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Language Attitudes toward Global Englishes: Is Thai Accented English Our Identity?

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Abstract

This study examines language attitudes toward Global Englishes (GE) among employees of multinational companies in Thailand's Chonburi and Rayong provinces. Sequential mixed-method research is applied. The survey questionnaires were first distributed and a total of 120 participants responded. The participants were employees in multinational companies and used English as their primary working language. The analysis of questionnaires revealed a prevailing inclination towards native speakerism while acknowledging the importance of GE in the global workplace. Participants demonstrated proficiency in communicating with both native and non-native English speakers. An in-depth interview approach is used with 10 informants for confirming or disconfirming the survey results. However, interviews highlight a complex attitude towards GE, particularly among high-ranking individuals who strongly adhere to standard English ideology. Nonetheless, a significant number of participants recommended introducing GE concepts to Thai students as a valuable step towards familiarizing them with diverse English varieties. This recognition of the need to prepare the next generation for a globalized world is encouraging. The prevalence of native speakerism underscores the urgency of addressing language attitudes and promoting linguistic inclusivity within the global workplace. By fostering on cultural awareness and embracing linguistic diversity, we can create a more inclusive environment that appreciates and values different English accents and expressions. This study highlights the ongoing importance of these efforts

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in promoting a comprehensive understanding of GE and nurturing a global mindset among individuals and institutions alike.

Keywords: Accents, Global Englishes, language attitudes, standard ideology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has brought about a paradigm shift, making English the predominant working language in international settings, giving rise to ‘Global Englishes’ (GE). Attitudes towards GE among English users in multinational work environments vary, with some aiming for native-like accents and accuracy, while others adopt a simplified version assuming effective communication through context. Despite these differences, overall company functioning remains unaffected (Cogo & Yanaprasart, 2018).

With globalization transforming English into the dominant language of international communication (Rose & Galloway, 2019), GE has gained increasing attention. This evolving form of English emphasizes clarity, conciseness, and contextual cues over rigid grammatical structures. In multinational work environments, attitudes towards GE among English users vary, with some individuals striving to imitate British or American accents and emphasizing grammatical accuracy, while others prefer a simplified version of English, assuming effective communication can be achieved through context alone (Baker, 1992). Interestingly, these divergent attitudes and behaviors have not significantly impeded overall company functioning (Hiranburana, 2017; Im, 2021). Despite numerous studies on English as a global lingua franca and its implications for English Language Teaching (ELT) in Thailand, a research gap remains regarding Thai nationals’ attitudes towards GE in workplace settings. While some studies have explored Thai English majors’ attitudes towards different English varieties in educational contexts (Jindapitak, 2015, 2019; Jindapitak et al., 2022a, 2022b; McKenzie et al., 2016), sociolinguistic research on Thai individuals’ social evaluations of GE, particularly in the workplace, is still at an early stage. Global research has revealed the presence of stereotypical perceptions towards different forms of English, with more mainstream (native-like) English varieties generally receiving favorable evaluations (Jenkins, 2015; Lindemann, 2005; McKenzie et al., 2016). However, specific attitudes and perspectives of Thai individuals towards GE in the workplace remain relatively unexplored.

In Thailand, English proficiency is crucial for employment prospects and global engagement. However, research gaps persist in understanding Thai individuals’ attitudes towards GE in workplaces. This study aimed to fill this gap by exploring Thai participants’ attitudes and practices towards GE in multinational work environments, informing language education policies and intercultural communication practices. The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the participants’ current GE practices in the workplace?
2. What are the English users’ attitudes toward the use of GE in their global work context?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Language Attitudes

Language attitudes play a pivotal role in influencing both language reception and production. They are learned dispositions that shape individuals' thoughts, emotions, and behaviors toward language use (Allport, 1954). Eagly and Chaiken (1993) refer to attitudes as psychological tendencies expressed through evaluations of entities with varying degrees of favor or disfavor. Oppenheim (1982) further elucidates that attitudes encompass cognitive and behavioral aspects, emphasizing the state of readiness in individuals to notice, perceive, select, feel, remember, and react to specific issues or topics in both real and abstract verbal forms.

Attitudes play a pivotal role in language reception and production, shaping our communicative competence. Language attitudes influence our reactions and responses to people who speak different languages, as well as our language choices and messages conveyed to specific interlocutors.

2.2 Language Attitude Components

Language attitudes consist of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components (de Boer et al., 2011; Garrett, 2010; Oppenheim, 1982). Cognitive attitudes involve beliefs, opinions, and knowledge about certain issues. They can trigger or be triggered by affective or perceptual reactions and may be expressed verbally or nonverbally. Affective attitudes pertain to emotional responses toward stimuli, such as objects, persons, or situations. These affective responses may be triggered by cognitive attitudes, and in turn, conative attitudes may prompt individuals to act in certain ways, such as attempting to correct grammatical errors. Behavioral attitudes relate to a person's tendency to act in specific ways, reflecting the interplay between cognitive and affective components. The interplay among these three attitude components significantly influences individuals, as positive or negative attitudes, along with approving or disapproving sentiments, profoundly impact language choices and linguistic behaviors within a community.

Attitudes towards one's native language or a foreign language, influenced by societal prestige, also play a crucial role in shaping one's identity and behavior in various social circles (Thamrin, 2018). These multifaceted language attitudes are influenced by beliefs, deep values, and social stereotypes, showcasing the complexity and significance of attitudes in shaping linguistic behaviors.

Language attitudes in global work contexts vary widely among English users. Some professionals adhere to native-speaker norms, while others embrace linguistic diversity and adapt to various forms of English (Galloway & Rose, 2015). Understanding language attitudes is critical for effective intercultural communication, particularly in settings where individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds interact.

2.3 Language Ideologies and Language Use in Thailand

Language ideologies in Thailand have historically favored native-speaker norms in English language teaching, emphasizing linguistic correctness (Garrett et al., 2003).

This ideology persists despite linguistic diversification. English teaching often revolves around American or British norms, leading to favoring or disfavoring certain accents and engendering attitudes of preference or aversion towards linguistic standards and correctness (Boonsuk et al., 2021; Tripasai, 2019). However, globalization provides English users in Thailand with opportunities to acquire language varieties from diverse sources and incorporate them into their language practices. This implies that language users in Thailand are no longer limited to a single standard but can embrace linguistic diversity and adapt to various linguistic influences within their bilingual lexicons.

In conclusion, this literature review emphasizes the importance of Global Englishes (GE) in multinational work environments, the role of language attitudes in communication as well as language ideologies and use in Thailand. Further research on Thai nationals' attitudes towards GE in the workplace is needed. Understanding language attitudes is crucial for effective intercultural communication in global settings, and globalization provides opportunities for embracing linguistic diversity in Thailand.

3. METHODS

This study investigates English language users' practices and attitudes towards linguistic diversity using questionnaires and interviews (Garrett, 2010). Participants include employees at officer, supervisor, and middle manager levels, with Bachelor's degrees and over three years of international work experience. The research design adopted a traditional sequential explanatory mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection for a deeper understanding of language attitudes (Dawadi et al., 2021).

The quantitative phase involves data collection from a diverse population of English users in five companies across different provinces, providing insights into workplace practices and GE awareness. The subsequent qualitative phase utilizes purposeful confirming and disconfirming sampling to explore specific findings (Creswell, 2011). In-depth interviews examined attitudes towards GE, confirming or disconfirming the quantitative results.

3.1 Quantitative Approach

3.1.1 Subjects

The quantitative approach was employed to address research question one: 'What are the participants' current GE practices in the workplace?' The study included a total of 120 participants from five companies situated in industrial areas of Rayong and Chonburi provinces in Thailand. The sample size represented a finite population, specifically consisting of English users working at the administration level within these workplaces. These five companies were multinational, with three of them being entities under a US corporation, one being German, and the remaining one being Thai-owned. English was utilized as the primary language for communication with other entities, foreign counterparts, and colleagues, both in written and verbal forms.

The sample size of 120 individuals allowed the study to achieve a margin of error (confidence interval) of $\pm 7.5\%$ (Conroy, 2016). This margin of error provided the study with the ability to determine specific language attitudes prevalent within the workplace context.

Table 1. Research site information.

Company name	Company's industry	Corporate origin	Thailand site location
A	Automotive	German	Rayong
B	Electronics	USA	Rayong
C	Automotive	USA	Rayong Pinthong, Chonburi Lamchabang, Chonburi Banpo, Chonburi
D	Automotive	USA	Rayong
E	Industrial Packaging	Thai	Rayong

3.1.2 Questionnaires

The language attitudes questionnaire utilized a bilingual structure, featuring both English and Thai languages, and was adapted from a previous study conducted by Chan (2018). Chan's original research aimed to explore gender attitudes toward English varieties among female and male secondary school students in Hong Kong. The original questionnaire comprised ten factors and employed Principle Component Analysis (PCA).

In Chan's questionnaire, which was also adapted for this study, ten themes focused on attitudes toward language use practices, perceptions of English varieties, preferred teaching models, and the learning of local native speaker (NS) pronunciation. These ten theme factors included aspects such as preference for NS English varieties, exposure to NS English accents in multimedia, the legitimacy of standard English varieties, and exposure to NS English accents in the workplace or study environment (Chan, 2018).

However, for the present study, the questionnaire was modified to contain seven theme factors, with a primary focus on English language usage in the work context within a multinational workforce. The themes examined attitudes toward English varieties, perceptions about language ideology, and participants' perceived abilities. The adaptation allowed for a comprehensive investigation of language attitudes specifically in the workplace and workforce context.

We sought the expertise of three experts, including two educators and one HR manager, to ensure the content validity of the questionnaire. They reviewed the questionnaire to assess its appropriateness and accuracy. For the full survey questionnaires, please refer to Appendix A.

3.1.3 Quantitative data analysis

The questionnaires concisely collected personal data, including only the participants' name-surname, current position, and frequency of using English in their daily work. To ensure anonymity and facilitate data analysis, each returned questionnaire was labeled with a pseudonym using alphabets A, B, C, D, and E, followed by an ordinal number representing each company. This labeling system

served the purpose of quantitative statistical data analysis and later aided in the selection process for key informants in the qualitative approach.

The survey data was analyzed using SPSS (version 16). Statistical measures such as the mean and standard deviation of each factor were calculated to understand the participants' responses. Additionally, frequency distribution was analyzed to summarize the survey data and identify any outliers or extreme values in individual questionnaire statements. This comprehensive analysis allowed for a better understanding of the survey results.

3.2 Qualitative approach

3.2.1 Subjects

To gain a deeper understanding of the preceding results, a confirming and disconfirming sampling strategy was employed. Two groups were explored, each exhibiting contrasting attitudes. The first group demonstrated a strong preference for NS (Native Speaker) varieties, scoring highest in Factor 1 (preference for NS English varieties) and lowest in Factor 4 (acceptance of speaking a local accent) in the quantitative results. The second group displayed a preference for NNS (Non-Native Speaker) varieties, scoring lowest in Factor 1 and highest in Factor 4 in the quantitative results. The selection procedure ensured equal representation from each company for both groups. This purposeful sampling approach allowed the researcher to refine and test the initial quantitative findings.

The final list of key informants was compiled, and they were contacted after obtaining official permission from the Human Resources manager for the interviews. Details of the subjects' information and sampling selection are presented in Table 2, providing the key informant selection list.

Table 2. Key informant selection list.

Respondent number	NS preference and pseudonym	Respondent number	NNS preferences and pseudonym
b 40	BT	a 7	AK
c 68	CS	b 40	BC
c 72	CA	c 94	CP
d 118	DN	c 96	CT
		d 108	DC
		d 115	DM

3.2.2 Data collection procedures

For an ethical consideration, key informants were notified of their interview appointments, and the protocol interview questions were sent to both the informants and the Human Resource manager for acknowledgment. Consent letters, which clearly stated anonymity and confidentiality, the participant's right to discontinue during the interview, were signed before the interview sessions. The interviews were conducted in the Thai language at the informants' workplaces, in private and quiet meeting rooms. Each interview session was scheduled for 30-45 minutes, and the informants consented to audio recording.

The semi-structured interviews were designed to explore various aspects of key informants' cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes toward the use of GE in their work context. The six protocol questions were originally written in Thai to ensure better comprehension during the interviews and were later translated into English as follows:

1. Have you ever heard of Global Englishes? What do you think of its meaning?
2. Can you share your experience learning English during school time or college time with Thai and Foreign Teachers? How do you like them?
3. How does the teacher's teaching influence your English ability at work?
4. At work, who are your foreign counterparts, customers, and suppliers? Please share. What kind of work activities are between you and your counterparts? What do you notice about the communication, in terms of accents and other English language uses?
5. If you want to achieve your working goals, what do you prefer between Standard English and GE, and why?
6. What is your suggestion for teaching our future students to become a workforce, if we should teach Standard English or GE?

3.2.3 Qualitative data analysis

During the analysis and interpretation process, the Thai interview sound data were transcribed. Manual data analysis was used for coding. The generic inductive approach was employed for methodological flexibility (Liu, 2016), especially when translation was a limitation. Coding involves finding patterns in repetitive affect, recognition, and behavior, and adapting researcher-generated constructs for pattern detection (Saldana, 2013). The analysis steps included organizing the data, reading through the transcripts to understand the tone, and applying coding using English translations of Thai phrases. Categories and patterns were identified for key interpretations, and final themes were formulated from the consolidated patterns of each informant, as reported in the research results.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Quantitative Findings

A total of 125 sets of questionnaires were provided to the Human Resources departments of each company, with 120 responses returned, resulting in a 96% response rate. The participants' job functions varied, and all of them reported using English in their daily work lives. The collected personal data included only the participants' name-surname, current position, and frequency of using English in their daily work. Table 3 presents the participants' data and response rate. Due to the varying number of job positions, they were reported as job group functions, and the frequency of English use in daily work is presented in Table 4.

Table 3. Participants' data and response rate.

Company name	Gender		Number of respondents	Response rate
	Female	Male		
A	14	2	16	12.80%

Table 3 continued...

B	18	10	28	22.40%
C	30	30	60	48.00%
D	12	3	15	12.00%
E	1	0	1	0.80%
Total	75	45	120	

Table 4. Participants' job position/function.

Job group function	Company A	Company B	Company C	Company D	Company E
Human Resources	2	1	8	1	1
Engineering	2	7	14	4	0
Production	3	5	8	3	0
Finance/Accounting	0	1	4	0	0
Supply Chain Management	8	12	16	5	0
R & D	0	0	2	1	0
Quality Assurance	1	0	6	1	0
Information Technology	0	2	2	0	0
Total	16	28	60	15	1

Descriptive statistics present the quantitative results for each theme factor and overall, with the analysis and interpretation of factor components shown in Table 5.

4.1.1 Native-speaker standard preference and practice

The participants demonstrated a relative preference and emphasis on native-speaker (NS) standards, as evident in Factor 1 ($\bar{x}=3.79$, $sd=0.89$). The results consistently show that participants did not feel negatively towards NS standards and accents, as indicated in Factor 3 ($\bar{x}=2.34$, $sd=1.15$). While they may perceive speaking with an NS accent as challenging, they believe that emulating native speakers is the correct approach when using English.

4.1.2 Global Englishes awareness

The results from Factors 2, 4, and 7 demonstrate participants' high level of GE awareness, as they acknowledged being well-informed about non-native speaker (NNS) varieties and the English varieties used in their daily work life and workplace. In Factor 2, participants displayed awareness of NNS varieties in the workplace, with some recognizing the use of Chinese-English or Thai-English accents ($\bar{x}=3.95$, $sd=0.87$). Factor 4 reveals that participants strongly agreed they were confident in speaking English with a Thai accent when communicating with both NS and NNS colleagues, and they took pride in their Thai identity ($\bar{x}=3.66$, $sd=1.03$). Additionally, the results consistently indicate that participants predominantly used English with NNS rather than NS, as highlighted in Factor 7 ($\bar{x}=3.26$, $sd=1.05$).

4.1.3 Perceived current English ability

The results of Factor 5 indicate that participants perceived their English ability to be at an acceptable level, enabling them to understand English conversations spoken

by both native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS) in specific situations, such as meetings or conference calls ($\bar{x}=3.39$, $sd=1.02$).

4.1.4 Perception of learning non-standard English

The survey results for Factor 6, along with its two items, indicate that participants show some reluctance in accepting the idea of learning non-standard English. However, they did not acknowledge that learning and practicing listening to non-native speaker (NNS) accents could potentially replace the current model of standard English learning ($\bar{x}=2.99$, $sd=1.21$).

Table 5. Factor results and interpretation.

Factor	Theme	No. of statements	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Preference for NS English varieties	3	3.79	0.8947	Agree
2	Recognition of 'non-standard' English varieties	2	3.95	0.8734	Agree
3	Negative perception of speaking with an NS English accent	3	2.34	1.1578	Disagree
4	Acceptance of speaking a local accent	3	3.66	1.0270	Agree
5	Perceived ability to understand English speech	2	3.39	1.0169	Not sure
6	Perception of learning non-standard English	2	2.99	1.2083	Disagree
7	Experience in communicating with NS and NNS speaker	2	3.26	1.0549	Not sure

4.2 Qualitative Findings

By employing rapport talk, the strategy for gathering personal data from informants proved effective in establishing a relationship before conducting interviews. Thai individuals customarily start learning English in the 5th grade during secondary education. Table 6 presents demographic information for key informants, and Table 7 offers an overview of their English language background. Researcher-generated key theme patterns are reported in items 4.2.1 to 4.2.7.

Table 6. Key informant demographic data.

No.	Pseudonym	Company	Job title	Year of services	Gender	
					Female	Male
1.	DN	D	Supply management	5	√	
2.	CP	C	Production Engineer	3		√
3.	CT	C	Manufacturing Engineer	5		√
4.	BC	B	Material Planning Manager	19	√	
5.	BT	B	Accountant	15	√	
6.	AK	A	Cost Controller	4		
7.	CA	C	Quality Engineer	6	√	
8.	DM	D	Human Resources Officer	2	√	
9.	DC	D	Design Engineer	1	√	
10.	CS	C	R&D (Launch Manager)	8		√

Table 7. Informants' English language background.

No	Pseudonym	Years of English studied		Extra English course experience	English instructor	
		School	University		Native speaker	Thai
1	DN	8	4	Short courses in Thailand		√
2	CP	8	4	none	√	√
3	CT	8	4	none	√	√
4	BC	8	4	none		√
5	BT	8	0	none		√
6	AK	8	0	none	√	√
7	CA	8	4	4 years in the US		√
8	DM	8	4	none	√	√
9	DC	8	4	none	√	√
10	CS	8	4	Short courses in Thailand		√

4.2.1 Awareness of Global Englishes (GE)

Among the ten key informants, it was found that nine of them had never heard of the term 'GE' before. Upon explanation, they stated that GE refers to English used for international communication with individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Some informants also described it as an interlanguage, an international language, or an official language. Interestingly, only one informant, CT, confidently responded that he had prior knowledge of the term 'GE'.

- (1) GE is English used by people in each zone or region with their particular accents for example, Thai people will have an English-Thai accent, and Japanese will have an English-Japanese accent, like as Indian and Indonesian. [CT]

4.2.2 Attitudes towards Thai and native teachers

Several informants expressed their admiration for Thai teachers, as they were a source of inspiration and motivation during their school years. These teachers played a crucial role in teaching them the fundamentals of English, including basic language skills, grammar, and vocabulary memorization. They recalled learning English through songs, which further enhanced their language-learning experience.

- (2) I have a Thai teacher, who used to live in the USA, and she teaches me to pronounce correctly. If we do not pronounce it right, the meaning can be different. [CA]
- (3) During my secondary school, I was not good at English subject. My mother sent me to a special English class, the Thai teacher teaches vocabulary memorized, and learning vocabulary from songs and movies, makes me understand English subjects better. And it has changed my attitude toward learning English. [DM]
- (4) During my junior high school, I took a special tutorial class, my Thai teacher was the best because she was so energetic; she speaks a very good English accent and it was very impressive. [BC]

Among the informants, there were varying preferences for English language learning. Some preferred learning with native teachers, while others were content as long as the teaching and learning process was enjoyable. On the other hand, some expressed a dislike for learning English altogether. Notably, many informants positively acknowledged that native teachers possessed effective teaching techniques.

They particularly enjoyed conversation classes with native teachers, as it helped alleviate anxiety and reduce stress. They believed that these classes improved their listening and speaking skills.

- (5) I have a negative attitude toward studying English in Thailand. Until I was in university, one of my English courses was taught by a British instructor and that helped me with my English presentation in an internship course. I like learning English with an NS instructor rather than a Thai instructor. [CT]
- (6) In my university, I like studying English with an NS teacher. I studied an English Conversation course; it is very useful and I can use it in real work now. [CP]
- (7) I can study English with an instructor who can make learning fun and not too stressful. I think learning too much grammar with a Thai instructor makes me tense. [AK]

4.2.3 Perceived work ability influenced by Thai and native teachers

Many informants expressed that the practical utility of their email writing skills was shaped by their interactions with Thai teachers during their school years, with a specific emphasis on grammar learning. The influence of these past experiences played a significant role in how they perceived the relevance of their email writing skills in a work context.

- (8) My ability to email writing is from Thai instructors because I learned grammar from them. It may not be 100% accurate but I believe my writing should be understandable. [AK]

A few informants expressed that they found little practical use for the extensive grammar and pronunciation lessons they had learned in real work situations. Additionally, two key informants felt that their English proficiency improved significantly when they learned through conversations with native teachers, and they were able to apply these skills effectively in their work.

- (9) Thai instructors focus on grammar teaching. This does not make me use English naturally, I have to translate Thai to English in my head, and it makes me speak English slowly. [DC]
- (10) NS instructor influences my work ability when I have to do presentations and communicate with foreigners. I feel that the Thai instructor imparted too much grammar so I will not use that much grammar. [CP]

Some informants mentioned that taking extra courses with native or foreign teachers helped improve their proficiency in English. However, one informant perceived that the application of their learning to the work environment is influenced more by practicing English skills rather than the teachers themselves.

- (11) I went to the US when I was 20+ years old. I have studied basic English from each level for 4 years. That makes me prefer an NS instructor because I learned content, songs, blogs or articles, some history content, and conversation. The teaching made me learn and can use it in my work today. [CA]
- (12) Despite that Thai instructor is my inspiration for learning English and that is 50%, another 50% is my own passion. I like English vocabulary, listening to English songs and English proverbs, so I make my English better that way. [CS]

4.2.4 Work context of interlocutors

The informants primarily used the English language to communicate with individuals from various nationalities, including Indian, Chinese, Japanese, American, Korean, Malaysian, and Brazilian. Some informants mentioned that conversing with Americans was straightforward because they did not always require complete sentences to understand each other.

- (13) When I talk to my counterparts, I do not need to speak a complete sentence, they could already know what I want. Especially, when I talked to the American colleague, we had a very easy talking; I didn't need to speak a complete sentence. [CP]
- (14) My work involves with many foreigners. The easiest listening is an American accent. They are NS, they pronounce and give simple accentuation. [DM]

Several informants confirmed that they find it easier to talk and listen to Asians because they tend to speak slowly. One informant mentioned that she felt relaxed communicating with Chinese, Japanese, or Korean (see 15). However, many agree that Indian English stands out as the most complex in terms of sound and accent. Additionally, they found it challenging to understand Koreans and senior Japanese speakers.

- (15) I work with Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and some Korean customers. I notice their accents and sentence structure; Indians speak long sentences like British and American, and I always ask them to repeat. But I feel more relaxed talking to Chinese, Japanese, and Korean because they speak a word-by-word form. [CT]
- (16) As a cost controller, I have weekly conference calls with many entities; Japanese, Indian, Chinese, Singapore, Vietnam, German, and Korean. I talk the most with Japanese and German. It is much easier to talk to Japanese because we both are not good and we speak slowly. [AK]
- (17) It is difficult to understand Korean and Indian, I have to keep saying, again please, through the whole conversation. [CP]

Interestingly, a few informants mentioned the linguo-cultural aspect of using English. One informant referred to communication behaviors, such as using a screamer or frantic tone or adopting a dry communication style. Another informant pointed out differences in courtesy practices when using English.

- (18) Currently, I work with Japanese, Taiwanese, and American. I feel the difference is cultural communication. I see that Italians use frantic sounds, making loud noises and banging the table. But the loud sound was over and ended peacefully after the meeting. Americans will be more soft and polite in the meeting. [DN]
- (19) I work with Indians and Chinese. I adjust myself to the different accents, work content, and negotiation. But one thing is communication etiquette. I believe we should show courtesy. Chinese shows a little courtesy and dry communication. Rather, Indian counterparts are easier to work with. [BC]

Several informants expressed their awareness of the variations in accents, spoken sounds, and pronunciation among interlocutors. They viewed accents as a representation of national uniqueness and individual traits, and they embraced these differences positively. Understanding the significance of effective work

communication, they demonstrated a proactive approach by immediately asking for clarification if they encountered any words pronounced with an unfamiliar accent.

- (20) My direct boss is a Vietnamese. I also have many bosses who are Brazilian, Chinese, and Indian. My boss uses perfect English as he was educated in the USA. I see that Chinese uses perfect grammar too. Brazilian speaks slowly like Thai people. [CS]

4.2.5 *Reactions toward GE and native English accent differences*

Out of all the informants, only one key informant had the opportunity to study abroad for four years and work part-time in a restaurant, which exposed her to various accent varieties. Interestingly, all the informants demonstrated positive attitudes and reactions towards the differences in their interlocutors' accents. Some informants accepted these variations as a unique and individual trait of their interlocutors, while others chose to take notes and ask questions later on for better understanding. Overall, most of the key informants showed no negative reactions to the accent varieties they encountered during their interactions.

- (21) I do some emails and I have to listen to several meetings with my American boss and a financial controller from Hong Kong. I do feel like to listen and to test my listening skills. [BT]
- (22) I do not feel against the accent differences, rather I accept the differences are gracefulness. I just need to learn. [DC]
- (23) I react to the accent differences by remembering and practicing the words they said to me so I can understand them in the future. [CA]
- (24) I feel the accent differences are gracefulness. I feel impressed with those who can speak English regardless of their own accents or their own wording style. It is their charm. [DM]
- (25) I do not feel resist the differences, in contrast, I will ask if I do not understand and repeat our understanding to our interlocutor. We can ask immediately or note down for asking later on. [CS]

4.2.6 *Preferences for using Standard English or Global English at work*

The study revealed an interesting division among the ten key informants. Half of them expressed a preference for a native-like accent and the use of standard English in their workplace interactions, while the other half felt more comfortable embracing their own identity and Thai-English accent. Notably, those with a strong preference for native-like accents also associated high proficiency in standard English with being well-educated and belonging to an upper-class group of English users. One informant proudly stated that maintaining a native-like accent and using correct grammar is a matter of personal pride for him. He explained:

- (26) When I see anyone who speaks correct English, I respect him and feel that he is so well-prepared. I feel like I want to be just like him and I hope that others will feel admiring at me the same way. [CS]

This group of participants admitted that the higher the proficiency, the better they understand. Using standard English helps better communication in a diverse workplace. Some informants viewed that being native-like would ease listening for interlocutors. In a similar situation, the informants revealed a social stereotype attitude

toward being trustworthy in the work community by using standard English or native-like accents.

- (27) My personal like is to speak like NS but I need a lot more practice. I want my NS or non-NS colleagues to understand me easily at work. [DC]
- (28) I push myself hard to speak like a native speaker because the better we use standard English; the more people understand you. [DM]
- (29) I would prefer being an NS-like because I want to be able to listen and communicate with others. I also like to use correct grammar. [CA]
- (30) It depends on the scope of work. If I need to officially present my work, I tend to be more on standard English. If it is a discussion meeting with Japan and Korea office then I mixed my Thai in the meeting. [CT]

On the contrary, the other half held the perspective that English is primarily a communication tool, and as long as it is communicative, understandable, and pronounced comprehensibly, it suffices. They never felt embarrassed about their pronunciation. Some informants shared that in their workplace, the Thai-English accent is prevalent, even among management-level employees. One informant mentioned that many individuals use a blended accent known as ‘Thinglish’ (a combination of Thai and English). Another informant recounted her personal experience, recalling a memory from the past.

- (31) There is no harm in using English in Thai norms as long as it is communicative and it can deliver meanings that we can proceed with our work. [DN]
- (32) I really want to use English in Thai style which helps me achieve my work goals. [BC]
- (33) I want to be myself. I will speak Thai-English accented. I cannot make the /th/, /r/, /l/ or /s/ sound. [AK]
- (34) My workplace culture is Thai-English accent. My executive management uses a Thai-English accent and they speak very simple English. I use English my Thai way, and I do not feel embarrassed. [CP]
- (35) I think it is communication, we communicate effectively for mutual understanding. But I will use my accent to show my traits and identity. [BT]

4.2.7 Perceived toward future English language teaching

The findings indicate that five informants expressed the view that working exclusively with native speakers (NS) in real-life situations might not always be feasible. They suggested that introducing students to various accents and lingua franca could be beneficial. According to them, each country and accent carries its own unique identity, and every nationality possesses individual charm and a rich array of linguistic-cultural variations. They believed that teaching Global English (GE) could enhance learners’ awareness of accent differences and promote a more inclusive and adaptable approach to language use.

- (36) I think it is not possible for every person will speak the same standard English accent; each nationality will have its uniqueness and accent. [DN]

- (37) We used to learn from NS English audio in the classroom at school. Now, I think we should learn GE because it is what we will use in real life. We should have learned Japanese-English or Chinese-English. [AK]
- (38) We should teach them GE. We should teach them to practice conversation workshops or have them do a project like I used to do with the Indian team. [BC]
- (39) We should groom undergraduates to serve a workforce market, and I would like them to learn GE. We should make them familiar with English from any accents and learn communicative English. [DM]
- (40) We should teach them GE because the gracefulness of each country is different. Their intercultural communication is also different. [DC]

However, four informants show ambivalence towards the suggestion of teaching GE or standard English to students. Some gave suggestions based on their English learning experience and their own proficiency, while another one felt ambivalence between speaking in GE way and an accurate standard English writing.

- (41) Based on my low English proficiency, I think we should teach student to make their own styles. Teaching anything that students think saves their time and memory of their own. [CP]
- (42) We do not need to teach students to be NS-like or even understand all GE-related. We can teach them to be a survivor at work. We can tell them to learn from experiences. [CA]
- (43) We should use English in our own style but we have to make it communicative. Yet, we should write accurate grammar because it can cause misinterpretation. [BT]
- (44) I think we should get them to change their attitudes towards learning English. Yet they do not need to be an NS, it is up to their preferences. [CS]

Only one informant suggested that teaching standard American English is appropriate because it has been an integral part of English teaching and learning for a long period of time.

- (45) For students, I would suggest we teach standard British or American English because it is the moderate way to teach, not too slow or too fast and too difficult or too easy. [CT]

5. DISCUSSION

The quantitative survey focused on factors that are specific to examine the current GE practices of Thai employees. Despite working predominantly with non-native English speakers, the findings revealed a prevailing preference for standard English, suggesting a strong adherence to standard language ideologies (see [Lippi-Green, 2011](#)). However, qualitative interviews provided insights into positive attitudes toward linguistic diversity in the global work context, indicating a growing openness among participants.

The participants exhibited a duality in their language attitudes: a preference for standard English when interacting with NS and an understanding of the importance of adapting to both GE and NNS environments. This phenomenon aligns with previous research in Thailand and highlights the impact of globalization on language use in the

workplace (Boonsuk et al., 2021; Galloway, 2013; Prabjandee et al., 2020; Tripasai, 2019).

The conflicting results can be attributed to participants' internalized language ideologies, where historical associations with prestige contribute to the preference for Standard English. Simultaneously, the positive attitudes towards linguistic diversity may be a response to increased global interactions and a recognition of the value of understanding different English varieties and accents (Im, 2021). The study underscores the significance of GE in global work contexts, emphasizing that successful communication goes beyond native-like norms. It necessitates an adaptive approach that acknowledges linguistic diversity and promotes effective intercultural communication in multinational settings.

To address the implications of these findings, the study suggests a paradigm shift in English language teaching. Educational reforms should emphasize the value of Global English and equip students with the skills to navigate diverse linguistic landscapes in international work environments (Lin, 2020). Practical recommendations include incorporating multimedia resources to expose students to various English accents and variations. Facilitating virtual classroom collaborations with schools or classrooms from different countries can encourage communication with English speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Additionally, organizing debates and discussions on global topics in English can foster intercultural communication skills.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the evolving attitudes towards GE in a globalized work environment among Thai participants. The observed language ambivalence reflects a growing acceptance of linguistic diversity, necessitating a more adaptive approach to language use. The research is particularly relevant in today's increasingly globalized and integrated world, where Thai people are more exposed to the use of English in various contexts.

Thoroughly applied research methods have revealed a strong inclination of the Thai workforce towards native-speakerism, ideology, and standards, while also showing some awareness of the concept of GE. The discussion section has explored various avenues for reflection to challenge the myth of native speakerism and alter perceptions regarding accent varieties and GE.

By embracing the recommendations for English language teaching and addressing the study's limitations, educators can better prepare students and the workforce to effectively communicate and collaborate in the globalized world. As the world continues to embrace globalization, this study lays the groundwork for further research in this nascent field, encouraging a deeper understanding of language attitudes and the significance of GE in intercultural communication and global interactions.

The study acknowledges the limitations of self-reports, which may be subject to bias, such as social desirability bias. To enhance future research, incorporating other data collection methods like observation or experimental designs and employing more comprehensive sampling methods would improve the generalizability of findings.

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APPENDIX

Quantitative Data Analysis of Factors Identification for Attitude Components

No.	Factors	Mean	SD
1	Preference for NS English varieties (Affective)		
1.	I should grammatically speak correct standard English	3.92	0.90
2.	I focus on pronouncing the correct sound of 'th' or 'f/v' or clusters of consonants 'r/l'	3.71	0.75
3.	A native-like pronunciation of English is a mark of high English proficiency.	3.73	0.99
	Total	3.79	0.64
2	Recognition of 'non-standard' English varieties (Recognition)		
4.	I understand non-standard English varieties such as Indian English, Singapore-English, Thai-English, and Chinese English.	3.77	0.88
5.	I recognize that my colleagues, customers, or suppliers such as Indian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, French, and German are non-native speakers.	4.11	0.83
	Total	3.94	0.70
3	(Negative) perceptions of speaking with an NS English accent (Affective)		
6.	A Thai person who speaks like a native speaker is a 'show off.'	1.83	1.04
7.	I feel shy about trying to imitate native speakers' pronunciation in front of local people.	2.28	1.07
8.	I think that difficult accent by native-speakers largely affects my work performance.	2.91	1.08
	Total	2.34	0.76
4	Acceptance of speaking a local accent (Behavioral)		
9.	I am confident in using my Thai-English with my Native-speaker and Non-native speaker colleagues or customers or suppliers.	3.46	0.98
10.	I don't mind if people can identify me as a Thai from my accent.	3.97	0.94
11.	It is not necessary to imitate native English speakers' accents as long as our English is intelligible.	3.54	1.07
	Total	3.66	0.74
5	Perceived ability to understand English speech (Behavioral)		
12.	In the conference calls with native speakers, I likely understand very little because they always speak very fast.	3.25	1.00
13.	In the meeting in English, I likely do not have a problem listening to Thai people speak English.	3.53	1.01
	Total	3.39	0.76
6	Perceptions of learning non-standard English (Recognition)		
14.	Thai-English pronunciation can replace the existing teaching model.	2.55	0.94
15.	I should practice listening to the non-native speakers' accents as it supports my work.	3.42	1.28
	Total	2.98	0.85
7	Experience in communicating with NS and NNS speakers (Affective)		
16.	Listening to the non-native speaker's accent is easier than the native speaker's accent.	2.75	0.97
17.	At work, I encounter non-native English accents more than native English accents.	3.75	0.88
	Total	3.25	0.75

Note: 5=Strongly agree, 4= Agree, 3= Not sure, 2= Disagree, 1=Strongly disagree