

Abstract

This research is intended to study how the variation of (ə), (o), (ia) and (ua) in Khonkean dialect correlates with social variables: the speakers's age, locality, attitude toward language and sex. Included in this study were three age groups: 15-25 years (young) 35-45 years (adult) and 55-65 years (senior adult). The localities studied were Muang district representing an urban speech community and Nongnakham district representing a rural speech community. There were two attitudes toward language: positive attitude and negative attitude. The sexes were male and female.

The analysis shows that (ə) has two variants: [ə] and [ɨ]. For (o) there are five variants: [o], [u], [a], [ua] and [ɔ]. For (ia) there are two variants: [ia] and [ɨa]. As for (ua), it has two variants: [ua] and [a:]. The fourth sound still appears to use the most traditional vowels in Khonkean dialect.

Without controlling for the other social variables, it was found that (ə), (o), (ia) and (ua) vary according to age, locality and attitude toward language. Sex is the only factor that is associated with the sound (ia).

When controlling for other variables the results show that (ə) and (o) vary according to age and locality, and (ia) varies according to sex. As for (ua), it varies according to age. The variable attitude toward language is not correlated with the variation of (ə), (o), (ia) and (ua) in Khonkean dialect.