

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

Past linguistic research has covered the definitions of, reasons for, methodology and past field work in sociolinguistic surveys of speech communities, including a variety of different perspectives on qualitative, quantitative, and network analysis. Statistical procedures offer mathematical means of summarizing results. The topics covered in this review are:

- a summary of the language situation in Thailand, including its embracive binary distinctions and fluid language hierarchy;
- language maintenance and vitality concepts, including the idea of bilingualism;
- language endangerment with case studies on minority and immigrant situations, including language attitudes faced by immigrants in the USA; and
- survey work, including such tools as questionnaires, sentence repetition tests, recorded conversation analysis, statistical analysis, social network analysis, and participant observation.

The attitude and core values regarding language and ethnicity which are important to the nation of Thailand is a significant matter to understand as it bears upon the immigrant situation for Thais in WA. Thais consider Standard Thai an important symbol of Thai national identity (Rappa 2006: 106-123). It is the national and official language of Thailand. Standard Thai is associated with the elite and in particular with Thai royalty (2006: 111), and therefore is something to be emulated. The Royal Institute of Thailand, established in 1898, oversees the development and standardization of the language (2006: 110-116). The language situation will be discussed under the next two sections as a background to the current values and attitudes held by Thai immigrants in WA.

#### **2.1 Thailand's embracive binary language distinction**

Thailand is an ethnically diverse country. Over 80 other languages are spoken in Thailand besides Thai including Thailand's four regional languages: Thaiklang, or Central Thai, spoken in Bangkok and Central Thailand; Lao, spoken in Northeastern

Thailand; Paktay, spoken in the South, and Kammuang, spoken in the North (Smalley 1988: 249). Standard Thai remains prestigious, however, because of the nation's binary perception of Thai – a language is either Thai or it is not (Rappa 2006: 108). This allows for many Thai (or Tai) languages to be “embraced” as dialects of Standard Thai which is the language to be used as the medium of instruction in government schools (although regional language speakers have the right to learn their own languages) (Person 9: 2010). According to Rappa this binary classification of Thailand's languages is an embracive distinction allowing for unity in the midst of diversity (2006: 106-123).

This binary concept is a sociolinguistic ‘us and them’ type reality. Rappa quotes King Chulalongkorn saying that a Thai citizen views a Laotian as ‘other’ until he is compared to a westerner, at which point he is viewed as ‘us’ and the westerner viewed as ‘other’ (2006: 106). This is a significant point to compare and contrast with the current immigrant situation in WA and will be discussed more fully in Chapters 4 and 5.

Besides this embracive view of language within Thailand, the nation also has a unique linguistic hierarchy.

## 2.2 Thailand's fluid language hierarchy

Smalley has proposed a linguistic hierarchy in Thailand: from Standard Thai (at the top), through regional languages, marginal regional languages, to displaced languages, languages of towns and cities, marginal languages, enclave languages, as well as external languages (1988: 247), as shown in Figure 1. Displaced languages here refer to ones whose speakers have migrated from elsewhere. Enclave languages here refer to languages which are totally surrounded by other languages within the country, which are not also defined by marginality or displacement or found in towns and cities. In fact, 90 per cent of the population speaks one of the forms of the four main regional languages of Thailand, which are Tai; the other 10 per cent speaks a non-Tai language (Simpson and Thammasathien 2007: 401). The purpose of this sociolinguistic hierarchy is to describe how non-competitive multilingualism can exist (1988: 246).

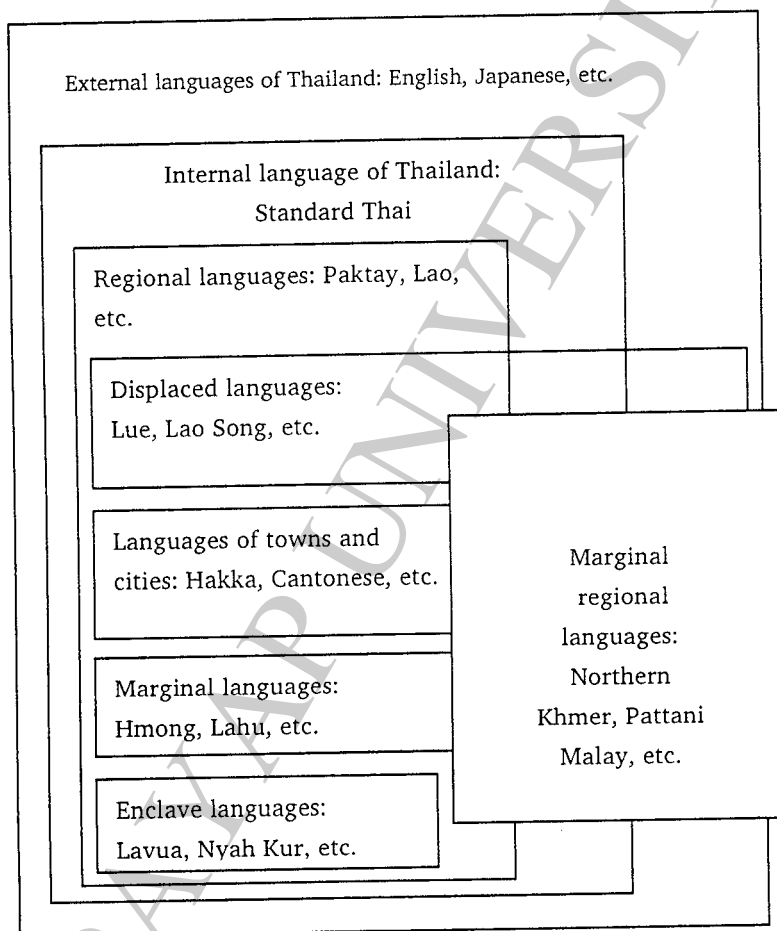


Figure 1 Smalley's language hierarchy of Thailand

There are languages unique to Thailand's various regions, unique to its towns and cities, and unique to its displaced populations (1988: 226-254). In the above figure, there are languages of the expatriate communities, such as English and Japanese which are found to be outside the language structure. Although external languages have a role in the nation, they are considered to be 'other' or 'outside'. There are also languages of communities such as the Chinese, who are Thai residents and nationals, and yet also have their own languages (1988: 246). Languages which are considered to be on Thailand's social periphery, such as the marginal languages of its 'hill tribe' peoples, appear at the bottom of this hierarchical structure (Rappa 2006: 112). Standard Thai, on the other hand appears to be a core value to the Thai people of Thailand. Socially more prestigious languages are placed near it, closer to the top, where it holds preeminence overall.

Each and all of these languages hang from a sociolinguistic structure or concept which allows for them to co-exist and which acts as a channel for inter-language tensions (Smalley 1988: 245). However, language communities from these categories function, for the most part, peaceably within the country. Smalley considers it a case of multiglossia, where people participate in different ways within a range of languages, seeing it as "a case study in linguistic diversity and national unity" (1988: 246).

Thai can be considered a language whose semantic system defines social and ethnic differences, where categories are centered rather than bounded (1988: 255). Whereas other class systems around the world may be restrictive, a centered hierarchical system allows for movement. When it comes to the concept of doing business across the scale of languages, for instance, people can avoid bearing a noticeable sense of being 'different' if they can manage the levels of language expected in a particular encounter (1988: 243). In the same way, this hierarchy of languages is an unusual situation as far as 'language ecology' goes, in that it does not confine its mother-tongue speakers (1988: 245-257) to a class. To the contrary, as long as an individual masters the social and linguistic markers at the levels he desires to move in, the Thai language hierarchy gives him a certain amount of freedom to do so. For this reason, there is no social shame associated with a member of a language ranking lower on the hierarchical structure using a higher language in order to identify himself with members of higher ranking languages (1988: 255).

This is not to say there is no socio/economic hierarchy among Thai language speakers. Again, in so far as this language hierarchical notion is expressed among the nation's

spectrum of Thais, social stigmas are associated with an inability to master the appropriate hierarchical markers, and grace given where individuals prove mastery in those areas (1988: 254). As Premsrirat notes, people can change their identity and social status if they can speak the language and have the education or economic status at the same level as people in a higher level (1995: 1). However, the researcher's experience has been that the mastery of social and linguistic markers which define a place on the hierarchical structure above where an individual was socialized often is accompanied by an accent unwittingly earmarking the individual as someone 'outside'. This may mean he will not completely be accepted at the highest socio-economical-political levels of the country despite his achievements.

Moving in and out or up and down the language hierarchy is a reasonable way of relating within the cultural context without an adverse affect on the domains that different languages are used in. Although Standard Thai is the medium of education, and is used in mass media and at the levels of business and commerce (1988: 248), it has not always replaced other mother-tongue languages used across the country. Each language is used in context and in appropriate domains in this multilingual society.

In view of both the inclusive binary concept of Thai languages and the gracious social door of opportunity in its language hierarchy, the Thai language hierarchy represents freedom to its speakers to be themselves and to seek greater social status; their identity as Thais is secure. When survey is made of Thais in their immigrant situation in WA, USA, these concepts provide backdrop by which to compare and contrast their sociolinguistic situation.

### **2.3 Language maintenance; language vitality**

When languages are effectively maintained, they retain their vitality. That is, when speakers choose to use their languages consistently in a broad range of domains, their proficiency in the language is not weakened but maintained; the language is considered healthy. This is the situation for many languages within Thailand's multilingual context (Smalley 1988: 248-257).

Tools for assessing to what extent languages are being maintained have been devised and used in sociolinguistic survey. Radloff (1991: 7) proposes the use of Sentence Repetition Tests (SRT) as an assessment tool. Observation and Participant Observation (PO) has been used in such studies as that of the Turkish in the Netherlands (Huls and vande Mond 1992). Questionnaires have been effectively used, as well. These tools will be discussed more thoroughly under Section 2.5, Survey Tools.

Although we have seen how a multilingual context such as that of Thailand can be healthy when maintained, the context of immigration potentially introduces a new language. In the midst of the challenges of immigration there is a need for both interethnic and intraethnic communication. Here in the present research, 'interethnic' refers to communication between immigrant Thais and the broad community to which they have immigrated, that of the USA. 'Intraethnic' refers to communications between Thais, even though some members may represent dialectal communities from which they originated in Thailand. Accommodating for interethnic communication does not mean that intraethnic communication consequentially suffers if the immigrant community is large enough with sufficient connections (Fase et al. 1992: 2-13). Immigrants individually may become bilingual when their value for their Home Language (HL i.e. Thai) and for the Language of Wider Communication (LWC i.e. English) leads them to maintain the former while acquiring the latter. Achievement of stable bilingualism is especially made possible when members of the HL immigrant speech community provide opportunities by which new generations may learn and maintain the HL.

A bilingual is a person who is able to function to some degree in a second language (Spolsky 1998: 45). Differentiated by whether it is spoken, read or written, or limited in certain domains of use, ability in a second language is unique in every situation. In terms of adopting a second language upon immigration and how it affects the maintenance of the immigrant's HL, bilingualism is an important consideration.

Smolicz comments that the degree to which an immigrant group maintains its language and culture is the degree to which they successfully interact with new cultural inputs from both within and without their group (1992: 278). The shedding of values not central to them may be done without detriment to the stability as a group. For some groups their HL acts as an identifying central value symbolic of their group and around which they rally when in minority situations. Others, such as the Irish in regards to Irish Gaelic, may shed their language without losing their sense of group identity

(1992: 280). It can be seen then, that core values, as with attitude, affect language maintenance, and hence language vitality.

Communities experiencing language endangerment, however, are real. Following here are examples of these and also those specifically relating to immigrant situations.

## **2.4 Language endangerment**

Included in the socialization of an individual is the learning of a language commonly spoken within the society around him as he matures through childhood. Language becomes a means of communicating thoughts, and of expressing the values and culture innately associated with the society which speaks it. Hence, languages are often what mark the ethnic identity of individuals, associating them with the social group which is significant to them. In many parts of the world, individuals grow up speaking more than one language due to the social context into which they are born, including that of minority language situations. Such examples include that of Thai Chinese (Rappa 2006: 116), the Tai Yai from marginal regions of Thailand (Smalley 1988: 251), or that of the Spanish immigrants of the USA (Edwards 2004: 20). Each language will have its allotted place in the scheme of that individual's identity, as he relates to the contexts of his society.

There are social conditions which are considered dangerous to the vitality of a language, and how and where it will continue to be used. Changes made to the social context of a speaker may have a significant detrimental effect on his proficiency in that language. Immigration may be a change in social context where a speaker uproots himself into a social context which may be very different from that in which he was socialized and in which he learned his language(s). The new society in which he finds himself may be the reason why he changes former language habits, or be the motivation for embracing new language habits. Such an immigrant example would be that of the Telugu speakers in Auckland, New Zealand. The case study made of their language shift situation demonstrates how parents encourage their children to speak only English. See Section 2.4.1 for more details on this survey work.

A language may be severely endangered in a speech community when a new generation of children are born, or immigrate, into situations where the use of their family's language is limited not only by the contexts (domains) of the society around them but also limited in the domains of their family life. When family members use their (heritage) language less and less frequently amongst themselves, children have less

opportunity to be socialized in it. In light of the fact that language-learning is key while an individual is still a child this is a serious reality for immigrant families. Such an immigrant language situation is that of the Turkish in the Netherlands. A linguistic survey was made of Turkish language use in the homes of immigrants there, finding that language attrition occurred when children used less Turkish than their parents, being more likely the longer immigrant families lived in the Netherlands. See Section 2.4.1 for more details on this research.

Eric Lenneberg's (1969: 226) study observes that the age of five is when a child has acquired a language and is well established in it. If, by this age, a child has not obtained a language his period of opportunity will have significantly narrowed. This is substantiated by Herschensohn's work which shows there is a sensitive period during a child's early years in which a first language is acquired (2000: 27).

Fishman (1991: 87) offers the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) as a means of measuring to what extent a language is in danger of being lost, by looking at how it is being used within family environs and by the community of its speakers, as seen in Table 1 below. A healthy language is one which is being spoken by the children as well as parents and elderly in the context of the home and society. The following table is an adaptation of Malone's condensed version of the GIDS (Premsrirat and Malone 2003: 2).

**Table 1 Description of Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale**

STRENGTH	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
<i>Weak side</i>	8	The only remaining speakers of the HL are members of the grandparent generation.
	7	The child-bearing generation knows the HL well enough to use it with their elders but is not transmitting it to their children.
	6	The HL is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language.
	5	The language is used orally by all generations and is being used in written form throughout the community.
<i>Strong side</i>	4	Public schools offer some instruction in the language but primarily are under the influence of the language of wider communication.
	3	The HL is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders .
	2	The HL is used for local and regional mass media and regional governmental services.
	1	The HL is used in education, work, mass media, and national level of government.



Irish of the 1980's can be taken as an example of where a language is at on the GIDS. Although Ireland eagerly named Irish as their national language, making it also the language of education, it was not used extensively in official settings (Fishman 1991: 123). As students graduated and moved to climb the economic ladder, they discovered that English was used more than Irish, and began desiring English-based education (1991: 122). Although advances have been made towards the acquisition of the Irish language and a desire to maintain it in further generations of English-speaking Irish, much is yet to be done towards language maintenance.

In this study, the GIDS will be used in conjunction with the following alternative scale of assessment of language endangerment proposed by UNESCO'S ad-hoc committee (Brenzinger 2006: 8-18). Together they will provide a framework by which to assess the language situation among Thai immigrants in WA. The following table is adapted from the work of Tehan and Nahhas (2009: 96-99).

**Table 2 UNESCO'S nine factors in language vitality and endangerment**

FACTOR	DEGREE OF ENDANGERMENT, GRADE AND DESCRIPTION
1. Intergenerational language transmission scale: 'Speaker Population'	<i>Safe 5:</i> The language is used by all ages, from children up. <i>Unsafe 4:</i> The language is used by some children in all domains; it is used by all children in limited domains. <i>Definitely endangered 3:</i> The language is used mostly by the parental generation and up. <i>Severely endangered 2:</i> The language is used mostly by the grandparental generation and up. <i>Critically endangered 1:</i> The language is used mostly by very few speakers, of great grandparental generation. <i>Extinct 0:</i> There exists no speaker.
2. Absolute number of speakers	No point scale was associated with this factor in the original report.
3. Proportion of speakers within the total reference group (population)	<i>Safe 5:</i> All speak the language. <i>Unsafe 4:</i> Nearly all speak the language. <i>Definitely endangered 3:</i> A majority speak the language. <i>Severely endangered 2:</i> A minority speak the language. <i>Critically endangered 1:</i> Very few speak the language. <i>Extinct 0:</i> None speak the language.
4. Shifts in domains of language use	<i>Universal use 5:</i> The language is used in all domains and for all functions. <i>Multilingual Parity 4:</i> Two or more languages may be used in most social domains and for most functions. <i>Dwindling domains 3:</i> The language is in home domains and for many functions, but the dominant language begins to penetrate even home domains. <i>Limited or formal domains 2:</i> The language is used in limited social domains and for several functions. <i>Highly limited domains 1:</i> The language is used only in very restricted domains and for a very few functions. <i>Extinct 0:</i> The language is not used in any domains and for any function.

<p>5. Response to new domains and media: 'New domains and media accepted by the endangered language'</p>	<p><i>Dynamic 5:</i> The language is used in all new domains.  <i>Robust/active 4:</i> The language is used in most new domains.  <i>Receptive 3:</i> The language is used in many domains.  <i>Coping 2:</i> The language is used in some new domains.  <i>Minimal 1:</i> The language is used only in a few new domains.  <i>Inactive 0:</i> The language is not used in any new domains.</p>
<p>6. Materials for language education and literacy: 'Accessibility of Written Materials'</p>	<p>5: There is an established orthography, literacy tradition with grammars, dictionaries, texts, literature and everyday media. Writing in the language is used in administration and education.  4: Written materials exist, and at school, children are developing literacy in the language. Writing in the language is not used in administration.  3: Written materials exist and children may be exposed to the written form at school. Literacy is not promoted through print media.  2: Written materials exist, but they may only be useful for some members of the community; and for others, they may have a symbolic significance. Literacy education in the language is not a part of the school curriculum.  1: A practical orthography is known to the community and some materials are being written.  0: No orthography available to the community.</p>
<p>7. Governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies: 'Official attitudes toward language'</p>	<p><i>Equal support 5:</i> All languages are protected.  <i>Differentiated support 4:</i> Minority languages are protected primarily as the language of the private domains. The use of the language is prestigious.  <i>Passive assimilation 3:</i> No explicit policy exists for minority languages; the dominant language prevails in the public domain.  <i>Active assimilation 2:</i> Government encourages assimilation to the dominant language. There is no protection for minority languages.  <i>Forced assimilation 1:</i> The dominant language is the sole official language, while non-dominant languages are neither recognized nor protected.  <i>Prohibition 0:</i> Minority languages are prohibited.</p>
<p>8. Community members' attitudes towards their own language</p>	<p>5: All members value their language and wish to see it promoted.  4: Most members support language maintenance.  3: Many members support language maintenance.  2: Some members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.  1: Only a few members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.  0: No one cares if the language is lost; all prefer to use a dominant language.</p>

9.Type and quality of documentation	<p><i>Superlative 5:</i> There are comprehensive grammars and dictionaries, extensive texts; constant flow of language materials. Abundant annotated high quality audio and video recordings exist.</p> <p><i>Good 4:</i> There is one good grammar and a number of adequate grammars, dictionaries, texts, literature, and occasionally-updated every day media; adequate annotated high-quality audio and video recordings.</p> <p><i>Fair 3:</i> There may be an adequate grammar or sufficient amount of grammars, dictionaries, and texts, but no everyday media; audio and video recordings may exist in varying quality or degree of annotation.</p> <p><i>Fragmentary 2:</i> There are some grammatical sketches, word-lists, and texts useful for limited linguistic research but with inadequate coverage. Audio and video recordings may exist in varying quality, with or without any annotation.</p> <p><i>Inadequate 1:</i> Only a few grammatical sketches, short wordlists, and fragmentary texts. Audio and video recordings do not exist, are of unusable quality, or are completely unannotated.</p> <p><i>Undocumented 0:</i> No materials exist.</p>
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Lewis and Simons compare UNESCO's framework with Fishman's GIDS by noting that it offers more categories at the weaker end of the scale, whereas the GIDS differentiates language statuses well which are above Fishman's level 6 (Lewis and Simons 2009: 8, 9).

For the purpose of reference, it should be noted that the Ethnologue also has a categorization of language vitality in the form of a five level scale. As well, Lewis and Simons has formulated a harmonization of this and Fishman's GIDS, plus UNESCO's Intergenerational language transmission scale, all into a 10 level scale known as the Extended GID (Lewis and Simons 2009: 30). For the purpose of this survey, however, the researcher has made use of only the GIDS and UNESCO's intergenerational language transmission scale as she finds these to be the most relevant frameworks for analysis of this small immigrant speech community, as their frameworks relate well to an immigrant language situation.

### 2.4.1 Case Studies

Societies always flux and change. Communities naturally adopt and adapt to their societies. Languages are used or not used to the degree to which they serve their speaker's purposes. As individuals interact with the pressures and demands they find within today's world, the decisions they make inherently affect the stability and vitality of their HL. Spradley and McDurdy also note that

A value is an arbitrary conception of what is desirable in human experience. During socialization every child is exposed to a constant barrage of evaluations – the arbitrary rating system of his culture. Nearly everything he learns is labeled in terms of its desirability...Individuals internalize their ideas about right and wrong, good and bad, and invest them with strong feelings...for a vast majority in any society, conformity results from the internalization of values... They provide security and contribute to a sense of personal and social identity (1971: 379-380).

Throughout the process of transformation due to immigration into new societies, values held by individuals may act as either the catalyst for change or breaks against change. Studies of immigrant situations in their various contexts offer insight into the rationale and reality of language maintenance. People's actions reflect the level of value placed on the HL languages. It may be observed, for example, that immigrants use their HL with their children and grandchildren, require that these generations use it with all from their HL background, that they do not code switch when speaking the HL, or that they learn to read and write their HL. These actions are examples which demonstrate high value placed on the HL resulting in good language vitality. On the other hand, if low value was placed on the HL, it may be seen as being worked out in terms of the opposite of these proactive choices, such as: encouraging the LWC to be used in domains where HL users might reinforce the HL, allowing code switching, or not making use of opportunities to provide practice in the HL (audio/oral language input/output).

#### **2.4.1.1 Non-dominant language situations**

Many non-dominant languages are influenced and impacted by their surrounding dominant languages. Intergenerational continuity of the language may be threatened in such cases. As Fishman notes, when the outflow of users outnumber the inflow for three generations or more there is risk of language endangerment (1991: 1).

##### **2.4.1.1.1 The K'iche' of Guatemala**

A study, beginning in 1987, was made of the ethnolinguistic vitality and language attitudes of seven K'iche' communities in Guatemala (Lewis 1996). Data was collected according to age groups and domains of use over a six month period using unobtrusive methodology and convenience sampling. The domains in which K'iche' was being used were those of home, street, play, market and work, which were considered the more

intimate domains. Spanish was being used in less intimate domains, such as religion, stores, the media, schools and government offices. Language maintenance in each domain was categorized as Weak, Moderate and Strong based on calculations of a language maintenance index between 0-2, reflecting the proportion of K'iche' use in observed speech transactions (1996: 4). Speech acts were also analyzed based on "categorical models of maximum likelihood" (1996: 3), based on four independent variables: the race and sex of the speaker, and the race and sex of the interlocutor. Fundamental to the analysis used is the concept expressed by Lewis that

Language shift occurs through the lack of transmission of a language from one generation to the next. Therefore, lower levels of language maintenance in the younger age groups can be taken as evidence of language shift. As well, the levels of language maintenance evidenced by young adults who are the producers and caretakers of the next generation may also provide indications of the prospects for language maintenance in the communities (1996: 4).

In his conclusion, Lewis states that the three communities which were reported as having the weakest overall language maintenance profiles were also ones which were the most urbanized and economically developed. Two of these three are departmental capitals. Communities which are more remote, lacking in access to schooling and modern conveniences, are ones with stronger language maintenance profiles. Although the seven K'iche' communities were each at different levels of language maintenance, the study showed that the language was being eroded in all of them as their residents responded to changes in their demographic, political, economic, social and cultural environment (1996: 4).

Bradley concurs, expressing factors which affect the viability of languages as the following:

- Population concentration,
- Ethnic identity and attitudes to language as a component of identity,
- Degree of contact,
- Economic and educational integration, and
- Political factors such as national policies on minority status (1995: 2).

The K'iche language situation offers a comparative situation for this thesis in that it describes the result of societal impact upon a non-dominant speech community whose linguistic choices affect the vitality of their language.

### **2.4.1.1.2 Swedish to Finnish in Finland**

Swedish was the majority language for many years in Vantaa, a municipality of Helsinki, Finland (Tandefelt 1992: 151-153). As the Finnish population within the town increased, however, Swedish lost its majority position. Tandefelt's study of this minority community made use of interviews of 69 participants, covering a variety of domains in which Swedish and Finnish are used (1992: 154). She also made use of participant observation in order to determine language choice in different settings.

Results of this case study show that as Swedish speakers felt their language had less utility in their local society, they both used it less in it and had less competence in it (1992: 149). Their language is shifting to that of the current majority, Finnish, as many speakers become bilingual (1992: 165). In addition, it was noted that when bilingual Swedish-Finnish speakers found that bilingualism did not benefit them in terms of the market-place, the usage of Swedish was also impacted at home in families in which both languages were used (1992: 165). Tandefelt's conclusion was that this situation contributed to weakening the motivation to hand down the lesser spoken language.

Case studies based on non-dominant language situations are a helpful beginning to the discussion of sociolinguistic language vitality. However, of more relevance are studies conducted specifically targeting immigrant speech communities, as the following sections address.

### **2.4.1.2 Immigrant language situations**

Non-dominant language situations can develop out of immigration, as is exemplified in Lopez's (1991: 131-143) work addressing immigration in the USA: as immigrants settled, some assimilated more than others; some became known as 'language minorities' due to the language they spoke, some due to their culture. These non-dominant languages face pressure from without and within, which cause impact to their HL. The following sections look at the language vitality situation of Turkish immigrants in the Netherlands, the immigrants from many ethnicities to Australia, and the Puerto Rican immigrant 'intellectuals' of New York City.

#### **2.4.1.2.1 The Turkish of the Netherlands**

In the 1960s the Netherlands recruited Turkish men to work in jobs not occupied by their citizens (Huls and vande Mond 1992: 99-115). By the 1970s these men had brought their families from Turkey to live with them. Today their children attend Dutch

schools and their wives are trying to obtain jobs. However, the Turkish language holds low prestige in the Netherlands. As their children acquired Dutch, they became interpreters for their families.

The language maintenance of two of these Turkish families was surveyed in the 1990s. Participant observation was used along with tape recordings of family conversations, from 3.30 PM to 9.30 PM for seven weeks. Studies concluded that functional language attrition of Turkish language takes place in migrant families when 1) their children use less Turkish than their parents, and 2) when the period of time in which a migrant family remains in the Netherlands is lengthy.

In the same way that this Turkish immigrant speech community was found to be heading towards weak language vitality, so are the various immigrant languages of Australia, as is shown in the following case study.

#### **2.4.1.2.2 Immigrant languages of Australia and New Zealand**

Michael Clyne compares notable shifts in minority languages to Fishman's GIDS (2001: 364) including immigrants from Europe and Asia. Using Australian census statistics on language use for the years of 1986 and 1996, prior research done by Fishman on Australian languages, various studies of immigrant language minorities around Australia, and current trends in Australian language planning, Clyne looks at language use in the home. He summarizes that, although language maintenance is possible in the immigrant situation, there is no evidence that it has occurred successfully in Australia. He suggests practical ways in which to implement Fishman's GIDS, making it localized, including the value of raising children bilingually (2001: 389).

Intergenerational language shift among Telugu speakers in Auckland, New Zealand was also investigated by Kuncha and Bethula (2004). Their sample group was that of Telugu speakers who attended Indian church, a forum for worship, socialization, and support. Language attitude and usage was surveyed and contrasted between two groups: 14 mothers and 20 children age 11 and up. Research tools used were that of structured interviews and a questionnaire covering language proficiency, attitudes towards English, Telugu, and bilingualism, and language maintenance.

For the children, language proficiency declined in the areas of reading and writing, and among second-born children, also in speaking and comprehension. Fifty percent of those who were mothers reported that it was a waste of time for their children to learn

Telugu; 55% of children reported that their parents encouraged them to always use English. With 90% of the children not wanting to learn Telugu and 75% of mothers not wanting to correct their children's Telugu, language maintenance is a serious issue for the speech community.

Proactive measures are needed in order to maintain immigrant languages in Australia and New Zealand. Fishman found that the intellectual Puerto Ricans who had immigrated to New York City were, in fact, being proactive in this regards, as can be seen in the following case study.

### **2.4.1.2.3 Immigrant languages in the USA and Britain**

Families immigrate from numerous parts of the world to the USA and Britain. The following sections look at the Puerto Rican community, as well as the Cantonese, Persian, Japanese, Spanish and Urdu communities of New York City, in the USA. Similarly, the Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi British immigrant communities are examined.

#### **2.4.1.2.3.1 Thais in New York City**

In 2005 Stphanie Teachout made observations during a preliminary of Thai language maintenance among a Thai immigrant community in New York City (12). Her methodology involved observations of Thai classes at the temple, and semi-structured and informal interviews of Thai teachers, students, religious leaders and members of the community. Questions asked were in regards to immigration, language choice and use, and perceptions of identity. Her data was analyzed within the framework of what she calls the tripartite conceptualization of the Thai identity: the nation, the religion, and the monarchy.

Teachout found that all three pillars of Thai identity were being maintained at the temple: the Thai community did not only exist within the temple but because of the temple. The nation, religion and monarchy were clearly visible in aspects of activities temple, as was language maintenance: the temple classes are accredited by the Thai government, under the sector of being non-formal education. The Thai government provides resources for Thais abroad through the temple, enabling Thais to succeed upon return to Thailand. Forty out of forty-eight respondents responded 'Yes' or 'not sure' when questioned as to whether they intended on living in Thailand in the future. These included Thais aboard for educational and economic reasons. Teachout concluded that



there is strong indication of a connection between language and identity for those she interviewed.

#### **2.4.1.2.3.2 Puerto Ricans of the USA**

Joshua Fishman conducted a study in 1967 of Puerto Rican intellectuals in the city of New York. It made use of lengthy interviews in both English and Spanish addressing individuals' views and comments on the following subjects:

- Spanish dominance and versatility without rejection of English;
- ideological-activistic [sic] approach to Spanish-language maintenance although English repertoire is available;
- a basic concern with Puerto Rican and American cultures as a whole rather than primarily with languages;
- familiarity with American behaviors and awareness of American pressures on Puerto Rican adults and children in New York; and
- Sociolinguistic sophistication in contextual communicative appropriateness in the use of varieties of Spanish (Fishman 1989: 487).

Much was revealed in his study about this speech community regarding the existence of language usage and attitudes. Of interest was how Puerto Rican intellectuals in New York differed from the common Puerto Rican immigrant in their drive for Puerto Rican culture and self-maintenance in New York: a more demanding attitude than that held by the others. While language consciousness and loyalty were found to be generally at a low level among average Puerto Ricans in New York where the 'man on the street' (1989: 496) holds a less pronounced concern for language maintenance and purity, it was evidently higher among their intellectuals.

#### **2.4.1.2.3.3 Cantonese, Persian, Japanese, Spanish and Urdu of the USA**

Exploration of family language maintenance surveyed factors and attitudes which contributed to maintenance of Cantonese, Persian, Japanese, Spanish and Urdu (Rohani et al. 2006). Interviews focused on participants aged 19 – 40 and their recollections and perceptions of language maintenance efforts made in their families while growing up. Some implicit actions which the parents made towards language maintenance include moving to their mother-tongue neighborhood where their culture predominated. Explicit actions taken included visits to their homeland, mother-tongue language

education and rebuking the use of English. Across the language groups who were surveyed it was seen that actions and attitudes of families played a key role in language maintenance. Two important conclusions were made in this study. English proficiency among family members affected the degree of mother-tongue usage across all language groups significantly (Rohani et al. 2006: 101). Interactions outside the home with other speakers of the same language, however, did foster language maintenance.

#### **2.4.1.2.3.4 Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi of the UK**

Informal interviews and questionnaires were used by Husain (2011) as tools to aid in discovery of language choice and maintenance measures that were being taken amongst Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities in the UK. Languages represented by respondents included Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Mirpuri, Gujrati, Kutchi, Pushto and Malayalam. Forty-five respondents participated in the study, 21 being male and 24 being female, and with ages ranging from 20 – 60 years of age. Husain also considered participants' socio-economical status, education and number of years within the UK.

Most respondents lived in non-Asian communities where they used English to communicate with their neighbors. English was also reported to be the language used in their professional domains. Opportunities to use their languages exist in places of worship, in the form of radio and TV programs, and by teaching their languages to others. The study found that 30 out of 45 participants did choose to make use of these opportunities to maintain their languages. The participants' attitude was towards bilingualism, that both languages were a necessity. However, many respondents did report that their children while understanding their mother-tongues well did tend to respond to mother-tongue conversation in English.

These case studies demonstrate how attitudes towards a language may be different among individuals within a speech community, resulting in less or more language maintenance. The following section discusses the importance of healthy language attitudes.

#### **2.4.2 Attitude towards languages**

Language attitude is what speakers of a language believe about their language. As Charles Ferguson briefly noted, these attitudes are of fundamental importance to decisions pertaining to how languages will be used (1996: 275). Speakers have feelings about the appropriateness of their language for such purposes as education, have beliefs

regarding how it compares to other languages in their country, and make value-based decisions on these attitudes. Spolsky ascertains that these beliefs influence language practices (2004: 14), becoming a basis for language management.

There are a good many reasons why an individual, family or community may choose to change the way in which they use their own language, especially when they have immigrated into a society which is culturally highly contrastive to their own. The process of settling and adjusting within a new society such as this provides an environment in which attitudes towards languages being spoken become solidified, weakened or readjusted. For instance, it may be more economical or socially acceptable to acquire the new society's language, often to the exclusion and weakening of the HL. Decisions, by which speakers are lead to move from the former usages of their HL, often go unnoticed despite the very real fact that such decisions are the out-workings of attitudes toward the heritage language and towards the language of the new society. These language attitudes may form gradually or suddenly as speakers find themselves in new language situations and are required to conduct themselves effectively there. And, as Baker states, attitudes towards a language affect the decay, death, life or preservation of the languages in question:

attitudes are latent, inferred from the direction and persistence of external behavior. Attitudes are a convenient and efficient way of explaining consistent patterns in behavior. Attitudes often manage to summarize, explain, and predict behavior (1992: 11).

Although direct observation of language attitudes is difficult to make, attitudes can provide a measure of the health of a language by pointing to the value and importance it has to its speakers. Choices made in language use result in either language maintenance or language shift (Baker 1992: 239).

National language policies, whether explicitly stated or not, affect attitudes toward languages and the extent of HL usage. The impact in this area is seen in how they will be maintained or otherwise not maintained. The United States of America is a nation that has not explicitly stated what its national or official language is (Wardhaugh 1987: 245). It is a nation, however, whose reaction to immigrant languages has depended heavily on whose language it is that is taking up residence in the nation, and on the current events transpiring internationally to make immigrant languages a thing of disparity or neutrality. Despite the nation's evident progress towards impartiality in regards to immigrants and towards language equality, assimilation of people and

language towards the US standard is a prevailing reality. Much has been done within the educational and judicial systems, for instance, to provide minority speakers the right to obtain education or a translation of judicial proceedings, in their own language (1987: 12). As a nation, however, the USA expects its new citizens to draw closer to the American standard, assimilating into the American value system, including that of the English language, for a greater sense of unity within the nation.

The assimilation of immigrants towards a culture, value system, world view and language other than their own is a result of their attitudes, choices, and needs, and the pressures under which they find themselves in their new society (Fasold 1984: 217). As has been discussed previously, resulting language choices contribute towards or away from the vitality of their HL.

For hundreds of years America has seen the dynamics of its population change. A great influx into the nation of people of European origin made the ability to speak other languages besides English a mark of refinement (Edwards 2004: 21). Bilingualism was the norm in many segments of American society between the late 1700s and late 1800s. However, a sentiment of concern was prevalent and, as expressed by Thomas Jefferson for example, a fear that the use of languages other than English would threaten the social structure of America's civil society (2004: 23). By the end of the nineteenth century this sentiment had been formulated into the idea that naturalization and patriotism for America meant learning the English language (2004: 28). World events played their part in solidifying the desire for English. Xenophobia due to events transpiring around World Wars I and II went so far as the prohibition in some states of the public use of any language other than English (2004: 28-29).

Social Darwinism and the eugenics movement also played a role in developing the nation's attitude towards languages. According to Edwards, immigrant tests were culturally biased. When low levels of English literacy were confirmed in speakers of other languages, the subjects were analyzed as being 'feeble-minded' (2004: 29). The quota system of the Immigration Act of 1924 was shaped by these language attitudes, and later reiterated in the 1952 US Immigration and Nationality Act (2004: 33).

Internal conditions in 1965 due to an economically favorable climate and greater concern for human rights brought amendments to the way the nation viewed immigrant languages. The national-origins quotas in the immigration system gave way to that based on the reunification of families and the need to acquire skilled laborers. Although many individual states have made English their official language, the country as a whole

has not stated such a national language policy. Attempts to amend this have been unsuccessful (Edwards 2004: 42).

America's attitude towards languages other than English is demonstrably a pragmatic one. When it has suited the nation in such areas as economics or politics, language attitudes have turned to being more or less receptive. As opportunity created open doors to immigration, it has also brought a measure of leniency towards foreign languages. As Edwards comments,

At various points in history there has been an urgent need for human resources, to extend frontiers, to fuel the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century, to fulfill ongoing needs for economic expansion in the modern world. In order to satisfy these demands, governments are easily persuaded to suspend feelings of 'us and them'...Yet, as soon as the achievements or the sheer numbers of newcomers threaten the power of the dominant group, forces of reaction come into play (2004: 44).

In today's American society, it is difficult to tell whether some immigrant languages will be maintained or replaced by the language of the nation to which they have immigrated (Wardhaugh 1987: 254). A number of societal factors act as pressures on immigrants in this language choice. Some pressures include the ridicule of their language or language accent in English, the cost-benefit factor that a shift towards English encourages, and the simple fact of needing to survive from day-to-day as new immigrants in job and community environments (1987: 253). However, reasons to maintain the immigrants' own languages also abound, such as the desire for meaningful conversations in the home or speech community or a desire to cultivate their identity based on their heritage culture. Visits to home countries or visits from same-language speakers may also encourage fluency in their language.

## **2.5 Survey**

This study is a sociolinguistic look at the Thai immigrant language situation as it stands for those residing in the State of Washington, USA. How immigrants there choose to use Thai in the domains of family and work, as well as how it pertains to their social and religious lives, impacts the vitality of the Thai language in their speech community. These questions are of special importance on an intergenerational level as their answers reflect how language values, attitudes and practical usage may be different depending on the immigrant generation of the respondent. These differences in values and choices

also indicate to some degree where the speech community is at on Fishman's GIDS and on UNESCO'S framework for determining language vitality and endangerment, as it describes generation-to-generation language usage (further discussed under Section 2.4).

An investigation into a particular language and the sociolinguistic dynamics of the community in which it is spoken must take into consideration at least six areas:

1. a description of the demographic area in question,
  2. the linguistic similarities between the language in question and other languages which may be spoken in that area,
  3. whether dialects in the area are intelligible,
  4. whether there is bilingualism present,
  5. which domains are each language used in, and
  6. what the attitudes are of the speakers towards languages spoken in that area
- (Blair 1990: 2).

In order to elicit answers to these questions mentioned above, investigators must survey speakers of the target area. A clear understanding of the purpose and goals of the survey, as well as which methodology will most likely accomplish these goals, are necessary. The researcher discusses points 3 – 6 above as they relate to this survey in Chapter 4.

The results of an investigation may vary according to a number of factors. For instance, which subjects are chosen as the target group of the survey may or may not be a good source of information towards the desired research question (and hence, towards the goals of the survey). Consideration should be given to the area from which subjects come and how much exposure they may have had to external factors which may influence their opinion or ability to provide information towards the research question (Blair 1990: 7). Furthermore, the methodology used to choose subjects and used in analysis of their responses may or may not result in conclusions extendable to a larger population. However, as Nahhas mentions, budget limitations and logistical problems may mean using field research methods which are less than optimal (2007: 3). Although this may be the case, results may still be faithfully generalized, with an unambiguous presentation of what methods were used and how they may have affected the results.

Tools crucial to this study of Thai immigrant language vitality are those which help build the picture of the sociolinguistic situation: a Vitality Survey Questionnaire (VSQ), Sentence Repetition Tests (SRT), Recorded Conversation Analysis (RCA), Statistical Analysis (SA), Social Network Analysis (SNA), and Participant Observation (PO). These

concepts are further discussed in the subsections to follow, and are pictured graphically in Figure 2. This figure depicts factors in assessing Thai language vitality in this study with the use of the given tools, each of which are explained in the following sections.

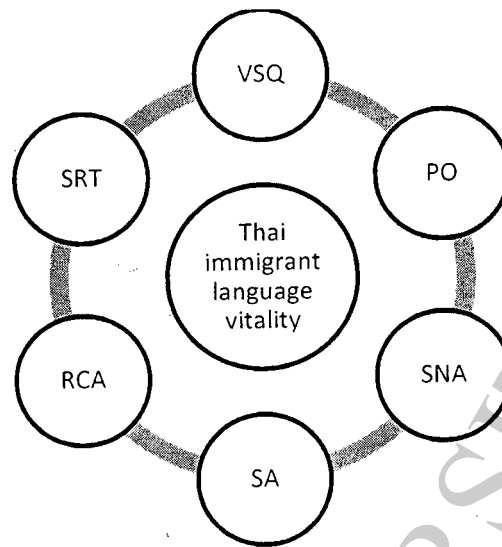


Figure 2 The survey process

### 2.5.1 Questionnaires

Gathering answers to the research question may take many forms, one of which is the questionnaire. Preparation is important in administering a survey questionnaire. The questions, the environment, answers for which questions are designed, and the validity and reliability of the survey as a whole are considered beforehand. Good questions require:

- defining of objectives and specifying the kind of answers needed to meet the objectives of the questions,
- ensuring that all respondents have a shared, common understanding of the meaning of the questions,
- that respondents can answer questions according to the expected terms in the questions, and
- asking questions respondents are willing to answer accurately (Frazer and Lawley 2000: 19-34).

Interview experiences that minimize the forces on respondents to distort answers so that they appear more 'socially desirable' are arranged so that they:

- assure confidentiality,
- emphasize importance of accuracy (encourage thoughtful answers), and
- reduce the role of the interviewer (i.e. use self-administrated survey form rather than one which requires respondents to reply to an interviewer) (Fowler 1995: 78-102).

The strength of surveys rests on questions that ask people about their first hand experiences. Guidelines for questions include:

- avoid hypothetical questions and ones that ask for a personal view of why things happened (causality),
- avoid asking respondents for solutions for complex problems,
- avoid asking questions with 'hidden contingencies',
- avoid ambiguous questions referring to feelings/behaviors, and
- avoid overly complex questions (Fowler 1995: 8-45).

Ethnolinguistic vitality can also be determined through the way questionnaires are designed (Landweer 1991: 2-8). Strong sociolinguistic questionnaires will help:

- determine the extent to which the language can resist influence by the dominant urban culture,
- establish the number of domains in which the language is used,
- determine the frequency and type of code switching which happens within the speech community,
- investigate the existence of a critical mass of fluent speakers,
- investigate the distribution of speakers across social networks,
- determine the internal and external recognition of the group as a unique community,
- determine its relative prestige compared with surrounding languages, and
- investigate its access to a stable economic base.

Radloff advises that demographical questions should be included in the questionnaire as it will confirm that the subject meets the requirements of the study (1991: 20). Other questions in this area elicit variables that may influence second-language learning (1991: 20), such as age, gender, or location.

All of these listed concepts were considered in the process of creating the VSQ in this survey, and are further discussed under Section 3.2.2.



Just as questionnaires can elicit valuable information in determining ethnolinguistic vitality of speech communities, so can sentence repetition tests (SRTs). SRTs demonstrate HL ability within speech communities where dominant languages are present.

### **2.5.2 Sentence repetition tests**

An assessment can be made of second-language proficiency of a large community by way of Sentence Repetition Tests (Radloff 1991: 7, 81). SRTs are fitted for the purposes of sociolinguistic surveys, to give a rapid and preliminary assessment of a speech community's language ability (1991: 8). The chapter of this thesis dealing with methodology, Section 3.2.4, discusses how the SRT which the researcher used was constructed, its validation process, and practicalities of how it was used in the instance of this survey. Also, Sections 4.2 and 5.3.1 evaluate the SRT used in this study.

In brief, an SRT is a set of 15 sentences all in the language of interest, are ordered from simple to difficult in structure, vocabulary, concepts and complexity. As a bilingual or second-language learner listens to each sentence and repeats each one back to the one monitoring the test, he will be demonstrating his proficiency in the language by how far he can proceed through the set of sentences. The farther along he gets in repeating sentences with consistent accuracy the more he indicates a likelihood of a native speaker's proficiency in the language (Radloff 1991: 153).

Sentence repetition demonstrates the level of familiarity with a language by revealing to what extent the participant is able to chunk information (Steven 1976: 16). Phrases and concepts are able to be chunked more often with more complexity the more the individual is familiar with the language.

In terms of assessing the ability of Thai for Thai immigrants to the USA, the Thai SRT may reveal the reality of how endangered or stable their language is within their community. If subjects have been exposed to Thailand on a number of occasions, or if they only moved away to the US after a certain age, their SRT results may indicate a stronger proficiency in the language than those otherwise exposed.

### **2.5.3 Recorded conversation analysis**

Ethnographic records enable researchers to analyze data; tape recordings are one type of ethnographic record (Spradley 1980: 63). The idea of recording conversations for the

sake of linguistic analysis was implemented by Erica Huls and Anneke van de Mond in their study of functional language attrition in Dutch Turkish homes (1992: 101). Two of their research questions were: 1) Is what is being observed in language usage just a process in language choice where the first language is substituted by the second without structural changes in the first language? and 2) Is the first language itself also structurally changed? (1992: 100). These questions were partially addressed by way of recording and analyzing intergenerational conversations which took place in Turkish immigrant homes.

R. A. Hudson warns that the collection of texts is a process necessitating several crucial components (1980: 145). Willing participants with time to give the recording process is a given. The placement of the recording device is important to make the clearest recordings, also preventing the device from dominating the scene of conversation. The later point allows for natural speech to be recorded during the course of interaction. The difficulties of recording natural speech are also addressed by Lesley Milroy. She points out that the presence of the researcher may play a detrimental role; conversely, when the recording is made with the researcher's absence speakers tend to fall back to more natural ways of interacting (1987: 23).

Discussion of how the researcher used her recording device and the outcome of the recording experience is discussed under Sections 3.2.5 and 4.3.

#### **2.5.4 Statistical analysis**

According to Ferguson, statistics "deals with the collection, classification, description, and interpretation of data obtained by the conduct of surveys and experiments. Its essential purpose is to describe and draw inferences about the numerical properties of populations" (1981: 6). Descriptive statistics is that used in censuses where entire populations are available for observation. Inferential statistics draws conclusions from sample data to the larger body, the population (1981: 3-16). This may take a number of forms such as random and stratified samples, depending upon factors involved in the survey, such as the time and finances available in conducting the procedures (1981: 143-144).

##### **2.5.4.1 Sampling**

Sampling is a significant part of the survey process as it allows a large population to be analyzed through statistical measures. Estimations can be drawn which correspond to

the larger population from which the sample was taken (Ferguson 1981: 142). Random samples are designed to be representative in nature, so that the likelihood of any one person in the population of interest may have an equal chance of being selected (Fallik and Brown 1983: 272). Stratified sampling divides the population in subsections called strata with the intent that the researcher will make implications for each stratum from the study (1983: 273).

Frank Blair ascertains that for a sample to be statistically valid, each set in a stratified sample must have a minimum of five persons (1990: 37). Data from a cell with less than 5 may not be considered reliable. Sample results from this research and how statistical analysis has been applied to them is further discussed in Section 3.2.6.

Sampling can also be done through social networks. A social network process of obtaining sample subjects may be considered representative although not random in the strictest sense of the word (Radloff 1991: 18). Sampling through a network of relatives and friends in this manner encourages cooperation in the testing process (1991: 18). The researcher chose this method to sample the population of Thai immigrants in WA. It was hoped that if a robust Thai language community existed in WA that it would be found in a dense social network. The following section describes the analysis of social networks, another tool aiding in the assessment of language vitality.

#### **2.5.4.2 Tools of analysis**

Results from these types of surveys can be represented by graphs and charts in order to visually represent numbers related to each set of facts. These are analyzed by way of formulas suitable to the context of the particular survey question. The mean, median, mode, variance and the standard deviation are examples of significant characteristics of data under observation (Fallik and Brown 1983). These and other characteristics of data speak of how a set of data relate to each other, allowing a summation to be made so that inferences may be drawn from them to the population in question.

In this study, demographical data stratified by age, location of birth and by age of immigration will be analyzed by a simple percentage preceded by how many participants fell into each given category. VSQ questions which correlate with questions concerning language exposure, usage and attitudes will be compared to these stratifications and analyzed by way of percentages and demonstrated with graphs and charts. The researcher has chosen not to take statistical analysis for this data beyond this as data samples are minimal and results may be demonstrated sufficiently without

using typical methods of analysis (such as mean, standard deviation, a bell curve graph or a t-test). This topic is further discussed under Sections 3.2.6.

### **2.5.4.3 Social network analysis**

The analysis of a set of units which relate to each other in certain defined relationships provides a means of observing the very real actions and reactions taking place within that society, or network, of units. Wasserman describes social networks as a relational concept and process that exists between units (1994: 4). Merriam-Webster's dictionary also defines a network as

- an interconnected or interrelated chain, group, or system, or
- a usually informally interconnected group or association of persons (as friends or professional colleagues) (2012).

Social interaction is central to a network (Bussmann 1996: 325). Every person participates in interactional exchanges with a set of other people: if individuals are considered to be points and the exchanges between them is considered to be lines, a network develops (1996: 325). A social network, then, is a set of individuals who relate to each other in some way, whether through attendance at the same place (i.e. temple) or participation in a common event. They might also be relatives, coworkers or simply acquaintances. Social networks have been used as a sampling system by other researchers such as Radloff (1991: 18), as the researcher has done in this survey project.

The social network, at the same time as being a sampling method, is also what can be understood as a still picture of interacting individuals. Social network analysis (SNA) is a visual and mathematical method of mapping and measuring what is taking place between those who are involved in the network (Krebs 2011). As Chamberlain describes it, a social network, in its simplest form, is like a map connecting individuals (nodes) by way of ties of interaction or interdependency (2010: 14). The following figure exemplifies this type of map.

○ Individual

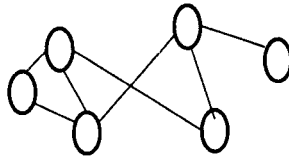


Figure 3 A social network diagram

SNA uses the term 'node' to refer to the actor, or individual, involved in the network; the relationship they have with another actor, or node, is referred to as a 'link' or 'tie'.

#### 2.5.4.3.1 Integral areas of analysis

The location of the actors demonstrates how central they are in their network: this measurement is referred to as the 'centrality' of a node (or actor) (Krebs 2011). Three measures of node centrality are degree, betweenness and closeness centrality; network reach implies how quickly information can travel in a network; boundary spanners and periphery players define how influential actors are (Krebs 2011). Betweenness and closeness are introduced here but are not used in analysis in this research.

- Degree centrality: referring to the number of direct connections an actor has. An actor with many ties is considered a 'hub' around which nodes interact. This 'clique' of nodes may be the only center of activity for a 'hub' node, however, inferring a limit to its influence.
- Betweenness centrality: refers to how a node may lay between actors in a high or low way. A node with high betweenness centrality may have a crucial role in connecting actors to a hub, who would not otherwise be connected.
- Closeness centrality: refers to actors with very few connections who may be in a place in the network where they have closest access to all other nodes, where they can monitor flow of information.
- Network reach: refers to the number of steps or links it takes to reach another actor in the network. Key paths in networks are ones which can reach everyone in the network in under 3 steps.

- Boundary spanners: refer to actors who connect their clique to other cliques, implying a higher centrality in the overall network.
- Peripheral players: refer to actors who are not highly central to the mapped network. However, actors are involved in overlapping networks. Peripheral players then are ones who are resources of new information as they are links to unmapped networks.
- Density is also a way to determine the overall distribution of links in a network map (Scott 2000: 73). How dense a network is, takes into account how many of its nodes are unconnected or isolated. An isolated point is a node with no lines and so can contribute nothing to the density of the graph. The number of connected points expressed as a proportion of the total number of points is the inclusiveness of the network. For instance, in a sociogram of a total 39 points, where 4 are isolated, the measure of inclusiveness is .90.

The other factor important to density is how well connected the nodes are. The number of links one node has is called its degree. The higher the degrees of the points in a network, the denser the network will be. Milroy describes a dense network as being one where a large number of the persons to whom 'ego is linked' is also linked to each other (1987: 50). The network degree in its basic sense, then, is  $x/2$ , where 'x' is the sum of all links within a network. For instance, if a network has a total of 138 links its network degree will be 69.

The overall network structure can be observed by looking at the above types of individual node centralities. Centralization of the entire network can be a reflection of how strong or weak the network is (Krebs 2011). A strong, less centralized network is one in which nodes can reach each other via paths other than hubs of high degree or high betweenness centrality.

Most often social network data are collected by observing, interviewing, or questioning individuals within the network about the ties that exist between others in the network or between themselves and other significant ones. Milroy discusses the importance of obtaining language in its situational context so as to capture what speech is in actual use within a network of speakers (1987: 31). The role that the researcher takes is crucial in this regard, in that his minimal or self-effacing presence allows for an optimal observation of speech (1987: 42).

Further discussion of how the researcher used SNA in her work can be found under Sections 3.2.7 and 4.4.

#### **2.5.4.3.2 Examples of SNA in sociolinguistic surveys**

Apiradee Chantanaraj's survey of Tai Nua speech varieties in China's Yunnan province makes use of SNA in grouping cities by perceived similarity of speech (2007: 126). This was determined by questionnaire, positive answers having a numerical value of 1, unanswered questions having a numerical value of 0. Cities where interviewees are located and cities mentioned in response to questions regarding perceived speech similarity were then mapped in a social network, both being actors with ties of shared similarity of speech linking them together. Analysis of the networks was then made, noting network density and centrality cities had in their networks.

The results of her SNA indicated there are two cores of the network, the first including the cities of Ying Jiang, Baoshan, Ruili, Zhefang and Mangshi; the second core including the cities of Lincang, Gengma, Mengting, Shuan Jiang and Canyon. She also found that the cities of Mangshi and Gengma have the highest degree of centrality, showing a star network pattern (2007: 103-108).

Michael Rueck also used SNA as it applied to language planning in Papua New Guinea (2011: 3). He discovered groups of people who would work well together in language development activities, proposing that coordinated language development programs would be most likely to succeed if they were to be organized in the same way that the peoples' significant social networks are organized (2001: 134). Links between actors in the social network he studied included intermarriage, trading partnerships, common traditions, ecclesiastical hierarchy, the educational system, the Local Level Government system, and reported and measured linguistic similarities (2011: 134).

Rueck used a computer software system to calculate closeness and degree centrality among the actors of the network in question. He suggested that the villages with the highest centrality in these areas would offer the best location in which to begin language development.

Social Network Analysis offers the researcher a way to portray graphically the social networks in this research, the immigrant language situation, as it may exist between users as a result of the choices they make and values they hold in that regard. This is

discussed more fully in regards to the researcher's work under results of SNA in Section 4.4 and in Figure 8.

#### **2.5.4.4 Participation observation**

Ethnographic observations and records are at the heart of Participant Observation (PO) (Spradley 1980: 63-72). As an investigator engages with the people in her environment, she is keenly aware of who the players are, and is actively taking mental stock of the 'what, when, how, and with whom' over which the social activity is occurring.

Participant Observation is a sociolinguistic tool aiding in the validation and interpretation of data analysis via other data-collection tools such as questionnaires, interviews, sound recordings of natural conversations or the study of social networks (Spradley 1980: 53). The researcher participates with informants in the activities in which they themselves are involved in using the language in question. This places the observations of language usage in a realistic setting as opposed to what the informant simply reports is happening in their language usage. Unbeknownst to him, what the informant believes he values and acts upon in regards to his language usage may be different from how he responds in natural settings. Therefore, participant observations allow the researcher to compare and contrast reported values and attitudes towards language with what is witnessed (Spradley 1980: 53-62).

Participant Observation is also a qualitative means of acquiring information about a language and its speech community (Blair 1990: 87). It offers a means of verifying quantitative studies in that it bases quantitative study results in the reality of the community situation. In a sociolinguistic survey, PO is also a good method of weighing self-reports about language attitudes, intraethnic norms of language use, and individual and community language proficiency (Spradley 1980: 3-171).

Participant observation was useful to the researcher in her survey work as a tool of verification. PO was used particularly during Sunday temple visits, casual interviews, and during several celebrations to which she was invited. Observations offered data on when and with whom Thai was being used, and also when it was not being used. It offered insight into relational situations in which language exchanges were exclusively in Thai and when speakers would switch to English. Further discussion about PO in this study is made in Sections 3.2.8 and 4.5.



## 2.6 Conclusion

The heritage of the Thai immigrants to WA is the key to their cumulative uniqueness among a majority English-speaking people. They are identified by their ethnic background, of a people who highly value their homeland's culture, language and monarch. With an innate concept of how their language is encoded in a binary way and a perceptive experience in moving through a language hierarchy, Thais have entered into a new context, that of immigration. The researcher will analyze how Thai immigrants may redefine these two innate concepts in light of their non-dominant place in an American society. As well, she will look at their minority position in immigration, as to whether it has placed the immigrants in question into a situation of decision. In respect to their HL usage, these decisions may have played a definitive role in language maintenance or loss. The language situation will be determined by way of looking at the Thai social network through 5 tools. The questionnaire answers will be substantiated through sentence repetition tests, recorded conversation analysis, social network analysis, and participant observation. Resulting data from these tools will be compared, analyzed and statistical analysis made so as to offer suggestive results for Thai immigrant language vitality in King County, WA.