

The Lavua Revitalization Project

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The Lavua community is an ethnic language group in Thailand. The Lavua language, spoken by around 460 speakers in Ban Papae, Mae Hong Son province, belongs to the Palaungic branch of the Mon-Khmer language family. Lavua leaders are concerned about what they perceive as a decline in the knowledge and use of their language and traditional culture, especially among the younger generation. They do not want to lose the rich cultural and linguistic heritage that has been handed down for generations. This presentation will describe the process and networks of the Lavua language and culture revitalization project. It was started as a collaborative effort by academic staff from Mahidol university to develop a writing system to be used as a tool for collecting various kinds of local knowledge such as rice cultivation, traditional songs, folklore, crafts, food and history. In order for their language to be taught at pre-primary school in the community, a curriculum, teaching materials, and teacher training programs have been developed through the co-operation of members in the community, linguists, historians, and educational supervisors.

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