWUSE, GSE, GV and MJE respectively. He maintained that familiarity with the accent was the major factor in the successful identification of the speaker's provenance. When the students' stereotypical attitudes towards the six speakers were explored, it was found that they

rated standard and nonstandard inner-circle varieties more favorably than varieties of expanding-circle English in adjectival traits representing prestige. On the other hand, the students were more positive towards Japanese varieties and nonstandard inner-circle varieties in terms of solidarity (adjectival traits representing social attractiveness) than standard inner-circle ones.

Bayard (2003), a New Zealander dialect researcher, and his associates conducted the extensive project: "Evaluating English Accents Worldwide" with the aim to investigate current attitudes and evaluations of the various "standard" inner-circle English accents (American English, UK English, Australian English and New Zealand English) in various parts of the world. Currently more than 15 countries were involved in this project (e.g., China, Hong Kong, Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Sweden, USA, etc.). The project aimed to discover what associations do the four accents have in the mind of international raters. The term "associations" in this project means social stereotypes and biases associated with status, power, solidarity and competence. The verbal-guise test with semantic differential scales that was used involved 22 stereotypical traits based on the four evaluative dimensions mentioned above. Male and female voices of the four inner-circle varieties were recorded and used as speech stimuli. The main focuses were to find out which accents are viewed as the most influential? Which are most pleasant and likeable? And to what extent are the different accents distinct and recognizable to other native speakers of English? To cast light on this extensive project, the findings of some Asian countries were demonstrated in the followings.

In Indonesian context, Bayard and his associates investigated accent attitudes of 106 Petra Christian University students. It was found out that the only voices that were recognized by more than a quarter of informants were male and female American voices. In contrast, the Australian accent was poorly identified, even though Australia is geographically much closer to Indonesia than America. The researchers maintained that this may be an effect of television media on accent identification. The voices of male and female Americans were clearly the leads on

most adjectival traits, while the two UK voices and New Zealand were clear losers on most traits (most dimensions).

In Singapore, the researchers recruited 56 students as research informants from National University of Singapore. The most correctly identified voices were American male, which was the only speech that was recognized by more than half of the informants. In contrast, the informants seemed to have difficulty identifying UK male voice. The reasoning behind this finding was not analyzed. The two American voices scored very high on most adjectival traits, while the two voices of UK English and New Zealand male were at the bottom on most traits.

In Hong Kong, the attitudes of 75 Baptist University students towards the four accents were elicited. The result showed consistency with the studies in both Indonesia and Singapore, in which the two American voices were most correctly identified. On the other hand, the informants were hardly able to identify the voices from both New Zealand and UK. Again, it was found out that Hong Kong students rated both male and female voices of American English more favorably than other speakers on most traits (every dimension), while the two UK voices were downplayed on most traits.

Zhang and Hu (2008) examined the attitudes of Chinese second language learners' in the US context towards inner-circle Englishes: American English, British English and Australian English. Two hypotheses were addressed in this research. First, American and British English would be judged more favorably than Australian English. Second, the participants would hold positive attitudes towards both American and British English. The researchers adopted the verbal-guise technique to elicit Chinese master and doctoral students' reactions to the three varieties of English. Speech samples of female voices were collected from George Mason University's speech accent archive website. The questionnaires used with the verbal-guise approach were categorized into three dimensions for the learners to rate: language-related qualities, person-related qualities and teaching-related qualities. Moreover, speakers' origin identification was also included as instrument in this

study. The results suggested that they had more positive attitudes towards varieties of English they had been exposed to. However, there was no correlation between intelligibility of the speech and their attitudes.

Scales, Wennerstorm, Richard and Wu (2006) compared attitudes of international learners towards English accents. The first group of the participants included 37 English language learners who were from two continents: Asian countries such as Thailand, Korea, Japan, Taiwan and Vietnam and Spanish-speaking countries such as Colombia, Argentina and Mexico. The second group consisted of ten native speakers of American English. They looked at four varieties of accent: General American, British English, Chinese English and Maxican English. The aims of this investigation were to analyze what accents the learners preferred to imitate, reasons for their preferences and how distinctiveness among varieties of English accents were perceived. They recorded a short lecture read by the speakers belonging to four speech accent communities mentioned above. The questionnaire used consisted of a series of several positive descriptors. The descriptors were mostly concerned with personal and speech qualities. The questions associated with accent goals of the learners and accent identification were also included to establish the models preferred and ability to identify English varieties. The follow-up interview of the selected participants was added in this study for the purpose of obtaining qualitative understandings. The results revealed that about half of them preferred American English while the Mexican English was least preferred with respect to pronunciation models. The learners' accent goals were in line with the preferences for a language model. Thus it was shown that the learners would like to imitate native speakers in English pronunciation. Moreover, the findings indicated that the participants had difficulty identifying various English accents. Accordingly there was a mismatch between their goals and ability to perceive English accents.

This literature review suggests that in the global context, there is no more single English used for international communication. What has emerged as global phenomenon of the development of English is the plural morpheme '-es' is added to the word "English" so it becomes "Englishes", which signifies diversity or

international characters of English. So far, it seems clear that many Asian countries (in the literature) have been alert about the emergence of world Englishes and what social role these varieties play in societies. On the other hand, how Thais think about the above issues has not been very much documented in the literature of EIL. This is considered critical because the last decade has brought about a significant change in the role of English throughout the world including Thailand. People's perceptions of English should be broadened to welcome the concept of pluralism instead of the traditional monolithic approach to language.

However, it should be noted that even though Thais' attitudes towards varieties of English has not yet been researched, some linguists reckon Thai learners as having the same characteristics as East Asian learners such as Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese and Chinese in terms of perceptions of varieties of English. Gibb (1997) believes that Thai students prefer learning American English to other inner-circle varieties such as Australian and British. Patil (2006) claims that Thailand, like many Asian countries, has a policy statement advocating teachers and students to endorse British or American English, preferably American, as a model of learning so that the country will be profitably engaged in economic, political or international domination of the native-speaking countries. Moreover, Jenkins (2005, 2006a) also denotes that Thailand faces the problem of an unrealistic model of English language curriculum and the native speaker fallacy which results in a lack of awareness of the wider varieties of English. However, such claims have never been investigated empirically in Thailand.

This review of related research has revealed that most of the previous work focused exclusively on general learners' perceptions; therefore, it would be informative if attitudes of English majors towards varieties of English are explored and analyzed in terms of English language implications for the changing world. Additionally, a variety of studies included speech samples which do not represent the three concentric circles of English use in the world (Inner, Outer and Expanding Circle): many included only inner-circle varieties, while some involved varieties from inner- and outer-circle countries. Accents used in the Expanding Circle were less mentioned. Hence to capture attitudes of learners towards world Englishes, it would

be better to include varieties from the three concentric circles to represent the notion of English as an international language more clearly. Last but not least, since Kachru (1992) and Seidlhofer (2003, 2004) note that English as an international language emphasizes the importance of non-native speakers in the Expanding Circle in shaping the direction of the development of English in the world, the researcher deems it necessary to document empirical data that is obtained from Thailand, one of the countries in the Expanding Circle, to the EIL profile.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter gives a detailed description of the research design for this study. First, background information of the informants recruited for this study is provided. Second, the chapter continues with a description of the research instrument employed in this study. Third, the chapter then describes the overview of the pilot study including the resulting improvement of the research instrument. Finally, descriptions of the data collection procedure and data analysis for the present study are also given.

3.1 Informants

The informants consisted of 52 third-year English majors from both the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Thaksin University, Songkhla Campus. Of the 52 English majors, 34 (65.4%) were from the Faculty of Education and 18 (34.6%) were from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. All of them were enrolled in the 'Translation I' course in the first semester of the academic year 2009. Since one of the research goals was to explore the attitudes of as many English majors as possible, the 'Translation I' course was chosen because it provided a large proportion of English majors from both faculties. However, the researcher did not attempt to compare the attitudes of each faculty's students with the other group. Instead, the researcher focused on investigating the attitudes of these students who would be *future English users* as a whole.

As had already been mentioned, the reason for choosing this group of informants was that they were considered future English users of English who were going to be confronted with many varieties of the English language in their lives, hence, their attitudes towards different varieties of English might provide some empirical insights into the field of English as an international language or the concept of world Englishes. Only third-year students were selected for this study because it

was believed that they were mature enough for the study both intellectually and academically.

49 (94.6%) of the informants recruited for the current study were females and 3 (5.8%) were males. Regarding their educational backgrounds, it was noted that these informants had been studying English for between 12-17 years. The majority of the informants reported not having had experience living, studying or traveling abroad. In fact, only four informants (7.7%) claimed to have traveled abroad (mostly in Malaysia) for a short time.

3.2 Instrument

In an attempt to discover the informants' attitudes towards, awareness of and preferences for the different varieties of English, a questionnaire was employed as an instrument in this study. To ascertain whether each part of the questionnaire was in line with the research aims, three Applied Linguistics experts from the Department of Languages and Linguistics at Prince of Songkla University, Hat Yai Campus were asked to independently check the validity of the questionnaire.

There were three parts to the questionnaire: demographic data, accent guess and preferences for varieties of English (see Appendix A). A description of each part of the questionnaire is provided below.

3.2.1 Part I: Demographic data

In this part of the questionnaire, the informants were requested to provide personal details relevant to the following topics: gender; faculty; years of exposure to studying English; and overseas experiences including purposes of visit, date and duration of visit.

3.2.2 Part II: Accent guess

This part comprises two subsections: the verbal-guise test and an accent recognition test, as detailed below.

3.2.2.1 Verbal-guise test

In this part, six varieties of English (AmE, BrE, FiE, InE, JpE and ThE) based on Kachru's (1992) three concentric circles of English use (the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle), were selected and used to evaluate the informants' stereotypical attitudes towards and their ability to recognize varieties of English. To conduct the verbal-guise test in the present study, the following details need to be pointed out: first, stimulus providers; second, variable control for the speech samples; and last, bi-polar semantic differential scales.

3.2.2.1a Stimulus providers

In this verbal-guise test, the voices of six educated female English speakers from the countries mentioned above, all of whom read the same neutral text, were used in the investigation. All speech varieties, except for the Filipino variety, were downloaded from The University of Kansas's International Dialects of English Archive (2000) website: http://web.ku.edu/idea/. This site was designed for a "dialect researcher to examine a reader's English pronunciation across a wide variety of phonemic contexts." However, the Filipino variety of English in the abovementioned website was not available in a female's voice, so the researcher recorded a Filipino voice himself by using a Sony IC recorder ICD-P620.

The neutral text as mentioned earlier, was a reading passage entitled "Comma Gets a Cure" (see Appendix B). It was composed by Jill McCullough & Barbara Somerville and edited by Douglas N. Honorof following J. C. Wells' standard lexical sets. The text is considered neutral in the sense that it does not contain culturally-biased and culturally-specific information. Moreover, as claimed by the authors, the text was created based on a list of words that could be used to disclose speakers' regional phonological behaviors (The University of Kansas's International Dialects of English Archive, 2000).

The stimulus providers' reading speed rates were in the range of 40 to 42 seconds. Their ages (at the time of recording) ranged from 20 to 25 years old (see Appendix C for other demographic details of the six speakers).

3.2.2.1b Variable control for the speech samples

In order to control variables ascribing to the speech samples, the researcher conducted a three-stage procedure in order to derive the six speech samples to be included in the verbal-guise test. Figure 5, presented below, shows the three stages of variable control for the speech samples.

Figure 5: The stages of variable control for the speech samples

Stage 1
Regionally typical speech samples as checked by two native speakers of each of the six nations

Stage 2
Fluency judgment of speech samples by three English lecturers

Stage 3
Voice quality control (e.g., noises, loudness)
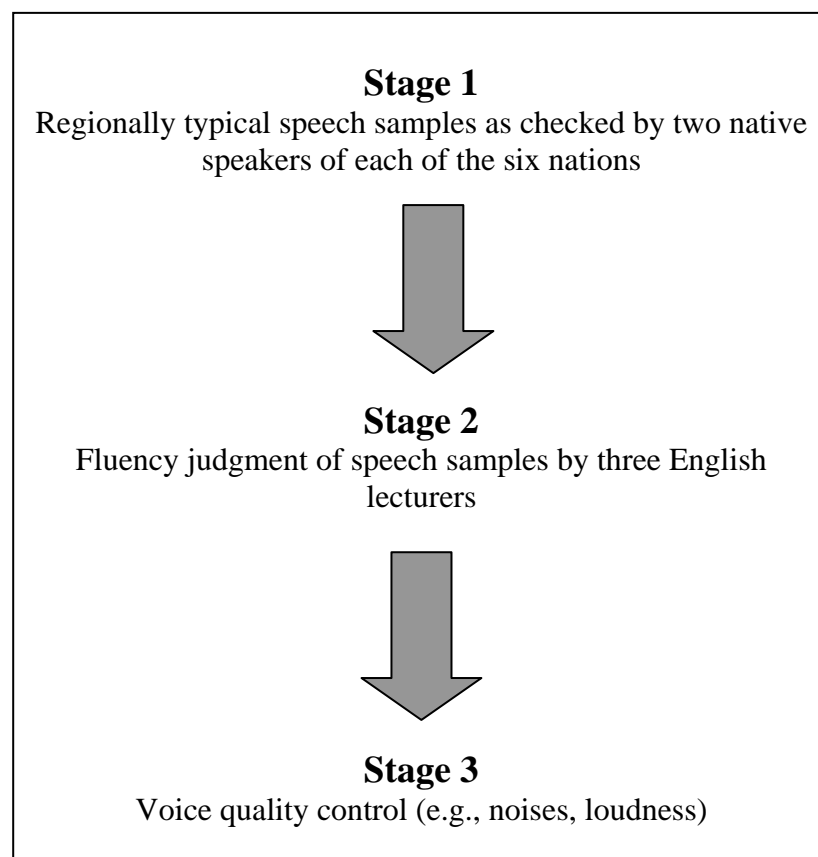
First, to ensure that each speech sample was regionally representative of the stimulus provider's nation and safe to use in the main study, at least two native speakers from the same nation as the stimulus provider were consulted. They were asked to identify their own English varieties from a good many speech stimuli (a total of 30 stimuli for the six varieties) as collected from The University of Kansas's International Dialects of English Archive website (2000) and as recorded by the

researcher himself. The stimuli that were successfully recognized by their native speakers were considered regionally typical and safe to use (i.e., if an Indian English voice was correctly identified by its native speakers, it was considered typical and representative of the 'Indian English' variety). It was found that 27 collected speech samples were representative of their own varieties. Said another way, only three voices failed to be identified by their native speakers.

Second, it was also necessary to ensure that all speakers were fluent English speakers. To do so, a total of three English lecturers (both native and non-native speakers) from Thaksin University and Prince of Songkla University were asked to judge each stimulus on the basis of "fluency" not "accent". Initially, 12 speech samples (two for each of the six varieties) as carefully selected from the 27 regionally-representative stimuli from the previous stage and the fluency judgment form were presented to the three lecturers (see Appendix D) to judge the speakers' fluency. It was intended that the qualified stimulus to be used in this study had the fluency score of 100%: a safe-to-use voice must be rated as 'fluent' by all the three lecturers. It was found that, of the 12 stimuli, 9 received a 100% fluency score. The qualified stimuli consisted of AmE1, AmE2, BrE1, BrE2, InE1, FiE1, JpE1, ThE1 and ThE2. The decision was made to include AmE1, BrE1, InE1, FiE1, JpE1 and ThE1 as the final six stimuli to be used in the verbal-guise test.

Finally, to ensure that the selected six speech samples were reliable and safe to use in the verbal-guise test, external variables in the speakers' voice qualities were controlled. Each speech audio was edited using the Adobe Audition Software 2.0 in which noises and other disturbing sounds were removed. The volume level of all speech samples was also adjusted to ensure that the audio was loud enough for the listeners.

3.2.2.1c Bi-polar semantic differential scales

The use of the verbal-guise test in several studies was always presented in the form of several bi-polar semantic differential scales which were designed to let

listeners rate the impression of the speakers based on each pair of attributes (such as Not Friendly--------------Friendly).

To maintain the validity of the construction of speakers' attributes to be included in the bi-polar scales, a separate checklist was administered in this study to examine the most appropriate stereotypical adjectives that describe speakers of the selected six varieties of English. To do this, 10 English major sophomores at Thaksin University were asked to describe their impression of each speaker by selecting adjectives from the predetermined list of 20 adjectives (see Appendix E). The eight most commonly chosen adjectives were impressive, uneducated, friendly, unconfident, gentle, generous, smart and incompetent. Each of these adjectives was then paired with its antonym and included as stereotypical attributes in the bi-polar scale questionnaire. The semantic differential scales used in this study were seven-point scales, ranging from 1 (meaning "not at all") to 7 (meaning "very much") (see Appendix A).

3.2.2.2 Accent recognition/identification

As its name implies, the objective of this part was to ascertain whether the informants had a critical awareness of the six varieties of English. The informants were asked to guess each speaker's country of origin and provide reasons for their guess.

3.2.3 Part III: Preferences for varieties of English

This part of the questionnaire concentrated on exploring the informants' preferences for the different varieties of English and the reasoning behind their preferences. For this purpose, a multiple-choice questionnaire was constructed, which asked which English variety they preferred to learn and use as an accent model. The options included 14 varieties (e.g., American English, Singaporean English, Thai English, etc.). Additionally, the options of "Other (please specify)" and "Any variety (no preference)" were also given in case that the first 14 options did not accommodate the informants' English preference. Therefore, there were a total of 16 options for this

question. To obtain more specific information, the informants were also asked to give reasons for the answer they marked in the first item.

3.3 The pilot of the instrument

The objective of the pilot study was to increase the validity, reliability and practicability of the instrument. The feedback from the pilot study was valuable for the researcher to derive the final version of the instrument.

As based on Dornyei's (2003, p. 64) overview of the functions of the pilot study, the piloting of the instrument in the current study had the goal of identifying the following problems:

1. Wording that may be ambiguous and difficult for informants to respond
2. Problems regarding the administration of the research instrument
3. The clarity of the instructions in each part of the questionnaire
4. Tasks that required inappropriate lengths of time to complete

The instrument (all parts of the questionnaire) was piloted with 32 English major sophomores from the Faculty of Education at Thaksin University, Songkhla Campus, on August 20th, 2009. This group of students was chosen for the pilot study because their educational backgrounds were believed to be similar to those of the informants in the main study. It should be noted, however, that these 32 sophomores did not include those 10 students who were asked to describe the impression of each speaker during the process of the bi-polar semantic differential scale construction (see Section 3.2.2.1c).

After piloting the questionnaire, the main problem discovered was the clarity of instructions. It was found that the students were unfamiliar with the bi-polar scale questionnaire and seemed confused when asked to rate speakers on the adjectival traits. Thus, for the main study, it was apparent that the researcher had to explain the instructions more clearly and double-check the informants' understanding by asking them to repeat the researcher's explanation to show that they comprehended

the instructions. Also, other minor problems such as ambiguous wordings, difficult vocabulary in the questionnaire and insufficient time allowance were revisited to derive the final version of the instrument.

3.4 Data collection

The data collection in this study was carried out on September 14th, 2009 at Thaksin University, Songkhla Campus by the researcher himself. The data collected involved the four main focuses: demographic data, accent guess, accent recognition, and preferences for varieties of English. All parts of the questionnaire were presented to the informants at the same session. Prior to the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher made clear to the informants that the questionnaire was not a test, and more specifically, that all responses written in the questionnaire would be kept confidential. They were, then, given instructions on how to complete each part of the questionnaire and loosely told the general objective of the study in their mother tongue language (Thai) twice. The purpose of giving them only a general explanation of the study's objectives was to ascertain that the informants not be influenced by such inward information. This technique is known as the "deceptive technique" (Garrette, Coupland & Williams, 2003, p. 16) and has been widely adopted in various language attitude studies (see e.g., Kim, 2007; McKenzie, 2006).

The procedures for each part of the data collection and the time allowances for each task are detailed below.

Part I: Demographic data (2 minutes)
1. Give the informants time to read the instructions, explain and translate them in Thai, if necessary.
2. Encourage them to honestly provide their background information (e.g., gender, faculty, years of exposure to English, etc.).

Part II: Accent guess (40 minutes)
1. Allow them to read the instructions, explain, translate the instructions, and then double-check the informants' understanding

and give an example of how to mark the bi-polar scale questionnaire.

2. Play each of the speech stimuli only once, then, pause for a couple of minutes to allow them to mark the evaluation sheet.

3. Encourage them to guess the speaker's country of origin and briefly give reasons for their guessed response.

4. Repeat step 2 and 3 for the rest of the speech stimuli until every stimulus has been played and every item has been filled out.

Part III: Preferences for varieties of English (5 minutes)

1. Allow them to read the instructions, explain and then translate them into Thai, if necessary.

2. Encourage them to indicate the variety of English they would most prefer to learn and use from the given choices or write down their own preference if they are not satisfied with any of the varieties listed.

3. Ask them to briefly explain more about their preference for the chosen variety of English.

Overall, it took approximately 47 minutes to complete the data collection procedure. However, it is important to note that the data collected was used, in one instance, in a different way than was originally intended (data collected for the analysis of preferences for varieties of English as models). That is, the informants were originally told to select as many preferred varieties as they wanted and rank them in order of preference. The researcher found that it was impossible to match up their choices of preferred varieties with reasons for the preferences because would lead to an inaccurate analysis of the data. Therefore, in order to prevent such problem, the researcher decided to use only the informants' first preference for the data analysis. To do this, Part III of the study was administered again on December 27th, 2009, to the same group of students with the same time allowance (5 minutes). This time, the informants rated their first preferred variety only.

3.5 Data analysis

The statistical software (SPSS for Windows version 11.5) were mainly used to analyze the data. Previous studies (e.g., Bayard et al., 2003; Markley, 2000; McKenzie, 2006; Kim, 2007; Preston, 1999; Scales et al., 2005) and many books on statistics for research were consulted for the analysis of data. As the current study addressed three research questions, the data obtained was divided into three parts for the purpose of well-organized analysis. The followings were descriptions of statistical tools and data categorizing approach employed in each analysis.

3.5.1 Analysis of informants' attitudes towards varieties of English

SPSS was run to analyze the quantitative data obtained from the informants' ratings on the bi-polar semantic differential scale questionnaire. Data were primarily summarized and organized by using descriptive statistics: mean and standard deviation. These sets of scores were followed up by the repeated measures analysis of variance (repeated measures ANOVA). The reason for conducting this statistical analysis was to compare the overall mean ratings of the six speakers in order to indicate whether the stimulus providers were perceived differently or not. In analyzing repeated measures ANOVA, the assumption of sphericity must be met or the homogeneity of the differences between the six speakers must be assumed. To establish the homogeneity of variance, Mauchly's Test of Sphericity was conducted. It was suggested that for the homogeneity of variance to be assumed, the expectable value of Mauchly's Test of Sphericity must exceed .05 ($p > .05$). If the significant effect was found and the main result of ANOVA manifested the significant difference of the samples being measured, a Post-hoc Test: Pairwise Comparison was followed-up to indicate where the significant difference lied.

3.5.2 Analysis of informants' awareness of varieties of English

The correct and incorrect identification of nationalities of the speakers was calculated using simple statistics: frequencies and percentages. Numerical codes

were assigned to the informants' reasons provided for correct identification of each speaker's provenance, which we were, then, categorized into themes for the purpose of qualitative analysis.

3.5.3 Analysis of informants' preferences for varieties of English as models

To find out the informants' preferences for varieties of English as models, all varieties that the informants had nominated as their preferred accent models were calculated using frequencies and percentages. In order to understand the reasoning behind their preferences, their written reasons provided for the chosen accent were translated into English and coded into themes. In addition, units of reasons that convey similar ideas were sorted into the same theme.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents and discusses the results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire which was used to provide answers for the three research questions: the informants' attitudes towards, awareness of and preferences for varieties of English. The findings are organized according to the research questions addressed in chapter one.

4.1 Informants' attitudes towards varieties of English

Research question one was formulated as: What are the Thai English learners' attitudes towards varieties of English? All the findings pertaining to the first research question are based on the data derived from part II of the questionnaire "the bi-polar semantic differential scale questionnaire (the verbal-guise test)". Findings obtained from the verbal-guise test were divided into two parts: first, informants' overall evaluation of the six speakers; and second, informants' differentiation of varieties of English.

4.1.1 Informants' overall evaluation of the six speakers

This analytical phase was to calculate descriptive statistics for the ratings of the six speakers (BrE, JpE, ThE, AmE, InE and FiE speakers) for each of the eight adjectival attributes. Table 1 below reveals the overall mean values and standard deviations of the evaluation of the six speakers.

Table 1: Overall mean values and standard deviations of the evaluation of the six speakers

Speaker	Mean	SD	N
BrE	4.74	.887	52
JpE	4.19	.928	52
ThE	4.20	.670	52
AmE	4.79	1.131	52
InE	3.69	.852	52
FiE	4.18	.995	52

Note: The most positive mean evaluation is 7.0.

The preliminary finding from the table presented above obviously indicates that, on the whole, the informants rated both speakers from the Inner Circle (the AmE and BrE speakers) higher than the other four peripheral speakers: JpE, ThE, InE and FiE speakers. It can be seen that in terms of hierarchical ranking of the overall mean scores for the six speakers, the AmE speaker received the most positive evaluation with the mean value of 4.79, followed by the BrE speaker (4.74). It should be noted that, even though, those peripheral speakers (except for the InE speaker) were judged less favorably than the two native speakers, they were still considered positive since the mean values of the evaluation of these speakers exceeded the neutral evaluation of 4.0 (4.20 for the ThE speaker, 4.19 for the JpE speaker, and 4.18 for the FiE speaker). InE was, on the other hand, the only speaker who was clearly perceived negatively by the informants with the mean value of 3.69.

To explore the informants' attitudes towards varieties of English in more details, the information on how the informants evaluated the six speakers on each individual attribute needs to be demonstrated. Hence, for this purpose, one attribute will be explored at a time in order to indicate how the six speakers were evaluated on each attribute. Table 2 below presents the mean values and standard deviations of the six speakers' performance on individual attributes as rated by the informants.

Table 2: Evaluations of the speakers: Individual attributes

Speaker (Variety)	Adjectival attribute							
	generous	smart	competent	educated	impressive	gentle	confident	friendly
BrE	4.63 (1.253)	4.88 (1.409)	4.85 (1.409)	4.87 (1.495)	4.71 (1.433)	4.52 (1.146)	4.88 (1.395)	4.60 (1.445)
JpE	4.46 (1.350)	3.92 (1.480)	3.96 (1.546)	4.13 (1.704)	4.12 (1.409)	4.48 (1.196)	4.13 (1.253)	4.35 (1.691)
ThE	4.33 (1.294)	3.88 (1.132)	4.02 (1.448)	3.92 (1.296)	4.17 (1.451)	4.65 (1.467)	4.12 (1.353)	4.48 (1.196)
AmE	4.60 (1.390)	4.85 (1.392)	4.96 (1.252)	5.04 (1.441)	4.79 (1.362)	4.58 (1.513)	4.88 (1.629)	4.60 (1.404)
InE	4.04 (1.047)	3.52 (1.163)	3.56 (1.211)	3.54 (1.448)	3.69 (1.112)	3.98 (1.475)	3.19 (1.344)	4.02 (1.196)
FiE	4.46 (1.553)	3.98 (1.698)	3.94 (1.526)	3.98 (1.379)	4.15 (1.420)	4.40 (1.512)	4.15 (1.552)	4.38 (1.795)

Note1: The most positive mean evaluation is 7.0.
Note2: Standard deviations are presented in parenthesis.

Attribute "generous"

   To start with the first attribute, the informants evaluated the six speakers positively on the attribute "generous" with the mean values (for all speakers) above 4.0. The highest mean value for this attribute goes to the BrE speaker (4.63), followed by the AmE speaker (4.60). This result suggests that, in comparison to the other outer- and expanding-circle speakers, these two inner-circle speakers were judged more positively. The speakers of JpE, FiE and ThE were also rated positively on this attribute as they were placed on the positive end of the bi-polar scale with the mean values being equally 4.46 for the JpE and FiE speakers, and 4.33 for the ThE speaker, respectively. However, the informants did not seem to evaluate the InE speaker as favorably as they did the other speakers as they gave this speaker the lowest mean value (4.04). Nonetheless, with the mean value being close to the neutral point of the evaluation scale, it may be interpreted that the informants' attitudes towards the InE speaker on this attribute is neutral.

Attribute "smart"

There appears to be a clear picture of native and non-native speaker dichotomy for the informants' evaluation of the six speakers on this attribute since the speakers' mean values were dichotomously placed on both the positive and negative ends of the bi-polar scale. The two native speakers, the BrE and AmE speakers, were rated with the positive mean values (4.88 for the BrE speaker and 4.85 for the AmE speaker). In contrast, the informants gave the speakers, who are from both Outer and Expanding Circle (the JpE, ThE, InE and FiE speakers), a negative evaluation on this attribute with the mean values being 3.98 for the FiE speaker, 3.92 for the JpE speaker, 3.88 for the ThE speaker, and 3.52 for the InE speaker. It should be noted that even though the FiE and JpE speakers' mean scores were demonstrated on the negative side of the bi-polar scale, they were very close to the neutral point. The second lowest evaluation on this attribute was given to the ThE speaker. Again, the InE speaker got the most negative evaluation.

Attribute "competent"

As for the evaluation on the attribute "competent", the informants tended to give the inner-circle speakers more positive evaluations than the outer- and expanding-circle speakers. The most positive rating was given to the AmE speaker with the mean value of 4.96. The second most positive evaluation on this attribute goes to the BrE speaker with the mean value of 4.85. The peripheral speakers received lower mean values than the AmE and BrE speakers: 4.02 for the ThE speaker; 3.96 for the JpE speaker; 3.94 for the FiE speaker; and 3.56 for the InE speaker. This finding suggests that non-native speakers were perceived to be less competent than the two native speakers. In addition, it should be noted that the mean scores of the ThE, JpE and FiE speakers were quite close to the neutral point of the evaluation scale. On the contrary, the InE speaker was seen as the least competent speaker since she was evaluated most negatively on this attribute.

Attribute "educated"

On the attribute "educated", the first and second most positive evaluations on this attribute were again dominated by the two mainstream inner-circle speakers. In other words, the two representatives from the Inner Circle were seen as more educated than the speakers from the Outer and Expanding Circle. The AmE speaker was evaluated with the mean value exceeding five (5.04) while the BrE speaker received the second most positive rating with the mean value of 4.87. The third most favorably rated speaker was the JpE speaker, receiving the mean value of 4.13. It should be noted that JpE speaker was the only non-native speaker with positive evaluation while the other non-native speakers (the ThE, FiE and InE speakers) were located on the negative end of the bi-polar scale. The informants seemed to hold almost neutral attitudes towards the FiE and ThE speakers since their mean scores on this attribute were close to the neutral point (3.98 for the FiE speaker and 3.92 for the ThE speaker). With the lowest mean value of 3.54, the InE speaker was seen as the least educated as compared to the above-mentioned speakers.

Attribute "impressive"

The informants rated all the speakers positively on the attribute "impressive", except for the InE speaker. The voices of the AmE and BrE speakers were clear leaders on this attribute. In other words, the informants saw the native speakers as more impressive than the other four speakers. In addition, the AmE speaker got the highest mean value (4.79) while the BrE speaker was rated with the second highest mean value (4.71). The next most positive evaluations given by the informants come into view in the ThE, FiE and JpE speakers with the mean values being 4.17, 4.15 and 4.12, respectively. The InE speaker was seen as the most unimpressive speaker relative to others since the mean value was at the bottom (3.69).

Attribute "gentle"

The informants' attitudes towards the six speakers on the attribute "gentle" appeared to be somewhat positive, except for the InE speaker. The finding was more or less the same as what was found and demonstrated in the previous attribute "impressive". That is, all speakers (but the InE speaker) were placed on the positive end of the bi-polar scale. Most intriguingly, the domination of native speakers being the first place in the evaluation on each individual attribute was replaced by the ThE speaker for this time. The informants gave the ThE speaker the most positive evaluation with the mean value of 4.67. The second and third most positive evaluations were given to the AmE and BrE speakers with the mean values of 4.58 and 4.52, respectively. The informants also rated both the JpE and FiE speaker s positively with the mean values of 4.48 and 4.40, respectively. Unlike those speakers who were seen as gentle persons, the InE speaker received the least positive evaluation with the mean value below-but-close-to the neutral point (3.98).

Attribute "confident"

The finding of the informants' evaluation of the six speakers on the attribute "confident" seems to be consistent with the results obtained from that of the evaluation on several previous adjectival attributes. That is, the native speakers were ranked on top of the positive evaluations while the other non-native speakers were judged less favorably. Being more confident than the non-native speakers in the opinions of the informants, the BrE and AmE speakers were rated most positively with the equal mean values of 4.88. Still on the positive end of the bi-polar scale, the FiE, JpE and ThE speakers were rated with the mean values of 4.15, 4.13 and 4.12, respectively. On the other hand, the InE speaker was seen, most of all, as the most unconfident speaker with the lowest mean value of 3.19.

Attribute "friendly"

The informants' evaluation of the six speakers on the last attribute "friendly" was very interesting since there were no speakers being evaluated with the mean value below 4.0. In other words, every speaker was seen as a friendly English speaker. To rank the six speakers' mean scores hierarchically, the two inner-circle speakers were, again, evaluated most positively: They were seen, most of all, as friendly persons with the equal mean values of 4.60. The next most positive ratings were given to the ThE speaker with the mean value of 4.48, followed by the FiE (4.38) and JpE (4.35) speakers. The informants, on the other hand, seemed to hold neutral attitudes towards the InE speaker on this attribute since they gave the speaker the mean score of 4.02, which was slightly above the neutral point.

To summarize, on average, the mean values appeared on the positive end of the bi-polar scale, and they clustered around 4.0. The highest mean value was found in the AmE speaker's "educated" attribute being 5.04, and it was the only attribute having the mean score exceeding five. The lowest mean value stood at 3.19, found in the InE speaker's "confident" attribute. There were only two speakers (the AmE and BrE speakers) who were evaluated positively on all adjectival attributes while the other four speakers (the JpE, ThE, FiE and InE speakers) were evaluated with the mean scores spreading along both positive and negative ends of the bi-polar scale. In terms of hierarchical ranking of the six speakers' performance on all individual attributes, it can be clearly seen that the speakers from the Inner Circle were judged most favorably on all individual attributes (except for the "gentle" attribute in which the leader was taken place by the ThE speaker) with high mean values. In contrast, the speakers from both the Outer and Expanding Circle were clearly inferior to the mainstream inner-circle ones. In particular, the InE speaker was the least favorably evaluated on most adjectival attributes relative to the other speakers.

4.1.2 Informants' differentiation of varieties of English

The preliminary findings presented above reveals the informants' preconception about a particular speaker's speech or what stereotypical attributes were salient in particular varieties. The findings indicate that the six speakers received different evaluations. However, the difference has not yet been tested for its significance. That is to say, the previous analysis and discussion could not tell us whether the six speakers were evaluated significantly differently from each other, or how the informants differentiated the six speakers. Hence, to examine whether statistically significant differences exist in the informants' evaluations of the six speakers, a one-way repeated measure ANOVA was calculated. But before analyzing the main result of one-way repeated measure ANOVA, it is safe to conduct Mauchly's Test in order to investigate the assumption of sphericity or to test the assumption that the relationship between pairs of the six speakers is equal. In the present study, the researcher aims to take each pair of speakers and calculate the differences between each pair of scores; therefore, it is necessary that these differences have equal variances. The result of Mauchly's Test (Table 3) reveals that the sphericity was assumed or not violated (Mauchly's W= .629, p>.05).

Table 3: Mauchly's Test of Sphericity

Within-subjects Effects	Mauchly's W	Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.	Epsilon(a)		
					Greenhouse-Geisser	Huynh-Feldt	Lower-bound
Speaker	.629	22.756	14	.065	.860	.949	.200

Since the significant result of the Mauchly's Test shows the evidence that variances of the differences between speakers are exactly equal (the homogeneity of variance is shown), the scores on informants' evaluations of the six speakers could be safely continued with ANOVA. The main result of ANOVA (Table 4) indicates that there was a highly significant effect of the six speakers, $F (5, 255) = 18.03$, $p <.001$.

Table 4: Tests of Within-subjects Effects

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Speaker	Sphericity Assumed	43.526	5	8.705	18.027	.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	43.526	4.298	10.126	18.027	.000
	Huynh-Feldt	43.526	4.743	9.176	18.027	.000
	Lower-bound	43.526	1.000	43.526	18.027	.000
Error (Speaker)	Sphericity Assumed	123.138	255	.483		
	Greenhouse-Geisser	123.138	219.222	.562		
	Huynh-Feldt	123.138	241.909	.509		
	Lower-bound	123.138	51.000	2.414		

As the test of within-subject effects demonstrates a very statistically significant difference between the six speakers, it is necessary to conduct a Post-hoc Test to further examine individual mean differences or to compare all different combinations of all the speakers as judged by the informants. Using Bonferroni procedure, the Pairwise Comparisons in Table 5 below illustrates the comparisons of each of the six speakers with each of the others to isolate exactly where the significant differences lie. For better understanding, it is suggested that readers also refer to Table 1, which presents the overall mean ratings and standard deviations of the evaluation of the six speakers.

Table 5: Post-hoc Test: Pairwise Comparisons

(I) Speaker	(j) Speaker	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.(a)	95% Confidence Interval for Difference (a)	
					Upper Bound	Lower Bound
BrE	JpE	.548(*)	.131	.002	.144	.952
	ThE	.546(*)	.105	.000	.221	.870
	AmE	-.043	.150	1.000	-.504	.417
	InE	1.050(*)	.139	.000	.623	1.478
	FiE	.560(*)	.156	.011	.080	1.040
JpE	BrE	-.548(*)	.131	.002	-.952	-.144
	ThE	-.002	.115	1.000	-.355	.351
	AmE	-.591(*)	.150	.004	-1.052	-.131
	InE	.502(*)	.106	.000	.177	.828
	FiE	.012	.126	1.000	-.376	.400
ThE	BrE	-.546(*)	.105	.000	-.870	-.221
	JpE	.002	.115	1.000	-.351	.355
	AmE	-.589(*)	.140	.002	-1.020	-.158
	InE	.505(*)	.116	.001	.148	.861
	FiE	.014	.139	1.000	-.414	.442
AmE	BrE	.043	.150	1.000	-.417	.504
	JpE	.591(*)	.150	.004	.131	1.052
	ThE	.589(*)	.140	.002	.158	1.020
	InE	1.094(*)	.151	.000	.628	1.560
	FiE	.603(*)	.161	.007	.107	1.099
InE	BrE	-1.050(*)	.139	.000	-1.478	-.623
	JpE	-.502(*)	.106	.000	-.828	-.177
	ThE	-.505(*)	.116	.001	-.861	-.148
	AmE	-1.094(*)	.151	.000	-1.560	-.628
	FiE	-.490(*)	.144	.019	-.933	-.047
FiE	BrE	-.560(*)	.156	.011	-1.040	-.080
	JpE	-.012	.126	1.000	-.400	.376
	ThE	-.014	.139	1.000	-.442	.414
	AmE	-.603(*)	.161	.007	-1.099	-.107
	InE	.490(*)	.144	.019	.047	.933

Based on estimated marginal means

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

a Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

The result clearly shows that both the British and American speakers were evaluated significantly more positively than the other four speakers: Japanese, Thai, Indian and Filipino. In addition, the American speaker was judged more favorably than the British speaker (see Table 1), but the difference was not significant (as shown in Table 5). Regarding the negative evaluation, the Indian speaker was

perceived significantly less favorably than the rest. It is interesting to note that the difference of mean scores among the Japanese, Thai and Filipino speakers did not reach statistical significance. The results of the Post-hoc Test: Pairwise Comparisons present a contrast to the study conducted by Kim (2007), in which her participants did not differentiate among native and non-native speakers (except for the Indian speaker). This may be explained that since the informants, in the present study, were the tertiary English majors and were in the field of ELT, they might have constantly been exposed to pedagogical principles favorably and profoundly rooted in native-speakerism ideology which considers an English native speaker to be an ideal source of information about the language (Holliday, 2006; Methitham, 2009). Thus, the dichotomy of native and non-native speakers tends to be somewhat stronger in the learners' minds.

To provide an answer for research question one (What are the Thai English learners' attitudes towards varieties of English?), the informants were indirectly assessed for their stereotypical attitudes by using the verbal-guise test (Part II of the questionnaire). As the present study was carried out in the interest of the concept of English as an international language (EIL), discussion will be based on this ideological framework. The results from the investigation into the informants' attitudes towards varieties of English using the verbal-guise test, to a large extent, show a consistency with a good many studies in the literature (e.g., Bayard et al., 2003; McKenzie, 2006; Scales et al., 2006; Zhang & Hu, 2008) in that the mainstream inner-circle voices, AmE and BrE, were judged as having better attributes (e.g., intelligence, confidence, impressiveness, etc.) than the voices uttered by non-native speakers. While the informants did not differently evaluate the three non-native speakers (the FiE, JpE and ThE speakers), they rated the InE speaker with the significantly lowest mean score. This finding suggests that there exists a certain level of linguistic prejudice in the learners' opinions and confirms Lippi-Green (1997) and Lindemann (2005) that there is a hierarchy of accent discrimination in their attitudes towards. Given that the informants tended to make judgment about people's attributes (e.g., personality, status, education, etc.) on the basis of accents (Dalton-Puffer & Seidlhofer, 1994), many scholars (e.g., Derwing & Munro, 1997; Kirkpatrick, 2007c;

Lippi-Green, 1997; Lewis, 2005) explain that the assumption of the degree of accentedness depicting particular speakers' intelligence or competence does not hold true or, in other words, is a linguistic myth. Can one really use "accent" as a means to evaluate or estimate a person's level of education, generosity, competence, gentleness or friendliness? Without the knowledge of the speaker's background, how did the informants in the current study really know that the Indian speaker (the stimulus provider), for example, was less educated than the British counterpart; that the Thai speaker was not as generous as the American speaker; or that the Japanese speaker was less confident than the British speaker? These findings proved the effectiveness of the instrument in eliciting the informants' biased attitudes towards non-native varieties/speakers of English.

The nature of the informants' stereotyped judgments towards varieties of English, whether negative or positive, is a complex issue. This is because the attempt to understand why the informants placed native speakers on positive continuum of stereotypical attributes can be a matter of politics rather than linguistics (Holliday, 2006). In addition, social conventions or social pressures (Norm-driven Hypothesis) may play an influential role in the informants' prejudicial judgments on certain spoken varieties to be prestigiously and aesthetically superior to others (Bezooijen, 2002; Giles et al., 1974; Hiraga, 2005; Jenkins, 2000; Wells, 1982).

4.2 Informants' awareness of varieties of English

Research question two was formulated as: Do the Thai English learners have awareness of varieties of English? In this part, the informants were asked to indicate the speaker's country of origin as well as provide reasons for their answers. The objectives of this research question were to examine the informants' recognition/identification of accent variations, differentiation of native and non-native accents and to investigate patterns of correct identification of the six accents. Findings, obtained from the accent recognition test in Part II of the questionnaire, were divided into two main sections: first, the informants' recognition of accents; and second, the recognition patterns of the informants who correctly identified the speaker's provenance.

4.2.1 Informants' recognition of accents

The number of correct and incorrect identification of each speaker's country of origin was analyzed so as to examine whether the informants were aware of varieties of English. The results are detailed in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Correct and incorrect identification of the speakers' country of origin

Speaker	Correct identification	Incorrect identification
BrE	14 (26.92%)	38 (73.08%)
JpE	9 (17.30%)	43 (82.70%)
ThE	26 (50.00%)	26 (50.00%)
AmE	14 (26.92%)	38 (73.08%)
InE	7 (13.46%)	45 (86.54%)
FiE	7 (13.46%)	45 (86.54%)

From Table 6 above, it can be clearly seen that the informants had difficulty identifying the six accents since none of the correct recognition rates for speakers exceeded 50%. The most correctly identified accent was, of course, the Thai English in which 26 out of 52 informants (50%) were able to accurately identify it. This finding was somewhat surprising since it was expected that the correct recognition rate of ThE should have been greater than this. This is because the Thai accent was understandably the most familiar accent to Thai learners; more specifically, they have studied English with Thai teachers for most of their academic lives. This finding was partly consistent with the related literature on accent recognition (e.g., McKenzie, 2006; Scales et al., 2005). On the one hand, it was parallel to those studies in that the stimulus provider who had a similar mother-tongue as the raters' came first in terms of hierarchical ranking of the correct recognition rate. On the other hand, in the present study, the correct recognition rate of the stimulus provider who spoke the same L1 as the raters was not as high as that of those studies. In the study of McKenzie (2006), whose subjects were Japanese college students, more than 90% of correct identification of Japanese English was demonstrated. Correspondingly, Scales et al. (2006) discovered that almost all of the Chinese respondents were capable of recognizing Chinese English. The result of low

recognition rate for ThE may lead us to think that the stimulus provider's speech may not be typical or distinctive enough for the informants to easily tell apart from other accents.

The next most successfully identified accents were AmE and BrE with the equal percentages of 26.92. In opposition to expectation, these two inner-circle varieties were somewhat poorly identified even though there appears to be the prevalence of American and British English in media and in learning materials (e.g., movies, music or classroom listening audios) in the Thai context. A possible explanation for the comparatively low successful recognition rates of these two varieties is that the informants might not have sufficient contrastive phonological knowledge of American and British English. Consequently, they were not aware of the distinctions between these two accents.

Most of the informants demonstrated considerable difficulty in identifying JpE, FiE and InE. Japanese accent was recognized by 17.30%, while Filipino and Indian accents were the most incorrectly identified varieties: The success rates equally stood at only 13.46%. This result was parallel to a plethora of related literature in that peripheral accents were the most difficult to be recognized by informants. Probably, in consequence of less exposure to these peripheral Englishes, the learners did not did not seem to have awareness of phonological variations of these varieties of English.

Despite the informants' poor awareness of varieties of English, they, in the global view, seemed to be more successful in distinguishing native and non-native accents. Table 7 below indicates the number of informants who were able to correctly distinguish between native and non-native accents.

Table 7: The number of informants correctly distinguishing native and non-native
accents

Speaker (accent)	Correct distinction	
	Native	**Non-native**
BrE	65.38%	34.62%
JpE	34.62%	65.38%
ThE	11.54%	88.46%
AmE	73.08%	26.92%
InE	5.77%	94.23%
FiE	21.15%	78.85%

From the data presented above, it could be clearly seen that the majority of the informants were able to distinguish between native and non-native speakers. Strikingly, even though the InE speaker's country of origin was most difficultly recognized (see Table 6), she was distinguished by the informants as a non-native speaker with the highest percentage (94.23%). This may lead us to think that the Indian speaker's voice was the most typical non-native English accent with distinct phonological patterns. For the second ranking, 88.46% of the informants could distinguish the ThE speaker as a non-native speaker of English. The next most successfully distinguished accent was the FiE speaker (78.85%), followed by the AmE speaker (73.08%). The lowest distinguishing rate was for the BrE and JpE speakers, being equally 65.38%.

To understand the informants' correct and incorrect identifications of the speakers' country of origin more thoroughly, geographical classification of the informants' responses on the six speakers' country of origin will be analyzed together with their recognition patterns in the next part.

4.2.2 Recognition patterns of the informants' reasons provided for correct identification of varieties of English

To examine the informants' recognition patterns of varieties of English or factors contributing to correct identification of each of the six speakers' country of origin, their comments provided for the guesses of the speakers' provenance were

analyzed. It is believed that understanding the nature of their reasons for identifying each variety of English would give us a more profound understanding of their process of recognition (Lindemann, 2005; McKenzie, 2006). For the analysis of data for this section, the results of the informants' classification of each speaker's provenance and their associating recognition patterns were separately analyzed to provide a clearer picture of their process of recognition. The result is presented below (presentation of data is arranged by concentric circles, and a brief summary of the main findings of each circle is also provided).

4.2.2.1 The Inner Circle

4.2.2.1a Informants' classification of the BrE speaker's provenance
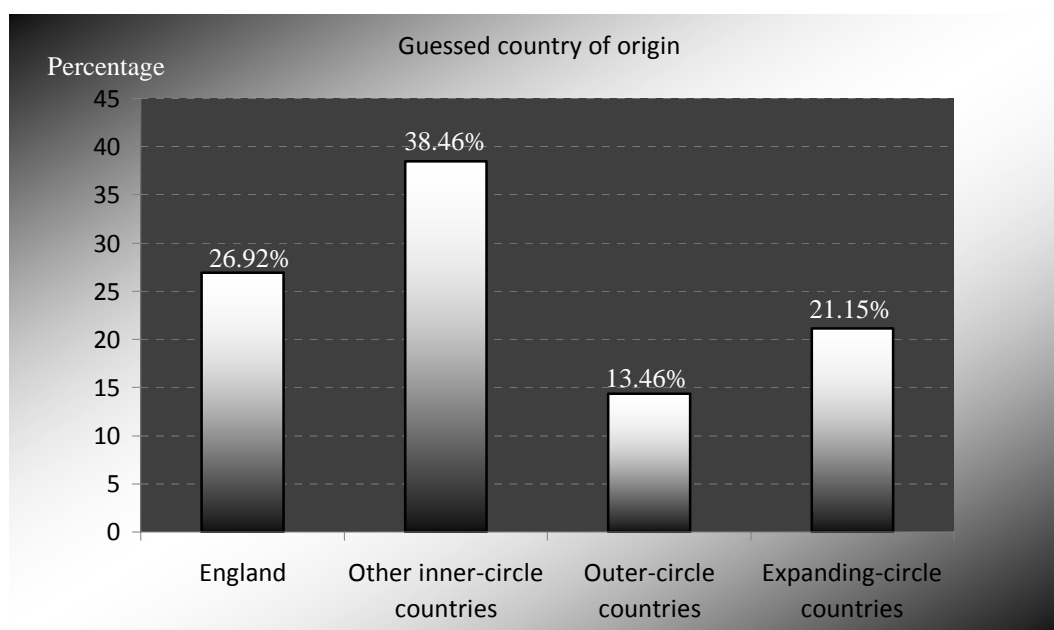
The figure indicates that 26.92% of the informants could correctly identify the speaker's country of origin as England (other relevant geographical determinants such as Britain, United Kingdom and London are acceptable). The relatively high proportion of these informants tended to describe the speaker's voice to be "standard", "correct", "clear" and "fluent" as two of the informantsc;aimed (the informant code is provided in parenthesis):

Good and correct pronunciation! She has the Queen's English accent-like pronunciation. (Informant 37)

She has standard and clear pronunciation, like a British. (Informant 46)

Interestingly, one informant seemed to realize that British English in the speech sample is a non-rhotic accent which does not allow for phoneme /r/ to be pronounced before consonants. As she pointed out:

Normally, English speakers do not pronounce /r/ as in the word "deserted". (Informant 2)

What is more, familiarity or frequent exposure of the accent was also mentioned by some informants who correctly identified the speaker's country of origin. As two of them commented:

Her accent is like what I have often heard from several listening tapes in the classroom. (Informant 41)

I think I make a correct guess because this accent is very familiar to me. (Informant 12)

4.2.2.1b Informants' classification of the AmE speaker's provenance
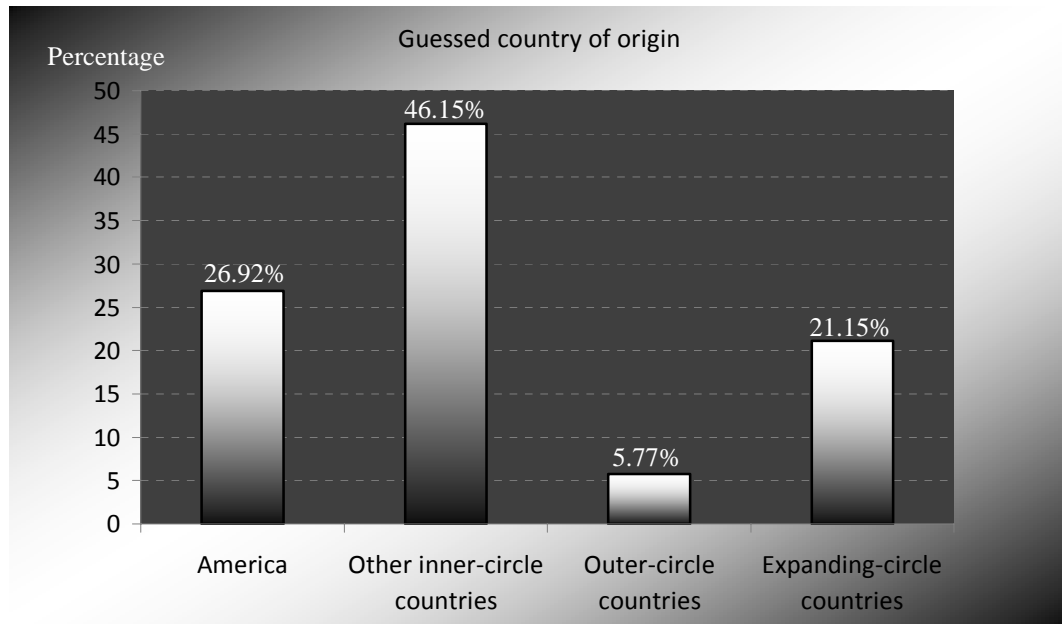
The figure above demonstrates that 26.92% of the informants could recognize the speaker's country of origin as America or USA. Many positive descriptors such as "beautiful", "clear", "natural", "good", etc. were prevalent in the informants' comments provided for this speaker. As two of them articulated:

I guess she could be from America because her English sounds natural and indistinguishable from a native speaker. (Informant 21)

She speaks good and beautiful English. (Informant 10)

Some informants were apparently concerned with the notion of standard English (accent). As anticipated, they considered the AmE speaker's way of speaking and/or pronunciation to be a standard form of English. As two of them remarked:

Her English is better than the previous speaker, and it seems like she is speaking standard American English. (Informant 11)

Apparently using standard language or standard English pronunciation. (Informant 49)

What is more, some informants were aware of some phonological features common in American English speech. For example, one informant pointed out that such the words as "to" and "of" are unstressed or toneless, while the other observed the pronunciation difference of the vowel "a" between British and American English:

There is the use of weak form in such the words as "to" and "of". (Informant 41)

The word 'Sara' is pronounced as [særa] in American English, but as [sara] in British English. (Informant 2)

In brief, the two figures above demonstrate a relatively low successful recognition rate of the provenance of the BrE and AmE speakers. Those who were able to make correct guess or identification tended to associate the speakers' voices with such positive descriptors as "good", "correct", "natural", "fluent", "standard" and "clear". Distinctive phonological features and familiarity with people from these two communities were also the major factors that contributed to successful recognition.

4.2.2.2 The Outer Circle

4.2.2.2a Informants' classification of the InE speaker's provenance
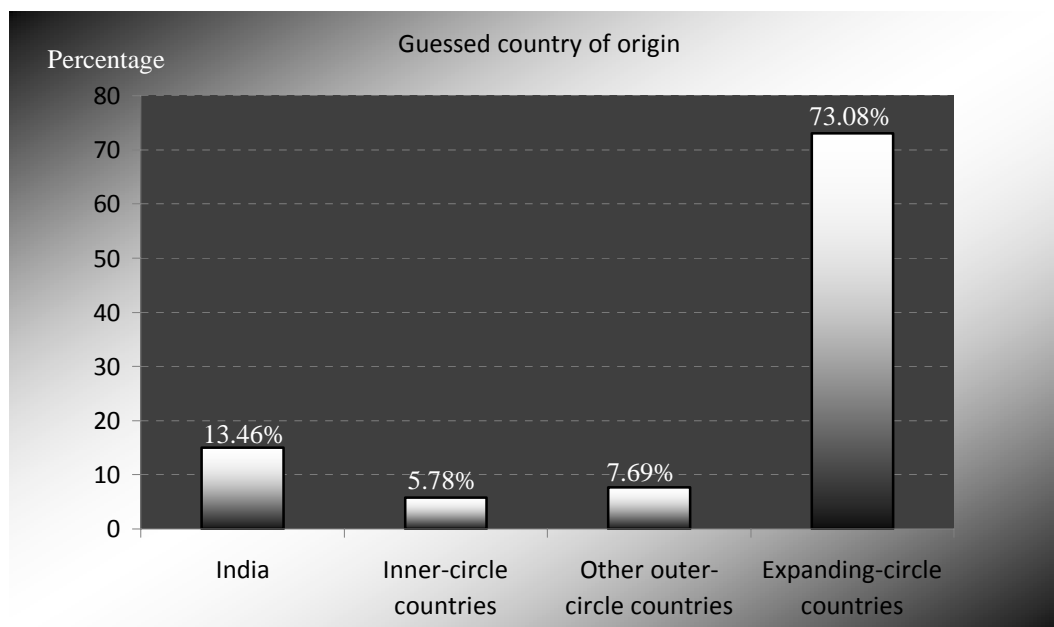
The figure above indicates a relatively low proportion of informants (13.46%) being able to identify the speaker's country of origin as India. Among these correct guessers, two of them who identified the speaker as Malaysian, were considered as making correct identification because their responses signified their true awareness of Indian English. The informants, who were able to provide correct identification, tended to comment upon specific features of the speaker's pronunciation. One informant below, for instance, observed the prominent unaspirated sound of phoneme /t/ in the speaker's speech while the other remarked upon the speaker's incorrect stress. As they articulated:

She seems unconfident, and her aspirated sound of /t/ is very salient. (Informant 38)

She speaks fair English but sometimes stresses some words in wrong positions. (Informant 47)

One informant, whose response was Malaysia, described that the speaker articulated like an Indian Malaysian because the distinctive manner of articulation of trill /r/ from the speaker's voice is observable/noticeable, and that, accordingly, counts as correct identification. As she stated:

What a strange accent! The sound /r/ is pronounced with trill manner of articulation, like typical Indian Malay. (Informant 31)

4.2.2.2b Informants' classification of the FiE speaker's provenance
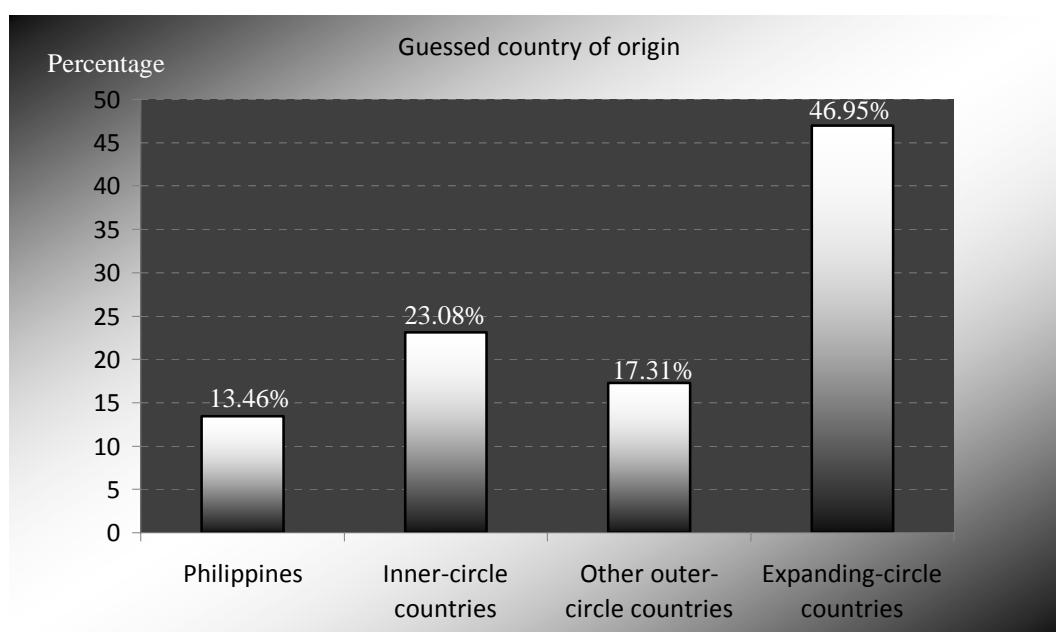
The informants seemed to have difficulty identifying the variety of Filipino English as the figure above indicates that only 13.46% of the informants were able to accurately identify the provenance of the FiE speaker. These informants' responses provided for the identification of this speaker were exclusively based on negative descriptions of the speaker's pronunciation. Within this number of informants, some generally remarked upon the "unnaturalness" or "incorrectness" of the speaker's pronunciation. As two of them claimed:

Her pronunciation is unnatural. (Informant 48)

I think she speaks English with incorrect accent, very much like most Filipino teachers. (Informant 50)

Just as those who were negative towards the FiE accent, so were these informants, but for different aspects. They tended to focus on some distinctive features of the speaker's pronunciation. The followings are the typical quotes representing their cognizance of some well-noted features of Filipino English pronunciation. As two of them commented:

Wrong pronunciation! There is always an absence of the aspiration of /p, t/. (Informant 31)

She could be from the Philippines because she pronounces every word with the same length of sound. (Informant 43)

In brief, the varieties of InE and FiE seemed to be very difficult for the informants to identify since a vast majority of them failed to recognize these two speakers' country of origin. Negative comments upon the speakers' accent and/or pronunciation such as "strange", "wrong" or "unnatural" were provided by those informants. Besides, some distinctive phonological features of these varieties were also observed by the informants.

4.2.2.3 The Expanding Circle

4.2.2.3a Informants' classification of the JpE speaker's provenance
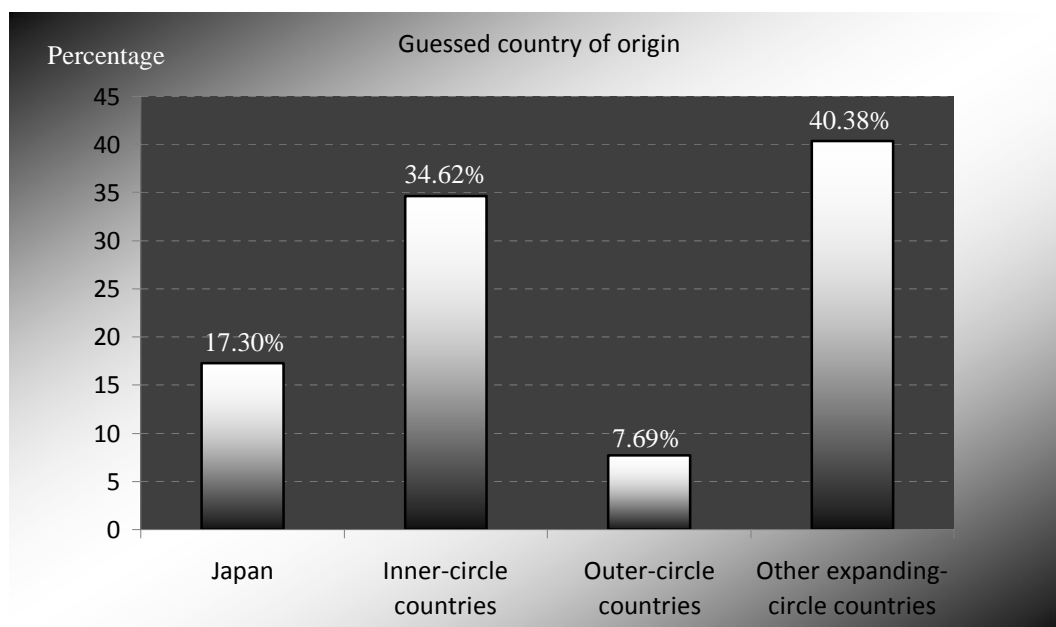
The figure above shows that the successful recognition rate of JpE stands at 17.30%. A relatively high proportion of the informants, who successfully recognized the speaker's country of origin, tended to generally associate their responses with the familiarity of accent. Experience in hearing and conversing with Japanese native speakers seemed to be the major factor that made them familiar with this accent. As two of them commented:

I used to hear Japanese people speaking English before, and their accent is very much similar to this speaker. (Informant 47)

I think her accent is similar to my previous English teacher who was from Japan. (Informant 8)

Aside from the comment on speech familiarity, some informants described the speaker's accent to be "unclear", "unsmooth" and "stiff". As two of them mentioned:

Her accent is not quite clear and smooth. I have difficulty understanding what she is saying. (Informant 37)

Her accent sounds a little stiff. (Informant 20)

4.2.2.3b Informants' classification of the ThE speaker's provenance
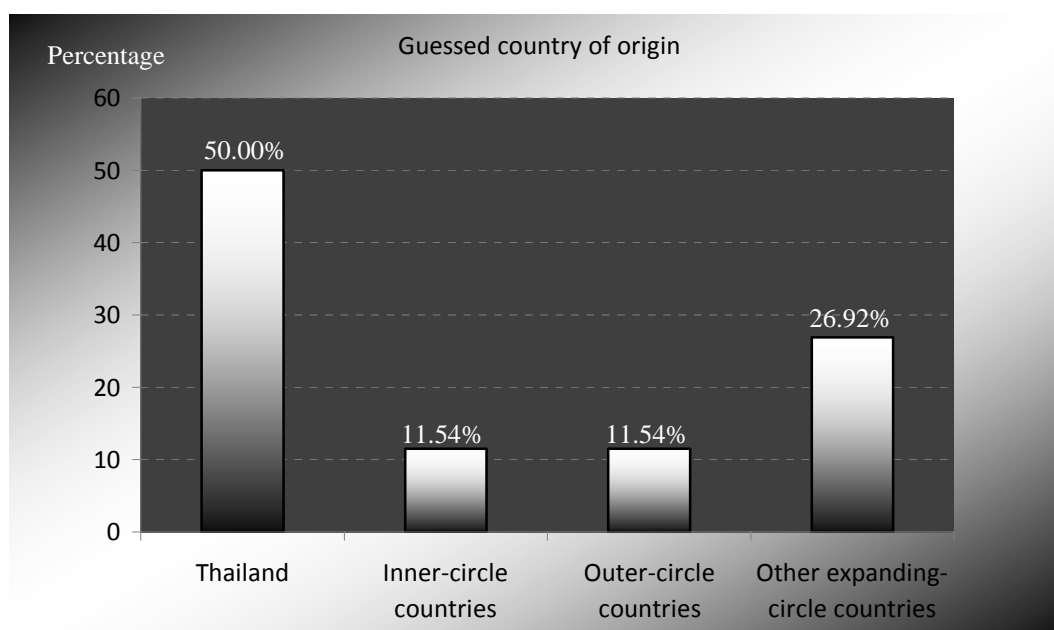
The figure above indicates that 50% or half of the informants were able to accurately recognize the speaker's country of origin as Thailand. A relatively large proportion of the informants, who made a correct guess, commented exclusively upon the speaker's specific features of pronunciation and tended to label these features as typical characteristics of Thai English accent. Within this proportion, many of them also focused on the lack of clarity in the speaker's pronunciation. As two of them articulated:

Having unclear and heavily accented English pronunciation, very bad English. (Informant 20)

Like a typical Thai speaking in English, her pronunciation is not clear. (Informant 21)

Some informants brought some phonological aspects into focus. They seemed to be aware of phonemic variations between Thai and English in both segmental and suprasegmental levels. For example, in segmental level, they remarked that specific English phones which do not exist in the Thai phonological system or differ from the Thai equivalents with regards to distribution of sounds seem to be a problem for Thai speakers. As two of them pointed out:

She cannot pronounce the sounds /z, v, θ/ accurately like a native speaker. (Informant 45)

She has problem in pronouncing the sounds /b/ and /t/ especially when they occur word finally. (Informant 36)

On the other hand, in suprasegmental level, the speaker's stress, pitch and intonation were observed. They seemed to be aware that the Thai speaker always pronounces every word with strong form and realize the speaker's tonal language. As two of them observed:

She speaks slowly and tends to unnecessarily stress every single word. (Informant 14)

Her speech is monotonous which is typical of Thai people speaking in English; that is, pitch movement is often absent in the utterance. (Informant 38)

To summarize, even though the figures above indicate somewhat different success rates of the two expanding-circle speakers (the JpE and ThE speakers), their recognition patterns appear to be the same. That is, their comments providing for correct identification were based exclusively on their negative attitudes towards the speakers' voices. What is more, familiarity with such accents and some phonological features that differed from those of the Inner Circle were also pointed out.

To provide an answer for research question two (Do the Thai English learners have awareness of varieties of English?), the informants were asked to identify each speaker's country of origin and provide relevant justification (the data were obtain from the Accent identification section in part II of the questionnaire). The findings clearly indicate that the informants did not have sufficient awareness of varieties of English. Simply put, they had difficulty identifying varieties of English accent. The most successfully identified accent was ThE, in which half of the informants were able to recognize it. However, this finding is somewhat opposed to the researcher's expectation. It was initially expected that the success rate should have been greater than it actually was because it was logically based on the assumption that the informants, to a considerable extent, were familiar with the Thai variety of English. Thus a more substantial number of informants should have been able to recognize their home accent. The informants' lacking awareness of linguistic diversity was also reflected in their inability to identify the other five varieties: BrE, AmE, JpE, InE and FiE. It was possible that the informants had less exposure to varieties of English. However, when the data were analyzed in terms of native and non-native distinguishability, it seemed that the informants, in the global view, were able to distinguish between native and non-native accents as manifested by high correct identification rates. To seek the informants' recognition patterns of the correct identification of the six speakers' country of origin, their responses were, in-depth, analyzed. The findings suggest that differences in the speakers' pronunciation or certain distinctive phonological features in the speakers' voices seemed to play a key role in the informants' recognition, that was reflected in their correct identification of the six speakers' country of origin. To a lesser extent, the informants' familiarity with

certain varieties of English and beliefs about standardness-nonstandardness and correctness-incorrectness and perceptions of intelligibility-unintelligibility of certain varieties also elucidated the informants' recognition patterns.

Additionally, in reference to research question one, the findings of the recognition patterns analysis also meaningfully provide more insights for the findings discussed in the verbal-guise section. When the informants' recognition patterns of the correctly identified varieties were looked at, undemocratic attitudes to varieties of English emerged. That is to say, the informants seemed to provide positive or favorable reasons for their guessed inner-circle varieties. Contrastively, many stigmas (e.g., "non-standard", "unclear", "stiff", etc.) were repeatedly provided for the guessed NNS voices (see Section 4.2.2.2).

4.3 Informants' preferences for varieties of English

The research question three was formulated as: What are the Thai English learners' preferences for varieties of English as models? The data were obtained from Part III of the questionnaire, in which the informants were asked to identify an English accent they wanted to learn and use the most, and also to provide reasons for their preference. Findings pertaining to the informants' preferences for varieties of English were divided into two parts. The first part deals with the informants' preferences presented in terms of individual varieties while the second part deals with the data presented in terms of concentric circles. In addition, reasons (obtained from the open-ended question) given by the informants for their preferred English varieties were in depth examined to cast light on their priorities as well as logical justification behind their preferences.

4.3.1 Informants' preferences for varieties of English: Individual varieties

To see how many varieties of English were chosen by the informants, frequencies and percentages of the informants' preferred English varieties are hierarchically presented in the Table 8 below.

Table 8: Informants' preferences for varieties of English

Chosen English varieties	Frequency (N=52)
American English	15 (28.85%)
British English	11 (21.15%)
Thai English	5 (9.62%)
Chinese English	4 (7.69%)
Australian English	4 (7.69%)
Canadian English	3 (5.77%)
Russian English	2 (3.85%)
Japanese English	2 (3.85%)
Singaporean English	2 (3.85%)
Malaysian English	2 (3.85%)
Korean English	1 (1.92%)
Any variety (No preference)	1 (1.92%)

The table above unsurprisingly reveals that the majority of informants identified the two mainstream inner-circle accents as the most preferred models to learn and use (28.85% for American English and 21.15% for British English). The third most preferred variety was Thai English (9.62%). Additionally, it should be noted that the discrepancy in percentages between the third preferred accent (Thai English) and the first two accents (American and British English) was considerably high. The next most chosen accents were Chinese and Australian accents with equal percentages of 7.69, followed by Canadian English (5.77%). Russian, Japanese, Singaporean and Malaysian varieties were equally preferred by 3.85% of the informants. Among the varieties in the list that were chosen by the informants, Korean English was the least preferred accent model with 1.92% opting for it. Similarly, the same percentage (1.92%) selected "any variety", which signifies that this informant has no preference for any variety of English to learn and use.

This findings are in line with the studies conducted by Gibb (1997, 1999), Kim (2007) and Scales et al. (2006), in which the mainstream varieties (American and British English) were most preferred as English models for learning and using, while other inner-circle varieties (e.g., Canadian and Australian English) and non-native varieties (e.g., Thai, Chinese, Japanese, Russian English, etc.) were obviously less nominated. More interestingly, if the number of informants who

preferred native-speaker varieties was considered, it could be seen that while the mainstream American and British varieties received the majority of preferences, the Commonwealth varieties, which are also native-speaker varieties, received just about 5-7% of the nominations. Why did Australian and Canadian Englishes receive such low nominations when compared to the other two inner-circle Englishes? It is possible that the dominance of both American and British Englishes as models in ELT is more apparent than that of the other inner-circle ones. In the Thai context, the established perception is that learning about the West equates to learning about America and England. Another reason that may account for this finding is that other inner-circle English accents, to general Thais, are sometimes perceived as strange or sub-standard. Kirkpatrick (2007c) notes that general Australians are often mocked or mimicked by other native English speakers (and sometimes by many non-native speakers) for not being able to make a distinction between the diphthongs /ai/ and /ei/ (e.g. the phrase 'Good day mate' is always pronounced, by Australians, as /gudai mait/). Similar to the Australian accent, which is sometimes subject to linguistic marginalization, the Canadian accent meets the same fate. As Shin (2004) reports: "There was even one reported incident, which is probably not an isolated incident, where a parent complained to the institute because her child's teacher was Canadian for fear that their [*sic*] child may not learn the "right" pronunciation of English" (p. 86).

4.3.2 Informants' preferences for varieties of English: Concentric circles

From the preliminary data shown above, it can be put in a nutshell that the two mainstream varieties (American and British English) overwhelmingly penetrated into the informants' choice of accent models. To shed more light on the understanding of the informants' preferences, there is a need to further investigate as to what extent that native and non-native varieties were prioritized and what reasons or rationales lied in the varieties preferred. To do so, the informants' preferences as well as the reasons provided for their preferences were detailed and interpreted in terms of Kachru's concentric circles so that clearer patterns of native and non-native priorities and their justifications (rationales) for the preferred varieties could be illustrated (Table 9).

Table 9: Reasons for the informants' preferences for varieties of English as categorized by themes

Reasons for preferences	Number of responses to preferred varieties				
	Inner-circle varieties	Outer-circle varieties	Expanding-circle varieties	Any variety, No preference	Total
Standard English	13 (25.00%)	-	-	-	13 (25.00%)
International English	8 (15.38%)	-	-	-	8 (15.38%)
Intelligible English	5 (9.62%)	-	4 (7.69%)	-	9 (14.31%)
Local English, My English	-	1 (1.92%)	4 (7.69%)	-	5 (9.61%)
Trendy English	-	-	4 (7.69%)	-	4 (7.69%)
Vague comments	4 (7.69%)	3 (5.77%)	1 (1.92%)	-	8 (15.38%)
Unanswered	3 (5.77%)	-	1 (1.92%)	1 (1.92%)	5 (9.61%)
Total	33 (63.46%)	4 (7.69%)	14 (26.92%)	1 (1.92%)	52 (100%)

4.3.2.1 Preference for the inner-circle varieties

The largest group of the informants (63.46%) identified inner-circle varieties of English as the most preferred accents that they wanted to learn and use. The typical three reasons shared by many informants are detailed below.

Firstly, the majority of the informants (25%) tended to associate NS Englishes with some positive social and political dimensions, status and linguistic criteria. Implicitly, such descriptors as "Oxford English", "educated English", "high-class English", "prestigious English", "Queen's English" and "smart English", that the informants provided as rationales for their preferred English accents, were coded into the family theme of "standard English". This theme lies in the assumptions that English is tied up with the concept of possessing native-like competence and the ideology of social, political and linguistic hegemonization. As two of them remarked (the preferred English variety and informant code are provided in parenthesis):

The most standard and best accent is unquestionably the Queen's English. (British English, informant 37)

I want to be able to speak like the Prime Minister Abhisit because he speaks smart English (Oxford English). (British English, informant 2)

This could be explained by the fact that social prestige may play a key role in making these informants want to converge towards the target-like standard inner-circle varieties (Jenkins, 2000). To elaborate, these informants tended to consider the inner-circle Englishes as the most pleasant or prestigious varieties basically owing to the imposition of cultural norms (Imposed Norm Hypothesis) (Giles et al., 1974). The reason that certain varieties enjoy high social status is clearly the result of the use of those varieties by high status social groups or elite people. In the present study, the informants referred to, for example, the Prime Minister, a former Oxford graduate, the UK Queen and American people. Due to their high social rank, their spoken varieties tended to be perceived as "prestigious" and therefore attitudinally coded as "standard."

Secondly, eight of the informants (15.38%), who opted for inner-circle varieties, tended to associate their preferred accents with "international English". And this was used as the theme to describe these informants' rationales. In detail, they believed that when real-life or international communication is involved, the most suitable accent models for this milieu should be that of the native-speaker varieties. As two of them articulated:

I prefer British English because it is used internationally and very suitable for real-life use. (British English, informant 52)

When we speak English with native speakers, we must use international/real English accent that native speakers use. (American English, informant 21)

Drawing from these informants' responses, it is interesting to note that the term "international English", in the eye of informants, seems to be synonymous with the Inner Circle only (especially with the two mainstream varieties: American and British English). Put most simply, being "native" equates being "international".

Furthermore, they also credited using native-like accent to be something authentic in real-life communication. In this sense, the findings seem to conform to Matsuda (2000) in that Japanese learners perceived English as an international language but they did not believe that it belonged internationally.

Thirdly, five informants (9.62%) thought that their preferred NS varieties were intelligible, and this made them want to assimilate such varieties. Hence, this theme was coded as "intelligible English" and used to describe these informants' rationales, which implied their goals in learning and using inner-circle intelligible English models. In detail, the informants tended to refer to their experiences and/or familiarity using English with native speakers, whom they thought spoke intelligible English. As two of them remarked:

According to my experience with native speakers, this accent is the most intelligible accent. (Australian English, informant 27)

I like Ajarn James' accent because he speaks clear English. (American English, informant 6)

The informants' reasons seem to resonate with the universal assumption in English language learning across the globe that the most intelligible production of English or accent is the one uttered by a native speaker. Put most simply, being "native" warrants being "intelligible". The reasons for this justification as reflected in the responses are clearly the informants' experience with and/or familiarity with native speakers.

4.3.2.2 Preference for the expanding-circle varieties

The informants by 26.92% (second largest group) preferred the expanding-circle varieties to learn and use. The typical three reasons as shared by many informants are detailed below.

Firstly, ease of understanding (the concept of "intelligible English") was provided as reason by the informants (7.69%) who preferred certain expanding-circle varieties (e.g., Thai, Japanese and Chinese English) to learn and use. These informants mentioned that they did not have difficulty understanding these varieties, and therefore, opted for such varieties. As two of them put it:

From my experience, I think Japanese accent is easier to understand than a native speaker's accent. (Japanese English, informant 46)

Thai accent is OK, and it is very easy to understand. (Thai English, informant 10)

This finding seems to support a plethora of intelligibility-based research studies which demonstrate that NNS varieties are found to be more internationally intelligible than is normally assumed, being easier to understand than certain inner-circle varieties (e.g., Hung, 2002; Kirkpattrick, Deterding & Wong, 2008; Smith, 1992). Speakers whose mother-tongue languages are syllable-timed (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Thai, French, Malaysian, etc.) are likely to find many syllable-timed non-native English accents more intelligible than stress-timed rhythm of inner-circle accents (e.g., American and British English) (see Section 2.7). Thus, the so-called syllable-timed pronunciation features of NNS varieties that increase intelligibility may be the determining factor of the informants' preferences for expanding-circle Englishes.

Secondly, the informants (7.69%) who identified Thai English as their preferred accent tended to broadly stand out in the discourse on identity and ownership. That is to say, they seemed to label their English "my English". This theme discusses the rationales advocated by the informants who did not find their Thai ways of pronunciation problematic but tended to perceive their own ways of speaking to be part of identity. As three of them stated:

I am Thai and I want to speak English with Thai accent; there is nothing wrong with it. (Thai English, informant 4)

I want to learn and use Thai English accent because I do not want to speak like a foreigner, and it is not my English. (Thai English, informant 43)

Thai accent is slow but easy to listen to. We can speak with Thai accent when we want to show native speakers that we are from Thailand. (Thai English, informant 15)

This finding clearly shows that these informants claimed the right of their own use of Thai English by constructing L1 identity through English, using English as a means to express their Thainess. To elaborate, these informants preferred not to orient themselves toward native-speaker norms or the conventional thought of the attainment of native-speaker likeness but tended to perceive their own ways of speaking to be part of identity. The informants' justifications towards their accented English seem to echo Strevens' (1980) argument of the role of local accent in lingua franca communication as he asserts that local accent can be rightfully used as a desirable means of voicing their social and local identity. Moreover, these informants' preferences for Thai English may be interpreted as their desire for emphasizing social differences between their ingroup and outgroup (Giles & Coupland, 1991, 2010; Giles & Ogay, 2007; Jenkins, 2000). This is clearly supported by the third example shown above in which *informant 15* expressed her desire for indexing or strengthening her Thainess identity when contacting with native speakers.

Thirdly, the informants (7.69%) who preferred certain expanding-circle varieties (e.g., Korean, Japanese, Russian and Chinese English) as accent models seemed to be inspired by global trends on pop culture and economy. The informants' positions towards the aforementioned Englishes should relatively be conceptualized as "trendy English." As three of them claimed:

Korean trend is now rampant, I often watch my Idols on Youtube and when they speak English I think it is very lovely. (Korean English, informant 7)

I actually want to learn both Russian and Chinese accents because they are going to be the next world's economic powers and we will need to communicate with people from these countries a lot in the future. (Russian English, informant 47)

China is growing very fast and its populations are everywhere. (Chinese English, informant 16)

The current dominance of East Asian pop culture (e.g., Korean and Japanese music, drama series and movies) in Thai media and the evidence of considerably high economic strength of new economic giants (e.g., the Russian Federation and China) may serve as an explanation of the informants holding preferable attitudes towards the aforementioned English accents. Kirkpattrick (2007) regards this phenomenon as the shift in linguistic preference and prestige as determined by "social and cultural change" (p.15). To elaborate, these shifting trends are reflected in the present study as follows; first, English learners appeared to be attitudinally gravitated to a certain English variety (e.g., Korean or Japanese English) where its pop culture is gaining substantial momentum in media. Learners may develop likeability attitudes towards people in the target culture and may want to integrate themselves into the community where a variety is spoken. Second, the learners tended to prefer a certain variety (e.g., Russian or Chinese English) where its political or economic motion is gaining recognition in the world arena. This view, to a certain extent, shares an established mutual relation to Graddol's (1997) assumption that a language (but accent in the present study) that is spoken in countries with great financial resources is likely to be perceived more attractively than one with no access to remunerative markets.

4.3.2.3 Preference for the outer-circle varieties

The smallest group of informants (7.69%) identified outer-circle varieties of English as the most preferred accents that they wanted to learn and use. In fact, there were only two varieties being selected: Singaporean and Malaysian English. Due to the heterogeneity and ambiguity of the obtained data, it was not possible to code these responses into themes. However, there was one case worth mentioning.

One of the informants who preferred Malaysian English accent expressed her need to use such an accent to mainly communicate with Malaysian people (tourists) in the local context (in Hat Yai, Thailand). Thus, Malaysian English in this sense functions as "local English". As she put it:

> *I want to learn Malaysian English because there are many Malaysian tourists*
> *in Hat Yai. (Malaysian English, informant 19)*

This reason reflects the learner's sociolinguistic needs outside of classroom (Matsuda, 2003a) which takes place in a local context where speakers use English as a lingua franca to communicate with target speakers who speak that variety (Malaysian English).

To provide an answer for research question three (What are the informants' preferences for varieties of English as models?), the informants were asked to indicate the variety of English accent they wanted to learn and use and also to provide reasons for their preference. The results, overall, appear to be consistent with related studies in that the majority of informants preferred inner-circle varieties as their learning and functional models. The two mainstream varieties in the present study, American and British Englishes, were ranked as the first two models that the informants wanted to learn and use the most. In contrast, the other non-native varieties (e.g., Thai, Chinese, Russian, Japanese English) and the commonwealth inner-circle varieties (e.g., Australian, Canadian, New Zealander English) were

considerably less nominated. When the informants' preferences were analyzed in terms of the three concentric circles, the inner-circle varieties were, of course, most prioritized, followed by the expanding-circle varieties, and the least preferred were the outer-circle varieties.

The reasons for the selection of the inner-circle varieties as models, as articulated by the informants, were mainly threefold: First, the preferred NS varieties were believed to represent a linguistic standard and social prestige; second, the inner-circle varieties were perceived as being international and authentic in real-life contexts; and last, the accents were thought as being the most intelligible English varieties. Additionally, it should be noted that the informants' positive comments about NS Englishes seem to correlate with the findings from the verbal-guise test and accent recognition in which NS Englishes were repeatedly perceived in association with positive descriptors (see Section 4.1 and 4.2.2). The informants' reasons for their chosen expanding-circle varieties were divided into three themes: first, the desire for preserving their L1 identity (those who preferred learning and using Thai English); second, the desire for following the global trends; and third, the desire for learning and using intelligible varieties. In addition, one informant who opted for the outer-circle variety (Malaysian English) expressed her need to use English in the local context where speakers of such varieties are present. Most interestingly, when the numbers of informants who preferred the outer- and expanding-circle countries were combined, it became clear that one-third of the informants did not want to learn and use NS Englishes. This finding is thought to carry weigh in shaping ELT in the Thai context in the future and seems to challenge the EFL or NS oriented pedagogy that had been deeply rooted in Thailand for many decades. Moreover, this finding also strikingly challenges Randolph Quirk's (1990) standpoint to uphold single monochrome standard form of English language pedagogy or what Kachru (1992: 66) calls "monomodel approach", which presupposes that the way English is used in every context of situation is universally identical.

Additionally, when the finding of this section was discussed in relation to the finding of the accent recognition section (research question two), one interesting point emerged. The finding manifests an incongruity between the learners' accent preferences and their ability to identify accents. Although the mainstream

American and British English varieties overwhelmingly dominated the learners' preferences, receiving more than twice as many nominations as any other varieties, they were poorly identified. This mismatch leads to the question of why many learners wanted to emulate such mainstream models (American and British English) even though they were not even able to recognize who was American and who was British. In this case, the learners have formed the idea that these mainstream varieties are "the best embodiment of the target and norm" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 194) for them. This idea may be reinforced by the Western modernization ideals that are embedded in language. When such the ideological construct is deeply instilled in language learners in periphery, the linguistic models, prescribed by those in the Inner Circle, are apparently seen as the "uncontested Kings" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 53). In short, the promotion of English in Thailand is gravitated towards linguistic hegemony: The dominance of American and British English is well-noted as the icon of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992).

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter consists of three parts. Firstly, results of the investigation into English learners' attitudes towards, awareness of and preferences for varieties of English will be summarized. Secondly, theoretical and practical implications concerning English language learning and teaching will be provided. Thirdly, recommendations for future research will be elucidated in the last part.

5.1 Summary of the findings

Adopting the ideology of English as an international language as a theoretical framework, this paper set out to explore Thai university English learners' attitudes towards varieties of English accent: AmE, BrE, InE, FiE, JpE and ThE. The aims of this research project were threefold: to find out the learners' stereotypical attitudes towards varieties of English accent, awareness of the abovementioned English accents and preferences for varieties of English as accent models.

The findings of this study can be summarized as follows.

1. With the use of bi-polar semantic differential scale (verbal-guise test), the evaluation of the informants' attitudes towards the six speakers based on eight stereotypical attributes reveals that the two mainstream inner-circle speakers, the AmE and BrE speakers, were judged more favorably than non-native speakers, the FiE, InE, JpE and ThE speakers, in most adjectival attributes. In contrast, the InE speaker was always perceived most negatively in all attributes. To seek whether there was significant difference between the evaluations of the six speakers, mean scores of each of the six speakers were compared with each of the others. The prominent dichotomy of native and non-native speakers emerged from such comparisons. Both

speakers of the Inner Circle, the AmE and BrE speakers, were evaluated significantly more favorably than the other non-native speakers. The speaker of InE was, on the other hand, received significantly less positive judgment than the rest. This finding suggests that the informants were, to a certain extent, linguistically prejudiced since they tended to make judgment about people's attributes based on the ways they speak. Given that these judgments were more likely to be a political matter than a linguistic matter, social conventions or social pressures as explained by the Norm-driven Hypothesis may play a key role in the informants' judgments on certain spoken varieties to be more prestigious and better than others.

2. Concerning the informants' awareness of varieties of English, the informants were asked to identify each speaker's provenance as well as provide reasons for their answer (guessed country of origin). The result shows that the informants lacked awareness of varieties of English. The most successfully identified accent was ThE, showing its recognition rate at 50%. The next correctly identified accents were hierarchically ordered as follows: AmE (26.92%), BrE (26.92%) > JpE (17.30%) > FiE (13.46%), InE (13.46%). Most interestingly, however, when the informants' answers were analyzed in terms of NS/NNS distinction, it was found that most of them (above 65%) were able to distinguish whether the speaker was either NS or NNS. To discover the informants' recognition patterns of the correct identification of the six speakers' provenance, their reasons were analyzed. The finding suggests that differences in the speakers' phonological features, familiarity, beliefs and perceptions about the standardness-nonstandardness, correctness-incorrectness and intelligibility-unintelligibility of certain varieties seemed to be major factors in the informants' recognition of varieties of English.

3. The findings of the investigation into the informants' preferences for varieties of English with the use of multiple choice questionnaire reveals that the majority of informants (63.46%) identified NS English accents as their preferred learning and functional models. These informants believed that an inner-circle variety was representative of "standard", "international" or "intelligible" form of English. A smaller number of informants (26.92%) preferred to learn and use certain expanding-

circle accents, mainly giving the reasons that an expanding-circle variety was "intelligible", "trendy" or "representative" of their own identity (Thai English). The least nominated were the outer-circle varieties, given that 7.69% chose these varieties as their accent models. One of them who preferred Malaysian English expressed her desire to use the language to serve her needs in the local context. Most interestingly, when the numbers of informants who preferred the Expanding and Outer circles were combined, it became clear that one-third of the informants did not want to learn and use native-speaker varieties. This finding challenges the concept of adopting a single monochrome standard form to be the sole linguistic model in English language learning and teaching.

5.2 Pedagogical suggestions and implications

Stemming from the findings of the current study, three main pedagogical suggestions and implications resting on "the fundamental principles of world Englishes paradigm" (Modiano, 2009, p. 209) that are considered useful and necessary for all parties involved in ELT in the Thai context include attitudinal neutrality and awareness-raising activity, exposure to varieties of English and sociolinguistic profiles of English, and pronunciation model in English language classroom.

5.2.1 Attitudinal neutrality and awareness-raising activity

Without critical awareness of varieties of English or world Englishes, English learners may hold monolithic view of the world and may "devalue their own status" (Matsuda, 2003a, p. 722) as well as other non-native ones in international communication. This layer of thought is eminently shared in the current study: The learners, as measured by the verbal-guise test, seemed to downplay NNS varieties of English while exalt NS Englishes. Also reflected is the learners' reasons provided for their guessed nationality of the six speakers as detailed in the accent recognition part. Learners who identified nationality of the stimulus provider to be non-native tended to give negative comments or prejudicial judgment upon the speaker's pronunciation

and/or accent and tended to perceive NNS accents as "wrong", "poor", "non-standard", "bad" or "stiff" (see section 4.2). These stigmas that the informants associated NNS accents with clearly reflect the informants' lack of tolerance toward linguistic divergence. To prevent English learners from developing such prejudicial reactions to non-native speakers or foreign accented speech that they are likely to be confronted with in the future, the learners should be exposed to a awareness-raising activity so that they can reflect on whether they hold prejudicial judgments about accented English. Additionally, this activity, as developed by Munro, Derwing and Sato (2006), may help the learners "understand the process through which stereotyped attitudes are instilled and reinforced" (p. 73). This activity was proved useful and successful with ESL subjects in Canada in raising the students' awareness of covert attitudes to Alabaman accent. The implementation of this activity, according to Munro and his associates (2006), is roughly based on the following three steps:

1. collection and preparation of the stimuli from various speech communities;
2. in-class audio presentation of the stimuli to learners who evaluate stimulus providers on pre-determined dimensions; and
3. tallying the results of the evaluations, followed by in-class discussion of the task outcomes.

The current study has already covered the first two steps. The last step addressed above is known as a follow-up discussion based on the result which indicates the degree of stereotyped attitudes held by learners. Topics such as accent discrimination, the nature of native and non-native English accents, the fact of accent variations and the notion of standard accents should be brought up in the discussion. Learners should, in the end, come to realize that foreign accent cannot be used as a benchmark to judge people's abilities. That is, they should be made aware that the way they speak is really part of their identity (Holliday, Hyde & Kullman, 2004; Kenworthy, 1987; Norton, 1997; Widdowson, 1994). This awareness-raising activity may not only help train language learners to be democratically-minded in viewing

non-native varieties of English as equal in status to native varieties, but also broaden their perspectives on linguistic pluralism that is fueled by the globalization of English.

5.2.2 Exposure to varieties of English and sociolinguistic profiles of English

Since the language changes over time, it makes no sense and seems unrealistic if pedagogical implementation is still geared towards the standard of the ambiguous 'West' (Shin, 2004) as the sole pedagogical priority in the expanding-circle contexts (e.g., Thailand) where learners use English mainly for lingua franca communication. That is, the approach to English language teaching and learning in Thailand must be critically and attitudinally revisited. Some evidence shows that English language education in the Thai context still rests upon the obsolete prototypical pedagogy of English as a foreign language (EFL) which primarily trains learners to act in accordance with native speakers' directions (Buripakdi, 2008; Forman, 2005; Methitham, 2009; Nattheeraphong, 2004; Patil, 2003). In greater detail, there is a general belief, among many Thais, that the insistence on an inner-circle pedagogical model would best equip learners with the skills required to fare with reasonable success in the world (Modiano, 2000). This belief, apparently, does not take into account the facts of linguistic diversification. In order to make educational practices more realistic, up-to-date and supportive of international lingua franca communication, there is an urgent need to engage learners in a pedagogy that goes beyond the idea of nativeness (Cook, 1998; Modiano, 2000): the focus on increasing learners' awareness of English as an international language and cognizance of varieties of English. The researcher agrees with Todd's (2006) suggestion that the appropriate pedagogy in English language teaching and learning in the Thai context should follow the ideology of English as an international language (EIL). This means that EIL should be used as an idealized approach to inform teaching and learning on both theoretical and practical grounds.

Theoretically, language learners should be made aware of the sociolinguistic profiles of English, e.g., the spread of English in the world and its consequences; the ownership of English; the notion of standard English; a distinction

"between the use of English in a monolingual society, as opposed to a multilingual society" (Kachru, 1992, p. 360); and so on. On practical grounds, learners should be made familiar with varieties of English. Exposure to varieties of English is believed to help facilitate learners' communication abilities when being confronted with diverse types of English uses and users (Matsuura, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2004). As Modiano (2009, p. 59) acknowledges: "An understanding of the diversity of English, for production as well as for comprehension, makes one a better communicator." The exposition activity, as adapted from Kachru's (1992) proposal in teaching world Englishes in the classroom, may involve familiarizing learners with major native and non-native uses and users, demonstrating examples of spoken genre in multifarious interactional contexts, and discussing shared and non-shared linguistic features such as similarities and differences in phonological systems. Nurturing learners through those activities under the framework of world Englishes may help create a sense of tolerance of linguistic diversity as well as enrich learners' linguistic repertoires when they cross-culturally interact with interlocutors from a great number of mother tongue backgrounds. Matsuda (2003a) points out that limited exposure to varieties of English may cause learners to form the ideas of confusion and to resist divergences when they encounter different types of English uses and users in authentic contexts.

The inclusion of the concept of world Englishes into language curriculum has gained recognition worldwide especially in many expanding-circle countries. For example, in Japan, the Department of World Englishes at Chukyo University has expressed the clear aim to enhance students' recognition of as well as appreciation for world Englishes by exposing students to major varieties of English and sending students abroad to experience different types of English uses and users (Hin, 2007; Yoshigawa, 2005). What can be done in the Thai context of education? The researcher maintains that there should be an opening up for covering other varieties of English aside from the popular Anglo-American English in English classes so that learners will become truly internationally-minded speakers who are conscious of the role of English in the world and the world in English (Pennycook, 2000). However, in Thailand, where the concept of EIL and linguistic diversity is still in its infancy, there appears to be multiple concerns about how to teach world Englishes. The major concern of the implementation of world Englishes into language

pedagogy seems to be the difficulty in searching for and developing materials for the teaching of world Englishes (e.g., world Englishes pronunciation and conversation audios). Due to the advancement of information technology, many internet sources offer millions of speech samples of speakers around the globe who have different tongues of English. Teachers can take the advantage of this technological availability by incorporating authentic audios of world Englishes available on hundreds of online sources (e.g., news, radio, films) into classroom materials so that students have an opportunity to have their repertoire internationally expanded, to be exposed to a wider varieties of English. Baik and Shim (2002) proposes an intriguing 15-week plan for teaching world Englishes via the Internet. The objective of their internet-based course is to enhance students' awareness of the existing English varieties. Throughout 15 weeks, students will get exposed to more than 18 varieties of English from various internet sources (e.g., news, radio and movie clips) and were assessed their world Englishes and/or EIL knowledge through various types of activities and exercises.

This positive move has shown how pluralism has become part of English in the globalized world, and therefore, we all need to be aware of it or conscious enough about the larger contexts of English. English is no longer a colonial tool for both Americans and British to serve their own interests (Phillipson, 1998; Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1997) or not anymore a franchise like Pizza Hut or Kentucky Fried Chicken licensed by its investors (Widdowson, 1997).

5.2.3 Pronunciation model in English language classroom

Derwing and Munro (2005) and Sifakis and Sougari (2005) call for the need to understand the relationship between second language accent and pronunciation teaching. Therefore, in this study, it is worth proposing pedagogical implications associated with pronunciation instruction in English language classroom. It is unquestionable to say that choices of models should be informed by learners' needs, hence, the learners should be given right to learn native speaker pronunciation models based on the finding that the majority (of them) wanted to conform to NS Englishes (see section 4.3). But these learners must be made aware of the fact that

what they actually hear in real-life interaction is very far from their perceived standard accents (known as Received Pronunciation and General American) which are extensively referenced in commercial pronunciation guides and materials. Jenkins (2000) asserts that less than 3% of British populations speak RP and there are only around 30% of Americans who speak GA. What is more, they should also be informed that they do not need to internalize NS models to an extreme length, i.e., attempts to reduce L1 accent in order to be internationally intelligible. In other words, learners should be told that accents are not a major cause of international communication failure. Jenkins (2000) argues that native speakers are not a necessarily universally intelligible model of English because they always use phonological features, that cause communication difficulties (especially when they interact with NNSs), such as weak forms, elisions or assimilations.

Given the above facts, the researcher calls for the need to replace the traditional (EFL) instruction of English pronunciation, (in which the paramount concern is to attain native-like competence in pronunciation or even to reduce foreign phonological traces in L2 accent), with a more realistic and attainable goal, known as EIL approach to English pronunciation. It should be noted that while aspirations of striving for perfect NS pronunciation sound attractive to so many learners and teachers, "the path to these high levels of performance is a tortuous one.." (Morley, 1991, p. 498).

The EIL pronunciation approach, as mentioned earlier, takes into account aspects of mutual intelligibility or comfortable intelligibility rather than the so-called accent reduction or native-speaker conformity (see e.g., Abercrombie, 1949; Jenkins, 2000; 2002a; 2005; Derwing & Munro, 2005; Levis, 2005; Morley, 1991; Sifakis, 2008; Sifakis & Sougari, 2005). Jenkins' (2000) book entitled *Phonology of English as an International Language*, which is based on her empirical research findings is a good source for EIL learners and teachers whose goal is to utter L2 productions intelligible to interlocutors from different L1 backgrounds. Jenkins' work on Lingua Franca Core for pronunciation instruction encompasses features necessary for mutual intelligibility in a wide range of international interactions. The main pronunciation features empirically found to be core for lingua franca communication are as follows.

- all consonant sounds except for voiceless and voiced 'th', respectively /θ/ and /ð/, and dark 'l' /ɫ/ -- the 'l' that precedes a pause or consonant as in the words 'pill' and 'held' rather than a vowel as in 'lip'.

- vowel length contrasts such as the difference in length between the /ɪ/ 'fit' and the /ɪː/ in 'feet'.

- consonant clusters, especially in word-initial and word-medial positions, e.g., the /str/ at the beginning of the word 'string' or the /fr/ in the middle of the word 'different'.

- nuclear (or tonic) stress, especially used contrastively as in the difference in meaning encoded in the following: 'Her son is at uniVERsity' vs 'Her SON is at university' (upper case indicating nuclear syllabus), where the former is a neutral statement of fact the latter implies a contrast with an unmentioned reference known to both speaker and listener. (Jenkins, 2001, p. 17)

The above phonological and phonetic features are considered crucial as safeguards for mutual international intelligibility. Moving away from the core features needed for EIL users, Jenkins, on the other hand, suggests that NNS sound inventions in L2 pronunciation or some NS pronunciation features that do not impede intelligibility fall outside the core. The non-core areas are as follows:

- the consonant sounds /θ/, /ð/ and the allophone [ɫ].

- vowel quality, (e.g., the different between /bʌs/ and /bʊs/ as long as quality is used consistently).

- weak forms, that is the use of schwa instead the full vowel sound in words such as 'to', 'from', 'of', 'was', 'do' (in EIL interactions, the full vowel sounds tend to increase rather than decrease mutual intelligibility).

- other features of connected speech, especially assimilation (e.g., the assimilation of the sound /d/ at the end of one word to the

sound at the beginning of the next, so that /red peɪnt/ 'red paint' becomes /reb peɪnt/).

- the direction of pitch movements whether to signal attitude or grammatical meaning.
- the placement of word stress which, in any case, varies considerably across different L1 varieties of English, so that there is a need for receptive flexibility.
- stress-timed rhythm. (Jenkins, 2002a, p. 98)

Accordingly, when such features are proved to be irrelevant to international intelligibility, they can be regarded as areas in which L1 interference indicates not "error" or "interlanguage" but (NNS) accent variation (Jenkins, 2000, 2002a). Thus, there is no need for non-native speakers to eradicate them. The NS target and EIL target in teaching English pronunciation are contrasted in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6: NS-based Vs EIL-based pronunciation target

	NS target	EIL target
1. The consonantal inventory	• all sounds	• all sounds except /θ/, /ð/ and [ł]
	• RP non-rhotic /r/ GA rhotic /r/	• rhotic /r/ only
	• RP intervocalic [t] GA intervocalic [ɾ]	• intervocalic [t] only
2. Phonetic requirements	• rarely specified	• aspiration after /p/ /t/ /k/
		• appropriate vowel length before fortis/ lenis consonants
3. Consonant clusters	• all word positions	• word initially, word medially
4. Vowel quantity	• long-short contrast	• long-short contrast
5. Vowel quality	• close to RP or GA	• L2 (consistent) regional qualities
6. Weak forms	• essential	• unhelpful to intelligibility
7. Features of connected speech	• all	• inconsequential or unhelpful
8. Stress-timed rhythm	• important	• does not exist
9. Word stress	• critical	• unteachable/can reduce flexibility
10. Pitch movement	• essential for indicating attitudes and grammar	• unteachable/incorrectly linked to NS attitudes/grammar
11. Nuclear (tonic) stress	• important	• critical

From Jenkins (2002a, p. 99)

Jenkins' pedagogic proposal of an EIL pronunciation syllabus that is based on descriptions of international intelligibility among non-native users of different first language backgrounds clearly shows how pronunciation can be approached in a realistic and meaningful way. To put this EIL-based pronunciation target into practice, pedagogical guidelines, useful for the teaching of English

pronunciation for EIL learners, as adapted from Jenkins (2008, p. 4-7) are summarized below.

      1. Teach first for intelligibility: Instead of extensively exposing students to a native-like phonological structure intelligible for only a small number of English users (in an inner-circle context), pronunciation teachers have to find out which phonological features would assist mutual intelligibility in international communication (e.g., clear articulation of consonant and vowel sounds are considered to be of paramount importance for international intelligibility). Teachers should also inform students that the end goal of pronunciation learning is not to reach near-native speaker proficiency, which is less relevant to various EIL interactional contexts. Rather, the EIL pronunciation goal is to maintain mutual international intelligibility and effective communication with speakers of different mother tongue backgrounds (Sifakis, 2008).

      2. Leave un-teachable and "non-core" items for acquisition through exposure: A number of items that do not cause mutual unintelligibility among EIL speakers which are known as "non-core" items (e.g., weak forms, pitch movement, stressed-timed rhythm, etc.) are unhelpful for L2 learners. Instead of teachers forcing their students to master native-like pronunciation in such features, they should encourage students to feel free to produce them with mother tongue influence (see pp. 115-117). More specifically, approach to pronunciation teaching should incorporate sociolinguistic facts of accent variations instead of considering any regional forms deviant from native-speaker pronunciation (model) as a "potentially harmful error" (Jenkins, 2002a, p. 97).

      3. Allow for expression of identity: Adopting the idea of accent addition rather than reduction implies that students are allowed to retain their mother tongue accents in L2 speech. Teachers should inform their students that there is no single correct accent, but it is a matter of speaker choice and of accommodation to suit the particular interlocutor in the particular context. Students should be made aware that since English has become a language for lingua franca communication, it will

become inevitable that EIL speakers will signal or communicate their nationality, and other facets of their identity, through English (Graddol, 2006). Thus, any version of non-native English accent deviant from a native-speaker one should not be seen as a sign of linguistic incompetence.

4. Raise both native and non-native speakers' awareness of World English accents. Native speakers should be made aware that since communication is a two-way process, it is not for non-native speakers to make all the efforts and adjustments in order to make their speech understandable. Rather, native speakers themselves should also adjust their pronunciation or simplify their speech so as to promote mutual intelligibility and comprehensibility. Put most simply, both native and non-native speakers meet half-way when they communicate with each other. For non-native speakers, teachers can inform them that varying forms of accent are permissible in EIL communication. Hence, there is nothing wrong with their use of localized accents because accents are not always the cause of communication breakdown (see Section 2.7). This way, students can be confident L2 speakers who use different but not deficient forms of English. Moreover, pronunciation teachers should take into account the issue of how to make English pronunciation assessment relevant to the international needs of many EIL users, rather than insisting on considering the relevance purely based on what is phonologically real for the relatively small number of native speakers (Jenkins, 2006d). Instead of penalizing the English use that is not native-like, teachers should shift the focus of their consideration to whether the use has beneficial or negative effect on communication. For example, when students render their pronunciation in order to accommodate their interlocutors (or sometimes replicate one another's errors) and promote mutual intelligibility, they should not be regarded as incompetent English users. The ability to keep the conversation going and maintain intelligibility is more important than approximating NS competence.

Given a more meaningful and realistic approach to pronunciation teaching, the researcher, however, does not finalize that native-speaker models should be completely banned in the English classroom. The point here is that (by referring to

Jenkins' EIL-based pronunciation target above) learners who have "personal aspirations to acquire native-like English" (Jenkins, 2009, p. 203) or wish to learn EFL in order to identify themselves with native speakers or linguistically function in an inner-circle environment will find the NS target more helpful. On the other hand, those learners (perhaps many Thais) who are likely to use English as a lingua franca with both native speakers and other non-native speakers will find the EIL target more helpful. That is to say, learners should be allowed to celebrate their choice of model which is lied in their specific goals.

Based on the present study, given that the majority of learners are awarded the freedom of choice to learn and use NS models, we should not forget that there is also a certain number of the learners or one-third of the informants (see Section 4.3) who do not want to learn and use inner-circle Englishes. These students' voices must also be heard. What does this finding imply? Classroom pedagogy that is based on the mainstream approach that adheres to native-speaker "scholastic pursuits" (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 542) does not seem relevant for these learners. This finding has also challenged the traditional ELT assumption that English learners, who most of their lives learn and use English in Thailand, have to master native-speaker likeness or native-like accent in order to use English effectively in both intra- and international contexts. Rather, these learners want to learn and use other types of English that allow them to glorify their identity, follow the global trends, adapt to their own needs, claim ownership and so on. In these cases, students have no desire to assimilate the way native speakers use the language nor feeling of becoming native speakers. Thus, the language pedagogy "must be sensitive to a particular group of teachers teaching a particular group of learners pursuing a particular set of goals within a particular institutional context embedded in a particular sociocultural milieu" (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 544).

Last but not least, when teachers are to set teaching objectives that are realistic or attainable for their students, it would be wise to take Cook's (2002) words into consideration, as he says: In the end, "the students will become L2 users, not native speakers" (p. 336).

5.3 Recommendations for future research

As has been previously mentioned, studies concerning linguistic diversification (especially accent variations) and the concept of English as an international language have been data-poor in the Thai context. Therefore, some observations, as based on the findings from the current study, are made to inform several agendas that may prove fruitful for future research studies.

1. The speech stimuli selected in this study were six varieties of English based on Kachru's concentric circles. In order to generate a more profound understanding of informants' attitudes towards world Englishes, it is recommended that future research include more speech samples especially from ASEAN countries because it is possible that Thai citizens would, in the future, have more opportunities to interact with other ASEAN speakers. Why? There has been an accelerated move on driving ASEAN to become one big village (Reuters, 2009). This means that people and cultural flows would definitely make for a more diverse and multi-colored Thailand. As a result, the use of English as a lingua franca in interactions among ASEAN people would become more common. Hence, studies on language attitudes towards ASEAN Englishes may be needed in order to catch up with the regional trend of "ASEAN become one" and yield significant implications to get students ready for the enlarged contexts of English.

2. Since the present study did not bring the informants' demographic data into focus, it is recommended for future study to examine whether demographic variables such as sex, age, cultural backgrounds and levels of education have any relationship with informants' attitudes towards varieties of English. Furthermore, since this study only focused on the evaluation of tertiary English majors' attitudes as a whole and did not compare the results between students of the two faculties (Education and Humanities and Social Sciences), it might be interesting to examine whether these two groups of students hold different attitudes towards varieties of English. Talking about comparative study, one interesting agenda for research is to

focus on both English and non-English majors and compare their attitudes towards varieties of English. All of these may yield significant insights.

3. In possible future study on attitudes towards varieties of English, it might be a good idea to develop various research methods or instruments to triangulate the data. For example, aside from the verbal-guise test and questionnaire employed in the current study, another possible approach such as the perceptual dialectology, which is known as the technique that involves asking informants to label mental maps with where varieties of a language are spoken, or to judge various geographical areas on how "pleasant", for instance, a particular variety is, is among the interesting ways to elicit informants' attitudes towards language variations (see, e.g., Bezooijen, 2002; Lindemann, 2005; McKenzie, 2006; Preston, 1999, 2005, for research using the perceptual dialectology technique).

4. Given the result of the study that the informants were linguistically prejudiced and had insufficient awareness of varieties of English, it would be a good idea to follow up the findings by developing awareness-raising and exposition activities, and to examine the effects of these activities on informants' discriminatory attitudes and accent recognition or the like. Moreover, regarding the informants' preferences for varieties of English, the current study is also limited in not shedding light on the relationship between the informants' preferences for varieties of English and what kinds of actual speaking activities the informants are performing and with whom the informants are using English with in their daily lives. This may help generate a clearer picture of whether their preferences are consistent with the functional and sociolinguistic realities in Thailand, and the extent to which they adopt the concept of EIL to their uses of English.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire:
Attitudes towards varieties of English

Part I: Demographic data

Instruction: Please provide your personal data and background regarding learning English.

1.Sex: Male ( )   Female ( )

2.Faculty: …….…….…………………………..

3.How long have you studied English? (   ) years

4.Have you ever had experience abroad? *It can be a long stay or a short visit*

            Yes ( )   No ( )

     (1) If Yes, where? …………….…Purpose of Visit: (   ) study
                                       ( ) travel
                                       ( ) business
                                       ( ) other, specify………..

    When……………………………………………………………..…..
      How long? (   ) Years (   ) Months (   ) Weeks (   ) Days
    Did you use English when you were there (   ) Yes   (   ) No

     (2) If Yes, where? …………….…Purpose of Visit: (   ) study
                                           ( ) travel
                                         ( ) business
                                       ( ) other, specify………..

    When……………………………………………………………..…..
      How long? (   ) Years (   ) Months (   ) Weeks (   ) Days
    Did you use English when you were there (   ) Yes   (   ) No

     (3) If Yes, where? …………….…Purpose of Visit: (   ) study
                                           ( ) travel
                                       ( ) business
                                       ( ) other, specify………..

    When……………………………………………………………..…..
      How long? (   ) Years (   ) Months (   ) Weeks (   ) Days
    Did you use English when you were there (   ) Yes   (   ) No

Part II: Accent Guess

Instruction: Listen to the recording and circle the number that indicates your impression of the speaker (1 means not at all, 7 means very much). Then guess each speaker's country of origin and provide reasons of the guess.

Speaker 1

Not generous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very generous
Not smart	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very smart
Incompetent	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very competent
Uneducated	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very educated
Unimpressive	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very impressive
Not gentle	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very gentle
Unconfident	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very confident
Not friendly	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very friendly

Guess the speaker's country of origin…………………………………………..……..

Give reasons why you think so……………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………….…………

Speaker 2

Not generous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very generous
Not smart	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very smart
Incompetent	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very competent
Uneducated	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very educated
Unimpressive	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very impressive
Not gentle	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very gentle
Unconfident	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very confident
Not friendly	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very friendly

Guess the speaker's country of origin…………………………………………..……..

Give reasons why you think so……………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………….…………

Speaker 3

Not generous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very generous
Not smart	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very smart
Incompetent	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very competent
Uneducated	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very educated
Unimpressive	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very impressive
Not gentle	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very gentle
Unconfident	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very confident
Not friendly	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very friendly

Guess the speaker's country of origin…………………………………………...……..

Give reasons why you think so………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………….…………

Speaker 4

Not generous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very generous
Not smart	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very smart
Incompetent	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very competent
Uneducated	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very educated
Unimpressive	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very impressive
Not gentle	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very gentle
Unconfident	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very confident
Not friendly	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very friendly

Guess the speaker's country of origin…………………………………………...……..

Give reasons why you think so………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………….…………

Speaker 5

Not generous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very generous
Not smart	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very smart
Incompetent	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very competent
Uneducated	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very educated
Unimpressive	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very impressive
Not gentle	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very gentle
Unconfident	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very confident
Not friendly	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very friendly

Guess the speaker's country of origin…………………………………………...……..

Give reasons why you think so……………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………….…………

Speaker 6

Not generous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very generous
Not smart	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very smart
Incompetent	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very competent
Uneducated	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very educated
Unimpressive	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very impressive
Not gentle	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very gentle
Unconfident	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very confident
Not friendly	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Very friendly

Guess the speaker's country of origin…………………………………………...……..

Give reasons why you think so……………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………….…………

Part III: Preferences for varieties of English

Instruction: Circle the variety of English accent that you want to learn and use the most (choose one) and provide reasons for your preference.

a) American English   i) Thai English

b) British English   j) Chinese English

c) Australian English   k) Japanese English

d) Canadian English   l) Korean English

e) Singaporean English   m) Russian English

f) Malaysian English   n) German English

g) Indian English   o) Other (specify)………..

h) Filipino English   p) Any variety, or (no preference)

Provide reasons for your preference…………………………………………..
……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

APPENDIX B

Reading passage:
Comma Gets a Cure

Well, here's a story for you: Sarah Perry was a veterinary nurse who had been working daily at an old zoo in a deserted district of the territory, so she was very happy to start a new job at a superb private practice in North Square near the Duke Street Tower. That area was much nearer for her and more to her liking. Even so, on her first morning, she felt stressed. She ate a bowl of porridge, checked herself in the mirror and washed her face in a hurry. Then she put on a plain yellow dress and a fleece jacket, picked up her kit and headed for work.

Note: This passage was specially composed using J.C. Wells' standard lexical sets and allows the dialect researcher to examine a reader's English pronunciation across a wide variety of phonemic contexts. It was written by Jill McCullough & Barbara Somerville and edited by Douglas N. Honorof.

APPENDIX C

Demography:
Stimulus provider's personal details

American English speaker
Recorded by Rebekah Maggor, September, 2005 in USA
Born: 1984
Hometown/Raised: Boston/Boston, USA
Occupation: Undergraduate student
Education: Social Science, USA
Mother Tongue: English (Boston accent)

British English speaker
Recorded by Paul Meier, November, 2006 in USA
Born: 1984
Hometown/Raised: London/London, England
Occupation: Undergraduate student
Education: Drama, Kent University at Canterbury, England
Mother Tongue: English (Estuary-flavoured RP accent)

Filipino English speaker
Recorded by Naratip Jindapitak, March, 2009 in Thailand
Born: 1982
Hometown/Raised: Cebu/Cebu, The Philippines
Occupation: English teacher
Education: Bachelor of Secondary Education, University of San Carlos
Mother Tongue: Tagalog

Indian English speaker
Recorded by Joseph Papke, February, 2006 in USA
Born: 1979
Hometown/Raised: Hyderabad/Andhra Pradesh, India
Occupation: Programmer
Education: M.S. Computer Science, California University, USA
Mother Tongue: Hindi

Thai English speaker
Recorded by Julia Guichard in Oxford, November, 2004 in USA
Born: 1979
Hometown/Raised: Bangkok/Chiangmai, Thailand
Occupation: Ph.D. student
Education: Asian Theatre, Kansas University, USA
Mother Tongue: Thai

Japanese English speaker
Recorded by Elizabeth Nguyen, November, 2007 in USA
Born: 1983
Hometown/Raised: Hamamatsu/Hamamatsu, Japan
Occupation: Master student
Education: English as a second language, UCI, California
Mother Tongue: Japanese

APPENDIX D

Fluency judgment form:
Speech fluency of the twelve speakers

Instruction: Please listen to each speech audio and mark to indicate the fluency of each speech WITHOUT taking an accent of each speaker into consideration.

Speaker 1

Fluency of speech
O Fluent
O Not fluent
O Not sure

Speaker 2

Fluency of speech
O Fluent
O Not fluent
O Not sure

Speaker 3

Fluency of speech
O Fluent
O Not fluent
O Not sure

Speaker 4

Fluency of speech
O Fluent
O Not fluent
O Not sure

Speaker 5

Fluency of speech
O Fluent
O Not fluent
O Not sure

Speaker 6

Fluency of speech
O Fluent
O Not fluent
O Not sure

Speaker 7

Fluency of speech
O Fluent
O Not fluent
O Not sure

Speaker 8

Fluency of speech
O Fluent
O Not fluent
O Not sure

Speaker 9

Fluency of speech
O Fluent
O Not fluent
O Not sure

Speaker 10

Fluency of speech
O Fluent
O Not fluent
O Not sure

Speaker 11

Fluency of speech
O Fluent
O Not fluent
O Not sure

Speaker 12

Fluency of speech
O Fluent
O Not fluent
O Not sure

APPENDIX E

Checklist:
Impression of the international speakers

Instruction: Listen to each speech sample and circle/underline the adjective that describes the speech provider.

<u>Speaker 1</u>

Honest	Warm	Incompetent	Unattractive
Credible	Generous	Unconfident	Low-class
Impressive	Gentle	Unintelligent	Funny
Sweet	Hard-working	Boring	Unkind
Friendly	Smart	Uneducated	Unreliable

Other (specify)……………………….

<u>Speaker 2</u>

Honest	Warm	Incompetent	Unattractive
Credible	Generous	Unconfident	Low-class
Impressive	Gentle	Unintelligent	Funny
Sweet	Hard-working	Boring	Unkind
Friendly	Smart	Uneducated	Unreliable

Other (specify)……………………….

<u>Speaker 3</u>

Honest	Warm	Incompetent	Unattractive
Credible	Generous	Unconfident	Low-class
Impressive	Gentle	Unintelligent	Funny
Sweet	Hard-working	Boring	Unkind
Friendly	Smart	Uneducated	Unreliable

Other (specify)……………………….

Speaker 4

Honest	Warm	Incompetent	Unattractive
Credible	Generous	Unconfident	Low-class
Impressive	Gentle	Unintelligent	Funny
Sweet	Hard-working	Boring	Unkind
Friendly	Smart	Uneducated	Unreliable

Other (specify)……………………….

Speaker 5

Honest	Warm	Incompetent	Unattractive
Credible	Generous	Unconfident	Low-class
Impressive	Gentle	Unintelligent	Funny
Sweet	Hard-working	Boring	Unkind
Friendly	Smart	Uneducated	Unreliable

Other (specify)……………………….

Speaker 6

Honest	Warm	Incompetent	Unattractive
Credible	Generous	Unconfident	Low-class
Impressive	Gentle	Unintelligent	Funny
Sweet	Hard-working	Boring	Unkind
Friendly	Smart	Uneducated	Unreliable

Other (specify)……………………….

VITAE

Name: Mr. Naratip Jindapitak

Student ID: 5111121081

Education Attainment

Degree	Name of Institution	Year of Graduation
Bachelor of Arts (English)	Thaksin University	2007

List of Publication and Proceedings

Jindapitak, N., & Teo, A. (2010). Thai in Blood, American in Taste: English Learners' Preferences for Varieties of English [Abstract]. *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences*, Thailand: Prince of Songkla University (p.33).