

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to compare lexical usage among three generations and to analyse the characteristic variation of phonology, lexis and semantics in the Southern Thai Language at Langsuan District, Chumporn. The data was collected using 500 Southern Thai words, which had different forms from those in the Standard Thai Language. These words were tested on eighteen subjects, both men and women, who were classified according to their ages into three groups : with the first generation ranging from age 55 – 65, the second 35 – 45, and the third 15 – 25.

The study revealed that in the dialects of all three age brackets, 91.8 % of the time the standard Thai vocabulary has replaced or been used interchangeably with the Southern Thai vocabulary. The study also indicated that the first generation uses original vocabularies more than the other two generations. Original vocabularies are being used interchangeably by the third generation more than the first and the second generations.

The data also indicated that the phonological variations are unconditional. There are variations in consonants, vowels and tone marks. There is a variation in lexical usage both with the original vocabularies and other vocabularies. Semantically, there is both a wide and a narrow meaning variation which occurs more in the subjects of the second and the third generations.