

An Exploratory of the Use of English in Contemporary Society

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Abstract : The study of English in Thailand receives comparatively little attention in the world of Englishes scholarship despite a complex and dynamic linguistic landscape. Like many countries in the region, English is used in predictable contexts, such as schools and at work. However, English is being increasingly used as a contact language among Thais and non-Thais, requiring much needed empirical attention. This study aims to address this neglected issue by examining how Thais perceive and use English in contemporary Thai society. This study explored the ways in which English has been used in public signage, mass media, especially about Thai food, and perceptions of Thais (N = 80) regarding English. Findings indicate that English in Thailand is used in a complicated manner portraying both standard and non-standard English. Thais still hold a static or traditional view of English, making it impractical, if not impossible, to have Thai English as an established variety.

Keywords : Thai english, thainess in english, public signage, mass media, thai food, thai linguistic landscape

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