CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0. Introduction

This chapter focuses on aspects of ethnolinguistic vitality and language attitudes that can inform this study of the Yong people in Lamphun province.

3. 1. Ethnolinguistic Vitality

Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977:308) defined the concept of ethnolinguistic vitality as that "which makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity within the inter-group situations." They attempted to put social psychological processes in their socio-cultural contexts in the area of inter-ethnic group behavior. They suggested that vitality could be objectively assessed on these three basic factors: status factors, demographic factors and institutional support factors. Status factors include economic status, and socio-historical prestige as well as status of the language both within and outside the community. Demographic factors include the number of members, distribution and proportion as well as immigration and marriage patterns. Institutional support factors include the extent to which the ethnolinguistic group gains support from formal institutions such as the school, government or mass media, as well as intra-group informal institutions such as the family.

In 1981, Bourhis et al. proposed the theory of "subjective" ethnolinguistic vitality (SEV) (145-55). They stated that subjective factors could be used to predict the ethnolinguistic behavior of the group members. In order to discover subjective vitality, they designed a model questionnaire to test the ethnolinguistic vitality perception of the members in the community. They used this model to test Greek and

Anglo communities in Australia. Other researchers have taken and adapted the methods elsewhere.

These studies inform the researcher's understanding of the concept of ethnolinguistic vitality and our understanding whether the three objective factors: status, geographic and institutional support factors can affect the ethnolinguistic vitality of the Yong group or not.

Later, Allard and Landry (1986:1-12) developed the concept of subjective ethnolinguistic vitality in terms of beliefs. They stated that a larger set of beliefs could explain the attitudes of the group members toward the use of their language as well as the motivations of the group members to maintain it. They found that this larger set of beliefs could predict language behavior also. They used a cognitive orientation theory of behavior to create a framework for exploring beliefs about ethnolinguistic vitality. According to this theory, beliefs are cognitive units of meaning that are part of a larger network of beliefs. This theory identifies four types of beliefs that contribute to the prediction of language behavior: general beliefs, normative beliefs, personal beliefs and goal beliefs. These four types of beliefs serve as the basis for the conceptualization of eight kinds of ethnolinguistic vitality: present vitality, future vitality, legitimate vitality, social models, belongingness, valorization, efficacy, and goals and wishes. These kinds of ethnolinguistic vitality can be classified into two groups: non-self and self-beliefs.

Non-self beliefs refer to the feelings of the group member toward anything that affects or reflects on the ethnolinguistic vitality of the group. Non-self beliefs consist of two subtypes: general beliefs and normative beliefs.

General beliefs are the facts that apply to the community concerning people, objects, events or situations. General beliefs are divided into three kinds: 1) present vitality referring to group members' perceptions of the present relative vitality of the majority

and minority groups in relation to the sociological factors, 2) future vitality referring to group member perceptions of the future relative vitality of the majority and minority groups, and 3) social models concerning the influence of friends and social models on language behaviors, emphasizing the language use in intra-group situations within the society.

Another subtype of non-self beliefs is normative beliefs, which is an opinion of people in the group about what should or should not be the situation with regard to the language. These beliefs are legitimate. They reflect the thought of group members to what each ethnolinguistic group ought to have on the sociological factors.

Self beliefs refer to the feeling and thinking of group members to what is suitable for the vitality of their ethnic group. These beliefs are more related to the individual network of contact than non-self beliefs. Self-beliefs consist of two subtypes: personal beliefs and goal beliefs.

Personal beliefs are divided into three kinds: valorization, belongingness and personal efficacy. Valorization is the beliefs of the group members about having access to the resources that are identified by ethnolinguistic factors. Belongingness is the feeling of belonging to the ethnolinguistic group of the individuals. Personal efficacy is a confidence of group members in their ability to achieve their personal goals. The other subtype, goal beliefs, consists of goals or desires of group members to have access to the resources identified by ethnolinguistic factors.

Allard and Landry's theory has been very useful in this research. The researcher can apply the concepts about self or non-self beliefs to predict language behavior of the Yong people.

Landweer (2003) proposes "indicators of relative ethnolinguistic vitality" at the website www.essex.ac.uk. She assigns questions and a point value (0-3) in each indicator for use in assessing a speech community. The score can help to predict whether the language will continue to be spoken in the future or will be lost. There are eight indicators of relative ethnolinguistic vitality.

1) Position of the speech community on the remote and on urban continuum: *"Is the speech community located near a population center where its members would have contact with speakers of other languages? Do they have access to such a population center?"* The principle of this indicator is that the more remote the speech community, the less frequent the contact with other languages and better the chance for language maintenance.

2) Domains in which the target language is used: *"Is there sufficient use of the language in key areas of life?"* The principle is that the more domains in which the vernacular is the medium for expression, the better the chance for language maintenance.

3) Frequency and type of code switching: *"Are there consistent patterns of language choice, determined by a change of conversational participants, domain, or topic?"* The principle is that the less code switching, the better the chance for language maintenance.

4) Population and group dynamics, *"Is there a critical mass of community-language speakers? (Considering marriage patterns, immigration and emigration). How well do immigrants acquire the community language, and retain their own?"* The principle is that the more speakers that adopt the community language, the better the chance for language maintenance.

5) Distribution of speakers within their own social network: *"Is there a network of social relations supportive of the target language?"* The principle is that the tighter

the social structures where the vernacular is the language of choice, the better the chance for language maintenance.

6) Social outlook regarding and within the speech community: *"Is there internal and/or external recognition of the language community as separate and unique within the broader society? Is there material or non-material evidence of such a distinction?"* The principle is that the higher the group's prestige, internally and externally, the better the chance for language maintenance.

7) Language prestige: *"Does the target language have prestige among other neighboring or regional languages? What is the relative prestige of the language within the linguistic repertoire of this speech community?"* The principle is that the higher the prestige of the language, the better the chance for language maintenance.

8) Access to a stable and acceptable economic base: *"Is there an acceptable economic base supportive of continuing use of the target language?"* The principle is that the more stable and acceptable the income base associated with the vernacular, the better the chance for language maintenance.

Landweer's article helps to consider what indicators can be used to predict a chance for language maintenance or language loss of the Yong dialect.

3.1.1. The Study of Ethnolinguistic Vitality in Various Languages

Miller (2000) studied language maintenance and shift in a Kadazan village in Sabah, Malaysia, and a Bru-So village in Northeast Thailand. In the Kadazan community, people were concerned about the loss of the Kadazan-Dusan language because of the influence of the national language, Bahasa Malaysia. Similarly, in the Bru-So community, the speakers of the language were shifting to Lao or Thai. Miller used the Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor model in her research. According to this model; the vernacular is fairly strong if it persists in intergenerational home use. Miller also

applied Allard and Landry's work about ethnolinguistic vitality beliefs in her study. These beliefs can be used to evaluate ethnolinguistic vitality (2000:174). Miller found four negative beliefs among Kadazan-Duzan and Bru-So. First, both the Kadazan-Dusan and the Bru-So community believed that their language was inferior to the national languages of wider communication. Second, they believed that if children in the community learned the vernacular, they would not be able to learn the national language well. Third, it was felt that maintaining the language is divisive and nonpatriotic. The last negative belief was that maintaining the language was too costly. Miller suggested some ways to change negative beliefs about vernacular language development and use. Not only the group's members or the national institute that are responsible for the development of vernacular language but also outsiders have an important role. There are many activities that can promote the change of beliefs concerning the vernacular such as language study by outsiders, language development, encouragement of leadership, encouragement of parents, etc.

Miller's work on the Kadazan-Dusan language and the Bru-So language helps the researcher understand the ethnolinguistic vitality situation of different language groups.

Evans wrote about "ethnolinguistic vitality, prejudice, and family language transmission" among Mexican Americans in the Southwest of the United States (1996). In American society, the use of various non-English languages is declining. The loss of such languages can be considered from the perspective of language maintenance. She focused her study on Spanish-speakers, particularly Mexican Americans, in two linguistic areas, one east of the downtown area, and the other north of the Colorado River in Austin, Texas, and in three small communities in Santa Cruz Country in southeastern Arizona. Her hypothesis was that "ethnolinguistic vitality is a determinant of parental policies affecting the transmission of Spanish among Mexican Americans" (1996:180). In the first study, she designed questionnaires concerning

three variables: demography, social status and institutional support, and explored beliefs about the variables in four ways: general beliefs, self-beliefs, norm beliefs and goal beliefs. All portions of questionnaires were tested on Mexican American parents in Austin, Texas, and the mothers of third grade students in the rural southeast. In her second study, she interviewed the mothers of third grade children. The result of these two studies was that parents' affective and cognitive commitment to Spanish, to Mexican American culture, and to the continuation of groups indicated the ethnolinguistic vitality beliefs in the two settings. The subjects in two linguistic areas still use Spanish in their family domains. Parents are eager to maintain their own cultural integrity and identity as well as support their children to be proud of their heritage and language (1996:196).

This study can help the researcher to consider whether parents' language use and language attitudes can have any affect on language use and language attitudes of their children. The language that the parents teach or transfer to their children can help to predict the vitality of language in the community.

Boehm (1997) studied language use and language maintenance among the Tharu of the Indo-Nepal Tarai. Her study examined the vitality of the Tharu language of Nepal and India. The Tharu are an aboriginal people of the Indo-Nepal Tarai region. Boehm collected data regarding the Tharu language from four villages in different districts in Nepal. A sociolinguistic questionnaire was designed to elicit data from these four villages. She divided her subjects into different categories according to age, gender and education. The result of the research showed that language maintenance was very strong in Tharu areas. The language use patterns, and other factors such as ethnic pride, marriage patterns, number of speakers, government support, attitudes of people toward the use of language, etc. indicated healthy linguistic vitality among the Tharu people.

Boehm studied language use and language maintenance among the Tharu people by considering the different subjects according to age, gender and education. This researcher used the same approach as Boehm when developing the questionnaire for the research project.

3.2 Language Attitudes

The word "attitude" is derived from the Latin word *aptitude* and the Italian *atto*, which means 'aptitude for action' (Baker 1992). "An attitude is an idea charged with emotion which predisposes a class of actions to a particular class of social situations" (Triandis 1971:2). The study of language attitudes begins with a decision to choose one of two theories about the nature of attitudes. One theory focused on "a mentalist view of attitude as a state of readiness", while the other one focused on the behaviorist view that "attitudes are to be found in the responses people make to social situations" (Fasold 1984).

People who accept the behaviorist view consider attitudes as a single unit. On the other hand, people who accept the mentalist definition consider attitudes to have three components: cognition, affect and readiness for action. Cognition concerns thoughts and beliefs. A favorable attitude to the language of people might entail a stated belief in the importance of continuity of the language. The affective component concerns feelings towards the attitude's object. The action component of attitude concerns a readiness for action. It is a behavioral intention or plan of action under distinctive contexts and circumstances. These three components form a model of attitude that can be written in a hierarchical form with cognition, affect and action as the foundation, and be merged into a single construct of attitude at a higher level as in figure 5 (Baker 1992:13).

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                    └──────────────┘
                      ▲    ▲    ▲
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   ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────┐  ┌─────────────────────┐
   │  Cognition   │  │  Affect  │  │ Readiness for action │
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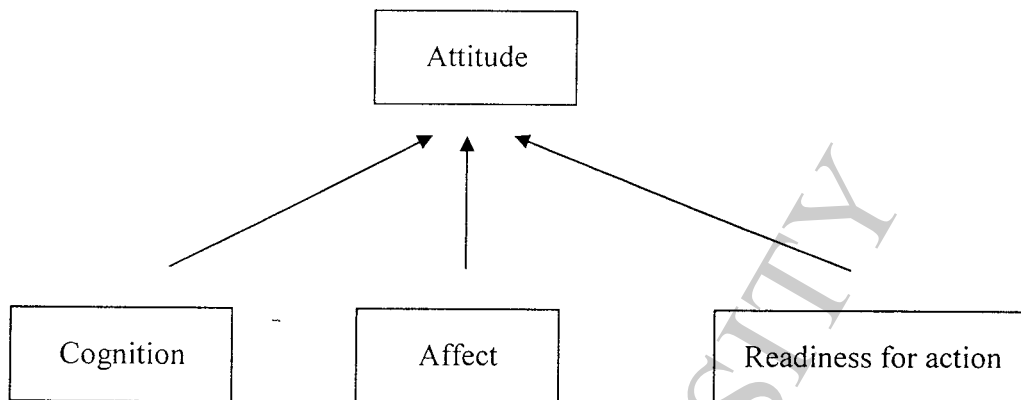
Figure 5: The hierarchy of attitude and its components

(Baker 1992)

According to Baker (1992), the term 'attitude' is a valuable concept within the study of bilingualism. The attitudes of people toward the language interact with language changes such as restoration, preservation, decay or death. A survey of attitudes toward language can shed light on community beliefs, preferences and desires. The status, value and importance of a language can be measured by looking at attitudes toward that language. Attitudes can be used to explain the direction and persistence of human behavior. It is not easy to directly observe attitude because people's thoughts and feelings are hidden. Attitudes of people are latent but can be inferred from the direction and persistence of external behavior.

Triandis (1971) suggested four functions of attitudes. First, attitudes help people to understand the world around them by organizing or simplifying the complex input from their environment. Second, attitudes can protect people's self-esteem by making it possible for them to avoid undesirable truths about themselves. Third, attitudes can help people to adjust themselves in a complex world by making it easier to get along with people who have similar attitudes. And attitudes allow people to express their fundamental values.

Baker (1992:32) states that there are two components of language attitudes: instrumental attitudes and integrative attitudes. An instrumental attitude to a language is mostly self-oriented. Instrumental Attitudes of people toward a language can be both positive and negative because of the desire to gain achievement, status, personal success, self-enhancement, or basic security and survival. On the other hand, an integrative attitude to a language is mostly social and interpersonal in orientation. It is the desire of people to be like members of the other language community. People who have positive attitudes toward a particular language want to identify themselves with a language group and their cultural activities.

This research project will design a questionnaire based on instrumental and integrative attitudes in order to investigate whether these two components affect the attitudes toward the dialect of the Yong people in Lamphun.

3.2.1. Methodology and Attitudes Measurement

According to Baker (1992:17), there are a variety of research methods for measuring individual attitudes toward a language such as document analysis, content analysis, interviews, case studies, autobiographies and the matched guise technique. In order to get a balanced picture of the community, the method should cover both individuals and groups.

In order to study language attitude, it is very important to look at certain key variables. Attitudes toward language tend to change with age. Children may change their attitude when they become teenagers, and teenagers' attitudes often change when they grow up to be adults. They adopt language attitudes according to their social interaction and environmental experience. Attitudes toward language might be different according to the socio-cultural behaviors of males and females. The educational context in which language attitudes develop can be a significant factor. More or less favorable attitudes and attitude change may be produced through the

formal or hidden curriculum in school. Other variables that may affect language attitudes are ability, language background and cultural background for the people in a society.

According to Fasold (1984), language attitudes usually entail attitudes to the speakers of a particular language or dialect. The methods for determining language attitudes can be either direct or indirect. A direct method requires subjects to respond to a questionnaire or interview questions that are used to ask their opinion about their language or another. An indirect method is designed to keep the subjects from knowing that their language attitudes are being investigated. There are various kinds of methods that can be applied to test language attitudes of people. The matched-guise technique is often used in language attitude research. In preparation for a matched-guise test, different speakers are tape-recorded reading the same passage. Speakers are chosen who are fluent in more than one dialect or "guise", sample listeners from the speech community are then asked to listen to the tape-recording and explicitly asked to give their opinions of speaker's characteristics. The opinions of the speakers' different guise give indication of language attitudes. Another way to discover language attitude is with questionnaires, consist of two types of questions, open and closed questions. Interviews are likely to ask open questions. The last kind of method is observation. This method is designed to collect naturalistic data. Most research attempts to include both direct and indirect research methods.

Fasold's article can help the researcher to design a suitable method for determining the attitudes of the Yong people toward their mother tongue.

Walker (1982:15-19) discusses various kinds of methods that can be used to gather language attitude data. A survey questionnaire is one of the methods that is widely used by researchers. Most questionnaires contain open questions, which invite subjects to express their feelings. The problem with using open questions is that they are difficult to score and are more subject to distortion than closed questions. A

closed question has three main dimensions, the focal object, the dimension of appraisal and a set of rating terms. Interview is another method that the interviewer can use to assess the subjects' mood and also more accurately direct their attention to the point of research. Commitment measure is the way to test subjects' willingness to perform an activity without doing it. The questions are formed to check their validity by comparing answers to actual behavior in related activities. The matched guise technique is the most popular way for examining the social significance of language varieties. The last method is indirect observation. The subjects whom the researcher wishes to evaluate may be both literate and illiterate. The researcher must plan and design the most appropriate test with the subject in mind. The researcher needs to use methods that are less direct in order to get reliable data and to validate data by more direct methods. Figure 6 shows various methods ranked on a scale of more or less direct.

DIRECT   INDIRECT

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Survey   Interview   Commitment   Matched   Observation

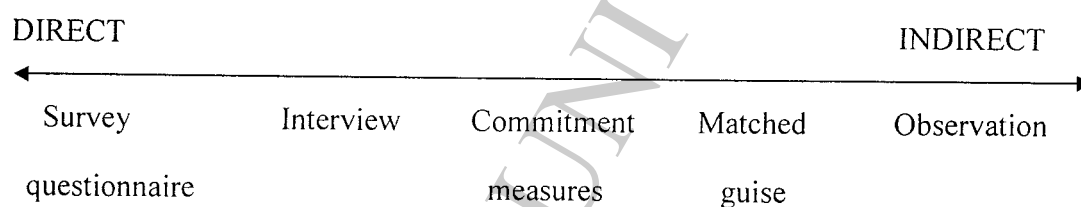questionnaire   measures   guise

Figure 6: A scale of direct and indirect methods to assess
language attitudes.

Walker's article talks about different kinds of methods used in doing language attitude research. Direct and indirect methods are used in this research in order to gain more reliable data from the subjects.

3.2.2. The Study of Language Attitudes in Various Languages and Related Research

Labov's book (1972) focused on a shift of the phonetic position of the first element of the diphthongs /ay/ and /aw/ on Martha's Vineyard. On this island, there are four

ethnic groups: old families of English stock, Portuguese descent, the Indians, and a miscellaneous group of various origins. Instead of the common Southeast New England standard [ay] and [aw], one frequently hears on Martha's Vineyard [ɐɪ] and [ɐʊ], or even [əɪ] and [əʊ]. The degree of centralization on Martha's Vineyard declined to a low point in the late 1930's and after the war it began rising. This feature of centralized diphthongs is salient for linguists, but not for most speakers. They are not aware of this change nor do they control it consciously. In order to study the feature of centralized diphthongs, Labov used a lexical questionnaire, questions concerning value judgments, and a special reading methodology to elicit data. He found out that there are many environments in which centralization occurs. First, the influence of the segmental environment, the following and preceding consonants, causes the centralized diphthong. Second, intonation also increases the degree of centralization. Third, most urban speakers have a variety of shifting styles of speech, but it is not the case with most Vineyarders.

Labov discusses many reasons that account for this linguistic change in Martha's Vineyard (27-41). The first reason is the economic pressure of the tourist trade. The change in occupation from independent fishermen and whaling to seasonal tourist industry has been a source of heavy psychological pressure on the Vineyarders of old family stock. People who feel that they truly own the island have a hard time accepting the expansion of summer trade with the "outsiders". The high degree of centralization of (ay) and (aw) is closely correlated with expressions of strong resistance to the incursions of the summer people. The rural people, Chilimarkers, in up-island areas have the greatest resistance to these outsiders, and they usually use centralized diphthongs in their speech. According to the study, centralization reaches a peak in the age level from 30 to 45. There are many young people from the old family groups who do not intend to remain on the island, and they reflect a lower average of centralization. Young people who want to continue living on the island after finishing college show considerable centralization. A pattern of centralized

vowels becomes a special characteristic that can separate them from the outsiders. From this study we see that linguistic change does not move toward the standard pattern all the time. At times, it can return to the old form, in order to maintain the identity of the ethnic group.

Labov's study is a good example of the relation between language attitude and language change of people. It can help the researcher to consider whether the Yong have positive or negative attitudes to their dialect and whether their attitudes can cause dialect change in their community.

Preeya's dissertation (1989) is entitled 'Central Thai and Northern Thai: Linguistic and attitudinal study'. Her study focuses on Northern Thai speakers as well as non-native speakers of Central Thai who are under pressure by the Thai mainstream. She focuses on the attitudinal reactions toward the Central Thai and Northern Thai dialects and their speakers by first year student subjects at Chiang Mai University and at Thammasat University, Bangkok. Northern Thai and Central Thai students who study in both universities were chosen to be the representatives of Northern Thai and Central Thai speakers. Preeya used the matched guise technique, a questionnaire, and interviews in her research in order to elicit data. The studies at both universities yielded similar results. The Central Thai and Northern Thai subjects evaluated members of their own dialect group more favorably on the cognitive scales, education, economic status, etc., and evaluated the contrasting group more favorably on the affective scales, friendliness, sincerity, and etc. Central Thai speaking subjects at both universities were more favorable to their group in regard to the competence and status dimensions such as education, economic status. The Northern Thai speaking subjects were more favorable to their group in regard to the characteristics of personal integrity and social attractiveness. The speakers of a high status group usually evaluate their language more favorably than they do for the contrasting group. Preeya also states that "Speech becomes a key factor to success in the mainstream

culture and it is used to judge the identity, educational and socioeconomic background of the speakers" (p. 136).

Preeya's study leads the researcher to know about the attitudes toward the Northern Thai and Central Thai language of different language speaker.

Stokes (1995) studied language attitudes and dialect use in the Lamphun speech community. Lamphun is known as a trilingual speech community, with Northern Thai, Standard Thai and Yong dialects. Stokes used a standardized questionnaire, which explored three major topics: patterns of language use, emotional and personal sentiments regarding dialects, and perceptions of domains in which the dialect is used. He used the questionnaire with primary school students by dividing them into two sessions, a group discussion, when all students wrote their responses for the questionnaire, and individual talk with volunteers, when some students were chosen to interview individually to determine their responses to the questionnaire. The subjects were Northern Thai, Standard Thai, and Yong speakers. The study shows that formal education does not reduce children's pride in their native dialect. The students think that their dialect is a major part of their daily life. However, they also express that in some certain contexts such as at school and at official or formal situations, Northern Thai is not appropriate to use. According to the Yong student speakers, they show a strong pride for their dialect, yet use Yong only occasionally, depending on the location. Although Yong subjects are proud of their dialect, they have little opportunity to speak Yong outside their community. The perception among Yong speakers is that their language is not as useful as Northern or Standard Thai (30-34).

Stokes' paper is about the general information of Lamphun province, geography, people and language of people. The researcher learns from his study about the feeling of the younger Yong speakers towards their dialect and uses this information to evaluate the result of this research.

Benjamas (1998) has done research on language attitude, and language use of the So ethnic group of Nong Waeng Village, Sakon Nahorn Province. This research area consists of two main ethnic groups, So and Nyoh. Other small ethnic groups are Lao, Phuthai and Thai. So Nong Waeng Village is a multilingual community. The language situation in this village has changed. The language use is shifting to Lao or Nyoh in both intra-group and inter-group communication. Benjamas applied the ethnolinguistic vitality theories developed by Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977), and subjective ethnolinguistic vitality as developed by Bourhis et al. (1981), and ethnolinguistic vitality beliefs developed by Allard and Landry (1986), for analyzing the data. She designed a sociolinguistic questionnaire to measure the So's attitudes toward their own ethnolinguistic group. The result of this study is that the ethnolinguistic vitality factors, demographic, status and institutional support play an important role in the So ethnic group. The So people have a neutral attitude toward their language, not positive or negative.

This review of literature helps the researcher to design the methodology for the research and helps her to understand the concepts of ethnolinguistic vitality and language attitude of different groups of people.