Language endangerment and community empowerment: Experience form community training in the Moken language documentation and preservation project

Sarawut Kraisame

Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia, Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom 73170, Thailand

A R T I C L E   I N F O

ABSTRACT

Language endangerment and extinction is currently a critical issue among linguists around the world. It is known that language attrition and loss dramatically progress, work on documentation and preservation should be done prior to the last speaker of such language passing away. It is found that there are at least fifteen languages in Thailand which suffer from language decline and will be extinct very soon. Moken language (ISO 693-3 code mwt) is one of language which is regarded as the dying languages. Like other endangered languages, Moken language and local heritage knowledge gradually decline without any transmission to younger generations. Thus, the Moken language documentation and preservation project (MLDPP) was initiated with an attempt to document and preserve Moken language and its oral literature before its extinction. As a part of MLDPP, this paper describes about how the community-training program is maneuvered. This contributes to collaborative language documentation and preservation project. As participatory action research, a grounded-theoretical approach together with on-the-job-training was adopted for contributing to the most benefit of community members. Based on almost-three-month training, the native researchers were able to initiate documenting their local knowledge and to manage the fieldwork without the researcher. They were able to document over 100 video records of Moken place names in Surin Islands with 27 min long and over 50 video records of traditional ecological knowledge with 20 min long without the linguist's supervision.

Introduction

Moken Language Documentation and Preservation Project, henceforth MLDPP, was initiated in 2013. Its primary goal was to document and preserve Moken language and oral literature, including local knowledge, on Surin Islands in Phang-nga Province. Engaging intensively in Surin Islands Moken community, the researcher explored that the language situation of this community was not as good as my expectation. It seemed that on one in this community was aware of language and local knowledge declination situation. It was observed that several signs were shown up that Moken language in this community was declining such as monosyllabization, semantic loss, semantic overgeneralization, Thai words borrowing and replacement, local knowledge transmission gap between Moken adults and kids etc. (see more in Kraisame, 2012). Even these linguistic phenomena could be generally found in every language but these could be significantly important signs with ethic minority languages which no writing system nor official language

E-mail address: s.kraisame@homail.com.

standardization. The disappearance of the actual Moken words, lexical meaning, and local knowledge transmission have weakened younger generations to their ancestors and less opportunities to acquire formal styles of syntactic structure and lexical knowledge (Nettle & Romaine, 2000). Together with the less number of its speakers, Moken language becomes one of 15 endangered languages in Thailand (Premsrirat, 2007). As a documentary linguist, language documentation and sustainable language preservation must be conducted before disappearing of the last speaker.

Grenoble and Whaley (2006) addressed that the key success of sustainable language preservation is community engagement from the very first step through the whole process of documentation and preservation. This corresponds to Czaykowska-Higgins (2009, pp. 15—50). She stated that researchers need to constitute "the community" regarding how it looks like for the purpose of the project from grass-roots speakers, language learners to various bodies in that specific "community". Thus, our attempt to working *for community, with community* and *by community* lead to empowerment and language work sustainability in the target community.

In terms of grounded-theoretical research, "an empowering research approach" and "a community-based language research" were conflated and adopted to be a framework (Cameron, Frazer, Harvey, Rampton, & Richardson, 1992; Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009; Rice, 2006). Based on these grounds, the researcher developed five components of "a collaborative language documentation and preservation" in Surin Islands Moken community as following: 1) partnership building; 2) orthography development; 3) technical preparation and native speakers' capacity building; 4) data gathering and eliciting and 5) mobilization and implementation (Kraisame, 2016). Both local and non-local stakeholders were invited to participate and discuss about the project's objectives and each stakeholder's expectation at the beginning of the project.

There were five interested stakeholders, excluding the researcher, accepted the invitation for round-table discussion: Moken community members, a teacher in Moken community learning center, a community-primary healthcare officer, Mahidol University language revitalization program facilitators (LR facilitators), and a documentary film maker. The primary objective of the stakeholders' invitation was not only to clarify the research's objective and to discuss the expectation of stakeholders but to seek a possibility to work sustainability and to build up partnership in the project.

As a result from the discussion, every stakeholder whom were invited agreed to participate and join as a team member. However, four stakeholders were identified as direct partners and the rest one was an indirect partner of MLDPP. The direct partners, as shown in Figure 2, were the first group who can intensively contribute to the project's outcomes. At this stage, the first group of direct partners were the Moken community members, the teacher in Moken community learning center, the Mahidol University language revitalization program facilitators (LR facilitators), the documentary filmmaker and the researcher. While, the community-primary healthcare officer was identified as an indirect partner who would provide supports and facilitate the team during the project.

In this paper, the researcher will highlight and discuss on "technology preparation and native speakers' capacity building" which is the part of a documentation process of Moken language. The technology preparation and native speakers' capacity building was done through *"training process"* which focused on both management skills and language documentation skills. The researcher believes that this training process empowers the community members carry out their own language work without or less dependent on linguists or academic expertise. Thus, the aim of this paper is to share the field experience in training indigenous people to document and preserve their own language and local knowledge.

Moken: Geographic, Demographic and Linguistic Information

Moken language (ISO 693-3 code mwt) is a member of Malayo-Polynesian branch of Austronesian languages family. It is spoken by 6,000 speakers approximately in Myanmar and Thailand's territories (Moken, n.d.). Moken is one of the three sea nomadic ethnic groups (or semi-nomadic people) who have been settled in Thailand, namely Moken, Moklen and Urak Lawoi'. Generally, they are called by Thais as/cʰaːw leːy/(sea people) or/cʰaːw tʰay may/(new Thai). Moken people have lived in Mergui archipelago (Myeik archipelago) where is from Tavoy island in Myanmar' territory to three southern west coast provinces of Thailand (Ivanoff, 1997). The research site is situated in Surin Islands. It is located approximately 60 km away from the mainland of Phang-Nga province. Surin Islands consists of five islands and one rock which is 141.25 square kilometres entire the archipelago: North Surin island, South Surin island, Ri island, Klang island, Khai island and Richelieu rock. In 2016, there are about 260 Moken speakers living in this community.

From linguistic evidences, three of them belong to the same language family but in different sub-branches. As shown in the following figure, Moken and Moklen belong to Proto Moken-Moklen sub-branch but Urak Lawoi' belongs to Malay sub-branch with Malay language. Even Moken shares many lexicons with Urak Lawoi', these sharing words are cognate to Austronesaian Language family (Chantanakomes, 1980; Larish, 1999; Swastham, 1982). As so many studies have been done on dialects of Moken language (Naw Say Bay, 1995, p. 194; White, 1992), six dialects of Moken are tentatively listed: Dung, Jait, Lebi, Niawi, Jadiak and Moklen. Moken speakers have lived from Mergui Archipelago (Myeik Archipelago), Tavoy Island, in Myanmar to Pi Pi Island in Thailand. In Thailand, only Jadiak dialect and Moklen dialect have been found; Moken language in Surin Islands is categorized in Jadiak dialect according to a mutual intelligibility test. The distribution of Moken and Moklen speakers can be found across the south-western coast of the country in 4 provinces, namely Ranong, Phang-Nga, Phuket and Krabi province. However, Moklen dialect has been found only in Phang-Nga province. A language family tree diagram of Moken language is shown below Figure 1.
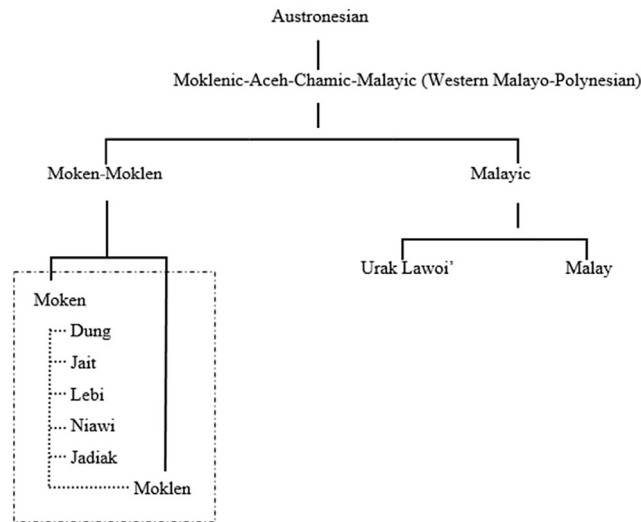
Figure 1 A language family tree diagram of Moken language
Source: Kraisame (2016 adapted from Larish, 1999) and Naw Say Bay (1995, p. 194)

It is found that the current Moken language has twenty-one consonant phonemes (in Table 1). The phonemes of Surin Islands dialect is relatively similar to Dung's (see Naw Say Bay, 1995, p. 194) except the lack of rhotic/r/sound in Surin Islands dialect. To note,/l/,/n/and/m/are interchangeable in many words.

The vowel system of Surin Islands dialect is relatively akin to Dung dialect regardless of diphthongs and nasal vowels./a/vowel has two variants, namely [ə] occurring in an unstressed syllable or in pre-syllable and [ɐ] appearing in a stressed syllable or in minor syllable. The vowel system of the Surin Islands Moken dialect has contrastively seven short vowels and seven long vowels, as shown in Table 2.

There are several phonetic diphthongs in Moken which can be treated as variant forms, namely [Vi], [Vːi], [Vu], and [Vːu]. These are phonemically analyzed as semivowels or approximants j and w proceeding the vowels as in Vj or Vw. However, there are two phonemic diphthongs with no vowel-length contrast: ia and ua.

	Phonemic	Phonetic (variant)
'star'	/bituak/	[biː.tuːək]
'monkey'	/buan/	[buən]
'shell'	/biakɛː/	[biːa.kɛː]
'to hear'	/ʔiaŋ/	[ʔiəŋ]

Four nasalized vowels have been found during my fieldwork in Surin Islands community. Their phonetic realizations include these following variants, namely [ẽː], [ɛ̃ː], [ĩː] and [ãː]. However, phonemically, I analyzed as a variation (variant) of /eː/,/ɛː/,/iː/and/aː/because not enough evidence to prove that the nasalized could be important phonemes in the inventory. Moreover, there is no non-nasalized vowel pair contrast. Examples of these are:

	Phonemic	Phonetic (variant)
'to be fun'	/leːŋ/	[lẽːŋ]
'drill'	/wɛːt/	[wɛ̃ːt]
'alone'	/maʔiːt/	[ma.ʔiːt]
'to laugh'	/naːwaːʔ/	[naːwãːʔ]

Methodology

To make the training outcome effective and practical an action research, On-the-Job-Training (OJT) was employed in this fieldwork. As the nature of OJT, its four main processes were introduced together with language documentation techniques including video and audio recording. Presentation of native speakers' work were required along the way of documentation for evaluation and feedback. In addition, project management and fieldwork administrative skills were trained to the native speakers, henceforth native researchers, who had agreed to be research team members. The trained native researchers were expected to work on both language documentation and field management academically and professionally without linguist's supervision during the fieldwork. Finally, the outcomes were evaluated and edited by the linguists who trained them. OJT in language documentation was summarized in the table below.

Referring to Table 3, the first step, *demonstration/instruction* aims at transferring language documentation

Table 1
Surin Islands Moken consonants

	Bilabial		Alveolar		Palatal		Velar		Glottal
Plosive	p	b	t	d	c	ɟ	k	g	ʔ
	pʰ		tʰ		cʰ		kʰ		
Nasal		m		n		ɲ		ŋ	
Fricative									h
Approximant				l		j		w	

Table 2
Surin Islands Moken vowels

	Font	Back
Close	i	u
	iː	uː
Close-mid	e	o
	eː	oː
Open-mid	ɛ	ɔ
	ɛː	ɔː
Open	a	
	aː	

Table 3
OJT in language documentation

OJT process	Activities in knowledge and technology transfer
Demonstration/instruction	- Video, audio, and photograph
Coaching	- Field management and planning
	- Local knowledge and oral literature documentation
Job rotation	- Field management and planning
	- Local knowledge and oral literature documentation
Projects	- Local knowledge and oral literature documentation
	- Data usage planning and implementing

skills from the researcher (a linguist) to the native researchers. The skills usually focus on video, audio and photography's skills. To meet the standard of language archive, the native researchers should closely pay attention to quality of primary data. The retrieved data must be in the standard format with less noise and any distractions as much as possible. This is to ensure that with some limited support in the future, their recording must less require post-recording production. They must be aware of planning their records ahead in order to avoid errors and mistakes.

The second step, *coaching*, focused on language documentation fieldwork. This step allowed the native researchers had first-hand experiences on the fieldwork after transferring the language documentation skills from the first step. In this step, the native researchers were required to work closely with the linguist from the beginning of field management and planning, documenting and planning, and fieldwork evaluation.

The third step, *job rotation*, it aims at rotating roles and responsibilities of the native researchers. Since there were two native researchers who agreed to be in the research team, job switching must be arranged to let them learn other aspects of the language documentation work. To note, the job rotation and the coaching (or supervision) are co-occurring processes throughout. These two steps allow them to know the whole research study before the end of the project.

The last step, *projects*, was based on what the native researchers want and expectations to work on documentation. The native researchers can contribute their contents and document any stories as they wish. This step allowed them to work on their own without linguist's influences regarding the narration's content. At the same time, data usage planning and implementing were discussed to exchange the idea between the researcher and the native researchers. All of these will be discussed in the next session as my research results.

Apart from the training method that was flexibly framed, some recording tools were prepared for the native researchers, as shown below:

1) Panasonic IC recorder (RR-XS450) with. WAV format

2) Sony microphones (ECM-F8 and ECM-T6)

Topic	Recording tools	Content
Audio	• Audio recorder	• Switching on and off the recorder
		• Build-in microphone and sound targeting
		• How to operate the recorder for recording
		• Playback option
		• Monitoring the recorder during recording: battery life and recording time
		• Audio recorder and external microphone
		• Audio recorder and external earphone monitoring
	• Microphone	• Types of microphone
		• Wind and noise
		• Unwanted surrounding sound and recording quality
		• Things to be careful when using microphones
VDO and photograph	• VDO camcorder	• Switching on and off the camcorder
		• How to operate the camcorder for recording
		• Playback option
		• Monitoring the camcorder during recording: battery life and recording time
		• Camcorder and external earphone monitoring
		• Usefulness of a tripod
	• Camera	• Switching on and off the camera
		• How to take a photo and review
		• How to operate any other options

Figure 2 Training content in recording tools
Source: Kraisame (2016, p. 65)

3) Headset wired microphone

4) Headphone

5) Sony VDO recorder (DCR-XS22E/S)

6) Cannon camera (PowerShot A2600)

Native Researchers' Capacity Building Process

From my action research over one year in Surin Islands Moken community, several training methods and contents were acquired to identify the most efficient and applicable for this community. This section will be mainly divided into three steps. The first will be *'demonstration/instruction'*. This refers to the suitable training process and its training content on language documentation were identified and introduced to the native researchers. The second is *'coaching and job rotation'*. In this step, the native speakers were asked to work as research assistants in the linguist's language documentation project. Both actual experience in language documentation and field management and administrative skill were focused. The last will be *'projects'*. The native researchers freely implemented their own documentation projects with provided recording tools. In this part, implication and mobilization of language documentation data were also analyzed and synthesized based on their views.

In the first step of OJT, *demonstration/instruction*, this part aims at the training method and its content in language documentation that arranged for the native researchers. This training can help them familiar with recording technology and prepare them for the next of language documentation fieldwork. It is hoped that both documentation technology and recording skills will be transferred from the linguist to the native researchers and they can conduct these further. Training content covered audio and video recording. The researcher spent one day on recording equipment preparation and fieldwork workshop for the native researchers. The training started from topics in audio recording. An audio recorder and microphones were firstly introduced to the native researchers; later, a VDO camcorder and a camera were introduced. The details of training content were illustrated below in Figure 2.

practice session was roughly divided into four steps: planning, practicing, presenting and reviewing, and evaluating. Planning, the native researchers must talk about what they want to record, what kind of recording scene, which equipment they will use, and what they prepare for the recording. Practicing, the native researchers were required to prepare the field and arrange everything themselves per discussion in the planning step. In case that a microphone-equipped required on any language consultants, they must equip it without any assistance from the researcher. Presenting and reviewing, the native researchers were required to present their fieldworks from the second step. They were also required to present any challenges and difficulties during recording. The last step, evaluation and feedback, mainly focused on quality of data. Noises in audio and blur records in video/photograph were primarily considered.

As a result from the first training, the native researchers were able to make good records on both audio and video. However, there were some minute problems regarding the recording, such as video focusing instability, too fast panning of the video recording, unfocused pictures and interfered noises from winds. Discussions and suggestions were provided to the native researchers for improvement. This step was not seriously evaluated. It was treated as the introductory stage for the native researchers.

In the second step, *coaching and job rotation*, the native researchers were invited to work collaboratively with the linguist in the linguist's initiated-language documentation project in language and oral literature documentation. As a part of planned OJT with aiming of empowerment inside, field management and admiration were raised at the beginning of our talk. The native researchers were asked to survey resource persons who specialized in singing traditional songs and telling folktales in their community. Interestingly, this survey made them raised their awareness that only few number of Moken resource persons were exist and they all were senior people: three singers and two story tellers. After discussing about the number of resource persons, the native researchers together with the linguist visited each resource person to inform him/her about the project and asked their permission to record songs and folktales. Later, the native researchers were required to arrange

Figure 3 native speakers' capacity building

There is another 6-h practicing session apart from the addressed workshop. The native researchers had a chance to practice recording what they had been trained. The

date and time and made appointment with them. This process was assigned to the native researchers as their main responsibility.
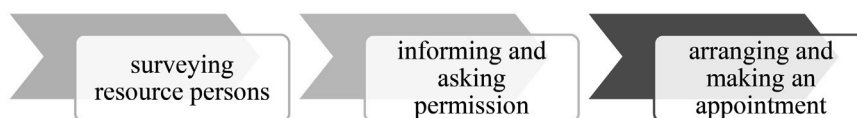
Figure 4 the first process of community empowerment and OJT in field management

After making an appointment, field preparation about place and length of documentation was discussed. Recording tools must be selected by the native researchers with under the linguist's supervision. Both audio and video were prepared and carefully installed to avoid any noise and distortion that may ruin the quality of data. The authority of fieldwork management and administration including timing, honorarium for resource persons and any expenses relating to fieldwork were granted to the native researchers. As my strong belief, this process could fully empower the native researchers because they fully engaged and took responsibility in every step of this documentation fieldwork.

In the last step of the training, *projects*, the native researchers were asked to document any stories they wish to record. Without any limitations and assistance from the linguist, they could freely record either video or audio. This step was as the result of the training. The success of native speakers' capacity development in language documentation could be proved in this step, as of my assumption that language documentation can be done by trained native speakers. If so, the language work could be more sustainable in the native community.

For almost a month that they were left to work by themselves, the native researchers did two categories of
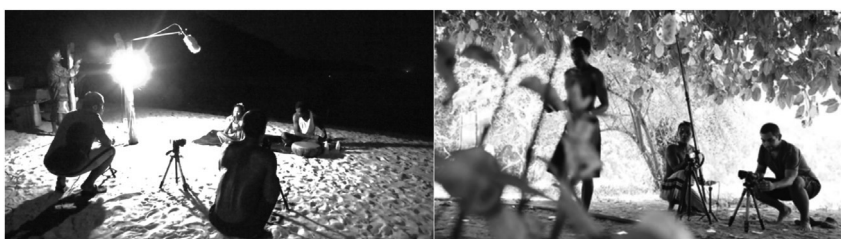

Figure 5 language documentation fieldwork preparation

It is surprisingly found that the native researchers show their strong willingness to participate in this project. As a coaching stage, they needed to record with the provided recording equipment to get more familiar with the tools and confront the actual experiences. Working together, the native speakers learned to deal several challenges and difficulties both from technical problems and respondents problems. For examples, they knew how to avoid surrounding noises from uncontrollable circumstances, how wind destroys quality of data, how to deal and negotiate with recourse persons in the community, how to communicate with any other persons and also how to manage and critically plan a step-by-step ahead. These prepared and trained procedures can promote more work's quality with less obstacles. Their success on documentation will be discussed in the next step, *projects*. As a requirement of job rotation, both of native researchers must take roles and responsibility of each other along the way of the fieldwork.

documentation. First, they documented places names around Surin Islands with 102 video records for over 90 place names together with the history or story of each place. The documentation was approximately 27 min in length. This documentation was named as *'the documentation of Moken place names'*. The second documentation, the native researchers recorded 54 videos about aquatic animals, food from the sea, and corals' types which approximately 20 min long. This second documentation was named as *'the documentation of traditional ecological knowledge'*. The native speakers also purposed and planned that they need to mobilize their own documentation, songs and folktales to be books that attached with video DVDs.

As my primary intention to sustain language documentation and preservation work in the community, main responsibility of the linguist is not merely gathering all language data and leave the community but to train the

Figure 6 the linguist and the native researchers working together as a part of OJT

community members and empower them to work by their own is what the linguist should do. From the last step of the training and what the native researcher shared, these prove that the capacity building and training process can increase their own confidence to control over language documentation and preservation work. It is confidently said that On-the-Job-Training in the collaborative project can contribute to community empowerment. One of the native researchers expressed his feeling and opinion towards what we did to me that:

"Before, we started the project, I never realized that everything was disappearing. I never knew that everything was vanishing. I never noticed that everything was not the same. But when you said that our Moken language situation was getting worse, I had noticed and found that what you said was really true.

…...Since the first day we started documenting, I have felt that we were going in the right direction. I felt better when we started. Lucky us, you came here at the right time before we lost everything. Without you without this project, nothing would be left to document. All Moken words would disappear. The kids and teenagers tend to use more Thai."

Finding and Implication

For almost three months of On-the-Job-Training, the native researchers' capacity was satisfying. Their capacity development can be divided into two main parts. The first is local knowledge documentation and the second is the field management and administration. As mentioned earlier of their own documentation works, 27 min long of **'the documentation of Moken place names'** and 20 min long of **'the documentation of traditional ecological knowledge'** were evidences of their documentation skills development. Some examples of their documentation were provided below.

The Documentation of Moken Place Names

Recorded by by Nin Klatalay and Sutat Klatalay

Figure 7 buːhuːn cʰanaj

ɲɔː ciː doːj nɛh buːhuːn cʰanaj ʔeː buːhuːn cʰanaj maːlɔj nɛh laːŋ taŋ buːhuːn cʰanaj tʰi doːj nɛh cʰanaj maːtaj tʰiː baːjaːʔ ŋɔːʔ ɲɔː maːnam laːŋ maːlɔj maːlɔj tup ɲaː pin kaːnaj daʔ laː buːhuːn cʰanaj maːnam lɔːcʰɔk baːjaːʔ ɲɔː maːlɔj baːjaːʔ ŋɔːʔ nɛh ʔeː maːlɔj maːlɔj buːhuːn daːtah tʰi doːj laː nɛːʔɛn gɔː mɔj doːj jaw cʰanaːmiʔ doːj keːn jaːlam niː nɛh

Here is 'buː huː n cʰanaj' (Chanaj sandune). We called this sandune (buː huː n) as Chanaj sandune because uncle Chanaj passed away here at that big rock. Before Tsunami, this sandune was quite big. We could play football on the sandune. However, the sandune is a bit small today, because, Tsunami took away all sands.

Figure 8 paːnaːt taŋaːn

doːj nɛh paːnaːt taŋaːn paːnaːt taŋaːn niː maːlɔj baːlaj buːlut pɔːlɔːʔ haː cʰaʔ jaw ŋin maluːj ʔɛh ʔaːk mɛːduːn ʔaːk ʔalɔj ʔaːŋ laːlɔj ʔanɔŋ kɔːʔ tʰiː doːj ʔɛh cʰaʔ pin maːlɔj laːkɔt tʰalɔːj doːj kaːbaːŋ mɔj ʔɛːm hah

Here is "paː naː t taŋaː n" (Iron Wood beach). In the past, Moken loved to dock their boats here. "paː naː t taŋaː n" can protect us from the eastern wind. We were able to find yams. However, no more living is like in the past.

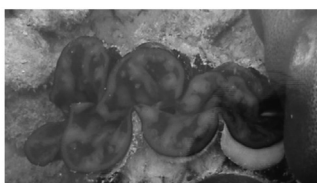**The Documentation of Traditional Ecological Knowledge**

Recorded by by Nin Klatalay

Figure 9 cʰalaːj cʰaːbun

doːj ʔɛh cʰalaːj cʰaːbun cʰalaːj cʰaːbun niː ɲaː naːŋɔːj
mɔj hah ɲaː ɲuː cʰaʔ ɲaː pin tʰiː ɲuː kaʔ tit tʰiː ɲuː kaʔ
hah ɲaː naːŋɔːj mɔj lɔː lah ɲaː naːʔ banɛh cʰalaːj
tɔːkɔːʔ   haː lah cʰalaːj taːʔ nɛh naːʔ taːlɔj macam

This is a Chaaboon giant clam. This giant clam cannot swim or move. When it sticks at somewhere, it will no longer move. Unlike a Torkaa giant clam, this clam can move or swim to anywhere. You must keep in mind that there are three types of the giant clam.

Figure 10 cʰalaːj paːn

doːj ʔɛh laːŋ laːɲaːn cʰalaːj paːn cʰalaːj paːn niː
weːla kaːlaŋ niŋ daʔ niŋ daʔ ɲaː maːtaj jaːlam
kaːlaŋ ɲaː doːj ɲaː ʔɛːm jaːlam kaːlaŋ lah ɲaː ɲuː
bɔʔ kɛːhaːʔ biʔ

This is a Paan giant clam. This Paan giant clam lives in a hump coral. The giant clam will die when the coral is bigger. Its shell will be gradually closed by the coral when it is getting bigger.

From the above four examples, both native speakers were able to arrange recording sequences and logically control contents of the documentations. Undoubtedly, these two community members can work on language and local language documentation in the future without linguists. The quality of their work also meets the linguistic archival standard. Not only the documentation skills that they got from the training, but the awareness of language and local knowledge disappearing can also be found. This was reflected from one of the native speaker below.

"Moken traditional life has gradually changed over time every day. We do not live on the boat anymore. Children have to go to school and teenagers usually leave the village for work. I am afraid that one day this knowledge will disappear in the near future. I must record these before I have no chance to do."

The second development is the fieldwork management and administration. The native speakers were able to prepare the fieldwork very well. The recording and lightening tools were installed properly. The administration including timing, honorarium for resource persons and any expenses relating to fieldwork was effective. The native speakers knew how and when to make an appointment with the resource persons. They also impressively arranged and managed any expenses relating to the fieldwork which was the cost effectiveness. As my intention to initiate community empowerment during this training process, it can be found that the two native speakers gradually gained the power equality in the field. They learned how to negotiate and re-negotiate to get the most benefit for their community.

The idea of knowledge transmission to younger generations was discussed with the native researchers. Book making, which attached with their VDO records, was arranged for kids. However, the book making processes required exhaustive assistance from Moken children. To assure knowledge transmission effectively, children were asked to listen and transcribe the records of Moken place names and traditional ecological knowledge with assistant of the native researchers. Both native researchers talked to the children about their concerns of local knowledge vanishing and asked them to participate. With close attention and helping of the native speakers, the children were able to transcribe VDO records and write

correctly in their own language with the developed orthography as show below. This process could assure that local knowledge which documented by the native researchers transmit to the younger generations and sustain in the community.
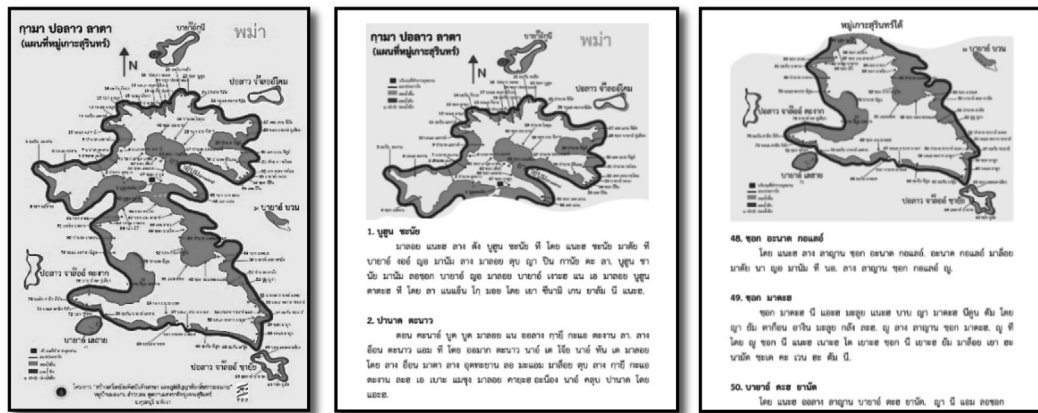

Figure 11 an example of book making of Moken place names

researchers. At this step, both of them had to plan, arrange and prepare the field with the linguist. They also needed to make an appointment with the resource persons, install the recording tools, and manage any expenses relating to the fieldwork. The native researchers and the linguist had

Conclusion and Discussion

This paper aimed to share and discuss the linguistic fieldwork experience in Surin Islands Moken community members' capacity building and development in language documentation and preservation; with the strong belief, well-trained community members and community empowerment can sustain language work in the community and also can maintain and preserve the indigenous language.

On-the-Job-Training was adopted to be an approach of community members' training. Using this approach, it allowed knowledge and skills transferring from the linguist to the native researchers while collaborative working in the field was emerged. It also allowed the linguist to build a strong relationship with the native researchers. With the OJT approach together with a grounded-theoretical framework, three steps of the training were introduced in the field: demonstration/instruction; coaching and job rotation; and projects.

The first step, *demonstration/instruction*, began with a half-day workshop on how to operate an audio recorder, microphones, a video camcorder, a camera and also some recording techniques. The native researchers would get familiar with the recording equipment before practice recording in the village. Later on, a 6-h practicing session was introduced to let them practice in real situations with close monitor and supervision from the linguist. The native researchers got more familiar in using each recording equipment. Any difficulties and challenges during the practicing session were discussed and resolved at the end of the session together with review the data that the native researchers gathered.

The second step, *coaching/job rotation*, allowed closer engagement between the linguist and the native

chance to collaboratively work in documenting Moken oral literature. Even the oral literature documentation was the linguist-initiated project, the native researchers were granted authority to choose topics/songs for recording and also timing of each record. This process gradually shared and transferred power and ownership from the linguist to the native researchers and this was a process of empowering the community members.

The last step, *projects*, was designed to let the native researchers had the full ownership of their work. With their initiated-project, the native researchers focused on what was vanishing soon. Two sets of local knowledge were documented. The documentation of Moken place name was done with 102 video records which contained approximately 27 min long and the documentation of traditional ecological knowledge was done with 54 video records which contained approximately 20 min long. The native researchers also purposed that they needed to mobilize all data from their documentation and the oral literature documentation to be books that attached with video DVDs.

From the native researchers' development in each step, it could be seen that the community members got confidence in language documentation work from the training. They also gained power equality in fieldwork management and language documentation research design. Collaborative working with the linguist, the native researchers learned to negotiate and re-negotiate on what they wanted or expected to be the best for future of the language and local knowledge.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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