

Chong Language Revitalization Project

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Multilingual Situation in Thailand

- ◆ 70 ethnolinguistic groups in Thailand
- ◆ Standard Thai, the only official language: medium of instruction for education and language of mass media
- ◆ Minority languages declining at various rates
- ◆ 14 small languages imminently endangered

Language death

the irreplaceable loss of a unique
way of viewing the world

“The language contains everything—our values
and wisdom, our outlook on the world”
(Dorothy Still Smoking, Blackfoot Indian
educator, USA. 2003)

Language Revitalization

“Language revitalization...is the attempt to add new linguistic forms or social functions to an embattled minority language with the aim of increasing its uses or users” (King, 2001, p. 23)



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Chong Language Situation

- ◆ Indigenous language, Chantaburi Province, about 2,000-4,000 speakers
- ◆ Austroasiatic language family
- ◆ Famous for four **registers**
- ◆ Rapid decrease in speakers last 20 years
- ◆ Stage 7 of Fishman's GIDS

CLRP beginnings

- ◆ Small cooperation between Chong elders & Mahidol linguists
 - ◆ Community motivation & commitment
 - ◆ Financial support from TRF; community-based research
 - ◆ Technical support from academic institution, ILCRD-Mahidol University
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CLRP Components

- ◆ Orthography development
- ◆ Literature production
- ◆ Curriculum development
- ◆ Teaching Chong as a subject in school
- ◆ Chong Community Learning Center

Chong Orthography

- ◆ Based on linguistic research
 - ◆ Based on Thai writing system
 - ◆ Tested to make sure it is readable and acceptable
 - ◆ Tool for recording Chong language and local knowledge, for teaching younger generation
 - ◆ Symbol of ethnic identity
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Developing Chong writing system



- The advantages of using Thai (national) script for writing a Chong (local lg).

- most potential users had basic knowledge of the Thai writing system.
- This knowledge of the Thai writing system is transferable to Chong literacy.
- Convenient in terms of pedagogy and proliferation : Thai script can be easily reproduced on personal computer.
- It is not a threat for the security agencies.

Principle of Chong orthography development

0. The most widely used dialect that most people understand is selected.

1. one sound – one symbol

- A single symbol would stand for a distinct sound in the phonology.
- There are many symbols for one sound in Thai, but only one symbol is selected for a sound in Chong. So only a portion of Thai symbols are used in Chong system.

2. The three way grouping of consonants acc. to the inherent tones, middle, low, and high groups in the Thai system is not followed in Chong orthography. Only consonant symbols from the middle and low groups in the Thai system are used.

3. Consistency in writing.

After completing a tentative orthography

- The writing system was tested to see how it is readable and acceptable to the community.
- The alphabet chart with keywords and pictures was produced.
 - Chong people were very proud of their work.
 - The orthography represents their Chong identity as a members of a unique ethnic community who are citizens of Thailand.
- The people are encourage to practice writing their language. using the Thai-based Chong writing system.















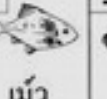



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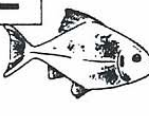



ตัวชนะระ

-ะ  กะละ	-า  กะตา	-ิ  มัดตะงิ	-ึ  จึ	-ะ  ละ	-เ  เปด	เ-ะ  แพะ	เ-  แซ
-อ  กริบ	-อ  กะพื่อ	เ-อะ  เลอะ	เ-อ  กะเซอ	-อ  กะซุ	-อ  กะหุ	เ-อะ  กะโมะ	เ-  กะโค
เ-าะ  เงาะ	-อ  ซอ	เ-ย  ซุกเป็ย	เ-อ  เกือก	-ว  บัว	-า  กำตี	เ-อ  ไฮ	เ-า  เฮา

ตัววันนะยุค

-  วา	-  ยาง	-  ปาว	-  ครา	-  กะว่าย	-  ร็อง	-  มะง่าม	-  กะล่าง
ย  ค็อน	ย  ชั๊ม	ย  ท้าม	ย  ซุ้จ	อ  เม้ว	อ  ลึย	อ  ร็อย	อ  คึน

ตัววันนยะยุก

- 	- 	- 	- 	! - 	! - 	! - 	! - 
วา	ยาง	ปาว	ครา	กะว้าย	ร๋อง	มะง่าม	กะล่าง
๗ - 	๗ - 	๗ - 	๗ - 	๘ - 	๘ - 	๘ - 	๘ - 
ก้อน	ญ้าม	ท้าม	ซู่จ	เม้ว	ลู่ย	ร๋อย	คีน

Chong Orthography Testing

- **Conducting the test**
- **The informants selected represent**
 - both genders.
 - different age groups.
 - different educational backgrounds.
 - different home villages.
- **The test was limited for those who speak Chong and are able to read Thai.**
- **The purpose of the test was clearly explained.**
- **Explain differences between Chong and Thai alphabets, particularly the letters and diacritics representing different values in each system.**

The test occurred at three levels

1. reading at the word level

- informants used word and picture card to match cards sharing the same thing.
- use all words representing the whole sound system of the language.

2. reading (and writing) at the sentence

- ten sentences of various stages of difficulties.
- wrote 4 sentences.

3. reading at the story level

- read a short story and answered comprehension questions.
- The researchers took notes of problems, difficulties, other reactions about the writing system.

