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**A WAY OF COMMUNICATION TO BUILD PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IN
MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY IN SOUTHERN THAILAND**

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Abstract

This research aims to study the dialects as a way of communication to build peaceful coexistence in a multicultural society in Southern Thailand, including Piten and Jehae language which are dialects of Pattani province. The sample groups used in this study were the leader and villagers of both Pithen sub-district, Tungyangdang district, Pattani province and Bangkhuntong sub-district, Takbai district Narathiwat province. The instruments for data collection were a focus group and the in-depth interview during June-December 2017. The results indicated that the villagers of both villages consider the benefits and the importance of their dialects as a means of communication among middle-aged people who want to develop dialectal communication in order to build peaceful coexistence in a multicultural society. The significant problems and limitations of dialect communication were a lack of its conservation. While a majority of dialect users were elders, adolescences prefer speaking Thai Language to the dialect because of educational movement, new learning medias that mostly used Thai language, and too specific in nature. As a result, the dialect has being disappeared. For the guideline of the dialect communication development, the dialectal language conservation should be more encouraged and opportunities will be provided for both villagers and non-villagers to co-study and create a common understanding that results in peaceful co-existence in multicultural society. To achieve it, the dialect learning will be added into a teaching and learning curriculum or establishing the association of dialect conservators cooperated with the governmental and private sector such as education institutes, other associations.

Keywords: Develop, dialect, multicultural

Introduction

Four southern border provinces originally presented a group of four provinces, including, Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and Satun. Later, the 11th former prime minister of Thailand, General Sarit thanarat, agreed to use a new term of Southern border provinces in April 4th, 1981. In April 20th 1981, however, southern border provinces were re-determined and Songkhla was added (Rattanachaya, 1992) It can be stated that Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat have their own socio-cultural identities that differ from other provinces in South of Thailand, in the aspect of religions; Buddhism and Islam, and dialect languages used for communication; local Malay, Southern Thai language, Jehae, and Pithen.

As the characteristics of society mentioned above, the use of languages in southern border provinces is unique and it causes the use of different protolanguage. For example, local Malay is originally from West-Austronesian. In opposition, not only Takbai-Thai local language is from Southwestern Tai but general Thai local language is also from Southwestern Tai that is commonly used in other Southern provinces of Thailand. Under such circumstances, different languages used in communication are not obstacles of people in community. Conversely, it is cultural charm that attracts to find the answer “why local people are able to stay together in the midst of the differences in belief and language for communication”

Tungyangdang district, Pattani province and Takbai district, Narathiwat province are selected as research area because there are the differences in religion and dialect languages; Malay, Jehae, and Pithen. It is interesting that although local people have different religions, they are able to effectively communicate with a same dialect. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the dialects as a way of communication to build peaceful coexistence in multicultural society in Southern border of Thailand in order to bring the results, as informative inputs to the governmental and private sectors to improve the peaceful situation in Southern border areas.

Research Objectives

To study the dialects as a way of communication to build peaceful coexistence in a multicultural society in Southern Thailand

Research Questions

1. How do local people use dialects as a way of communication?
2. How does the community have a way to preserve the dialects used for communication?

Theory

According to SMCR Model introduced by Berlo (1960), the effectiveness of communication among people is depended on four main components; sender (S), message (M), channel (C), and receiver (R). The communication effectiveness of sender and receiver is affected by communication skill, attitude, knowledge, social system, and culture meanwhile, message code, and content treatment are considered as necessary element of effective message The SMCR Model can be applied as theoretical framework for conducting this research. It describes that each local is unique in nature, for example, culture, social system, and language. These factors create the feeling of being a part of the same group. When people use dialect as daily communication, they will feel they are the same group. As a consequence, the opportunity to build peaceful coexistence is more likely to increase. Also, the concept of sociology (Yamklinfung, 2003) is applied to explain the relationship among people in a same society is built from both direct and indirect interaction, interdependence, among each other. This research applied this concept as theoretical framework to explain the link of dialect communication and peaceful co-existence. The society with peaceful co-existence among people need the good relationship their communicative interactions become influencing factor that can determine the level of co-existence among people in the same society.

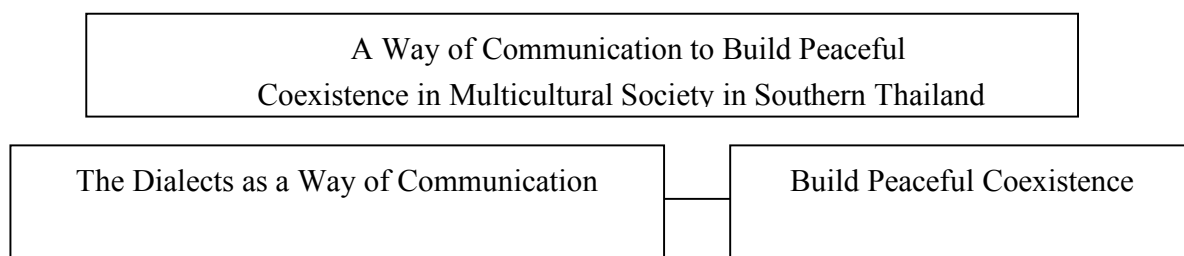


Figure 1. This is a diagram showing the conceptual framework of this research

Methodology

The research is qualitative research with using in-depth interview as data collection instrument. The sample groups were villagers in Pithen sub-district, Tungyangdang district, Pattani province, and Bangkhuntong sub-district, Takbai district, Narathiwat province. As the in-depth interview was conducted, it motivated participants to think and conceptualize the facts of dialect languages used in communication as well as integrate communicative knowledge with the local wisdom, lifestyle and experiences of people in the community. The following steps of conducting research are as below:

Stage 1: To study the dialects-based communication, Pithen and Jahae language, to build the understanding of coexistence in multicultural society by employing in-depth interview and purposive sampling technique. As two research areas were determined; Pithen sub-district, Tungyangdang district, Pattani province and Bangkhuntong sub-district, Takbai district, Narathiwat province, two community leaders, two expert with dialectal experiences, and eight villagers were selected as participants in this research. More specifically, selected participants were interviewed and the interviewing process was also recorded. Secondly, the recorded data was then transcribed. Several in-depth interviewing question topics can be presented below; history or source of dialect or dialect use, characteristics of dialect, benefits of using dialect, how to preserve a dialect. Furthermore, the example of transcribed dialogs are shown as follows;

“Phitan language has soft and polite accent. The listeners may feel relax so using Phitan language can convince other people to be more friendly as a result, it creates better relationship.”

Village Leader

“Phitan language is fundamental of speaking standard Malay language because its words are built by applying or adopting Pattani local language which is considered as one of starting point to learn Malay language”

Academic expert

“I can speak some Jahae language but listening is better. The reason why I can speak is because I have been in a local where use Jahae language for a long times.”

Villager

These information were analyzed and generated typologies by using common traits of data collected. Finally, the classified information was described qualitatively to present the research phenomenon.

Stage 2: To investigate the conservation model for local dialects that can exist with a community by applying a technique of focus group to brainstorm opinions of 12 key informants from two villages.

Literature Review

Tongchuy (1991) said that the dialect is the language of the ethnic groups that live in the local area, such as the local Thai dialect of the Thai group which are scattered throughout the country. The dialect of any ethnic group is the language that is most important to that group because it is a language that is used to speak, communicate, together since birth which can be considered by native speakers and those with roles related to the language as follows;

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The dialect is the local language of the local people living in that area. It is a language that requires for a communication in daily life and has been used since birth through learning, remembering, inheriting and sharing, improving and changing into a language that is important as part of a way of life. The dialect is therefore the most important to the native people (Kaewseenaul, 2012).

Dialect is one of a culture that is worth to be studied because the study of dialects helps to understand the social and cultural conditions of the people as well as wisdom of villagers in various aspects such as lullabies, fairy tales, puzzles, riddles, personal names, plant names, animal names, equipment name, food name, drink, ritual and various local literature all have to use language as a communication tool (Tantinimitkul, 2001).

The dialect is the historical foundation of the group. It can be stated that the group of villagers who use the same language in their daily lives for many generations must have a history together such as the Tak Bai, Thais and Malaysians of Thai descent in Tumpat District, Kelantan, Malaysia, who speak the Thai language in Tak Bai dialect everyday must have a history of a group of people together in the past up until the present involved with hundreds years of history. Therefore, people can use the local language as a historical evidence of a group of people. (Karawee, 1996)

The dialect is the source of local literature. From the results of local literature survey that inherited verbally or as a story that has been passed down on the mouth and literature that has been written in writing, such as literature, koi book, leaves and stone inscriptions found that there many types of literature, such as religious literature, beliefs, myths, etc. These literatures reflect the wisdom of each local villager. More important, these literatures use the local language as a medium to convey the messages. So, if there is no dialect, it is impossible for these local literatures to occur (Suksrisai, 2011)

Parinyokul and Yamrat, (2016) said that Nong-Chim dialect language reflects a good relationship, lifestyle of people, and also traditions and cultures of Nong Chim sub-district in Chantaburi province. Kaewseenaul (2012) said that the most reliable media was a person especially, the community leader or religion leader.

Findings

A study of the dialects-based communication, Pithen and Jehae language, to build the understanding of coexistence in multicultural society

Pithen Language Characteristics of Pithen language: Pithen language is the southern Thai dialect that is one of Thai language in Tak Bai group that was originally spoken in Takbai district, Su-ngaipadee district, Su-ngaikorok district, Waeng district, and Kotabaru city, Kelantan, Malaysia. However, Pithen is also commonly used for

communication in other districts in the southern parts of Pattani consisting of Panare, Mayor, Tungyangdang, Saiburi, Kapor, and Maikaen. Moreover, it is also spoken in every district of Narathiwat; Bajor, Ruesor, Srisakorn, Yi-ngo, Muang, Ra-ngae, Su-ngaipadee, Su-ngaikolok, Waeng, and Sukirin district.

Pithen language has an interesting character in using vocabulary. Some words are similar and different from general Southern Thai language and standard Thai language. Furthermore, Pithen language normally borrows words not just only its sound but also grammar structures from standard Thai language and Pattani-local Malay language. It has still been used as communicative language such as Ka/Ka-ne, MaiChak, Kalamae, Songsan, Mortumyhae. Furthermore, some words in Pithen also use Thai royal language such as Sa-wei (eating), Ban-tom (sleeping), Klod (umbrella).

The advantages of using Pithen Pithen is the unique language which mixes various languages in communication such as southern language, Jehae, Malay, Sakorm. Therefore, a person who speaks Pithen is able to understand multi-languages.

It seems to be foundation for practicing standard Malay language because the structure of some Pithen words is similar to the Malay words so it allows people to easily speak and understand standard Malay language.

Pithen is the language that helps to make a good relationship with others. Its sound and pronunciation are very polite. It makes people feel comfortable and friendly when hearing this language.

It is cultural heritage from generation to another generation.

Allowing people to learn and realize their own history and the importance of Pithen language

Jehae Language Characteristics of Jehae language: It is Southern Thai language with Takbai accent or Jehae language which has been commonly used in Panare and Saiburi district, especially Takbai district where is located on Thailand and Malaysia Eastern border In addition, Jehae language has been used for communication among Thai-Malaysian people in Kelanton state of Malaysia. Jehae is Thai language with unique characteristics. There are a lot of words that are quite different from general Southern Thai language especially, the accent of Jehae is the combination of Southern Thai and Northern Thai accent. As a consequence, the final sound of sentence will be pronounced in softened voice that makes the listeners feel gentleness. For example, Takbai people want to say "Ma-Yea-di" but they will make a voice as "Ma-Yea-dai". Currently, Jehae is widely used among Buddhists in several districts of Pattani; Mayor, Panera, Saiburi, Tungyankdang, Kapor, Maikaen. There are also some districts of Narathiwat including Bajor, Ruesor, Srisakorn, Yi-ngor, Jor-ai-rong, Muang, Takbai, Ra-ngae, Janae, Su-ngaipadee, Waeng, and Sukirin. Jehae is not used among Thai people but Thai-Malaysian people also use it, especially the ones who

live in Kelantan state such as Tumpat, Pasir Mas, Kotabaru and Pasir Puteh district. In addition, Jehae is also similar to Sakom dialect which is used in Songkhla.

The advantages of using Jehae It was found that Jehae allows people to have more effective communication and more understanding among each other that affects their coexistence of people who has different religions and languages. The dialect makes them feel they are the same social group.

The investigation of the conservation model for local dialects in a community

The model of conservation of Pithen language The community in Pithen sub-district, Tungyangdang district, Pattani province provided some suggestions for governmental agencies and private organizations to support and collaboration with the community in following issues;

Setting up the association of dialect conservators. It will be a good opportunity to disseminate the dialect to publics.

The dialect-related units of both governmental and private sector should provide opportunities to the community to publicly spread out their dialect identity such as the annual fair or ceremony.

Establishing the exhibition or a short-film competition that strongly requires the use of dialect communication. It is expected to motivate or attract the interest of new generation that leads to creating a good fundamental of dialect learning as well as to conserve local language.

Education institutes should add dialects into the curriculum or the lesson plans.

Education institutes should have area-based learning for students regarding to the dialects in order to research and publish it to publics through a variety of channels such as webpage, blogger, and youtube that people can learn the dialect more conveniently.

Every family should practice dialects for their children or talking with neighborhoods. It seems to campaign and cherish the dialect.

The model of Jehae language conservation It was found that the support and collaboration with governmental and private sector are needed in following issues;

At present, the association of dialect conservator has been set up on Facebook. Therefore, training courses in advertising or online media production are greatly in need. The expected outcome is to increase the Jehae conservator and its network.

To build an understanding and good image of the community, the government should set a campaign that encourages villagers and workers to use more Jehae language in the community.

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Sub district administration organization should set a campaign of dialect communication to build the community identity and to create effective communication among people in the community.

Setting up a campaign that affects the realization of every family on the importance of using the dialect in a family and neighborhoods because family is the closest and most trustable institute that people feel free to talk.

Discussions

The study of the dialects as a way of communication to build peaceful coexistence in a multicultural society in southern border of Thailand was the study of the dialects used to communicate in Pithen sub-district Tungyangdang district, Pattani province and Bangkhuntong sub-district, Takbai district, Narathiwat province. The results showed that Pithen and Jahae were the important communicative medium of people in both areas. It was able to build a good relationship and indicate the kindness, a simple lifestyle, politeness and friendliness of people in the community. Using the dialect gives the advantages for the people and the community in several ways, for example, the ability to better communicate especially people with different religions and languages. These people can use bi-lingual and they felt that they were the same social group. For instance, if a person is able to listen and speak Jahae, he/she will feel they are one of the Jahae group. It was consistent with Parinyokul and Yamrat (2016) that Nong-Chim dialect language reflects a good relationship, the lifestyle of people, and also traditions and cultures of Nong Chim sub-district in Chantaburi province.

Language has been an effective tool to disseminate the story of the community. Moreover, it was found that communicating with Pithen and Jahae dialect was the model to conserve and disseminate the dialects, from generation to another generation, that can maintain the dialects and transfer it as cultural heritage for a new generation to learn the history and realize the importance of their own dialect.

From the findings of the investigation of a model for the dialect conservation, it pointed out that people in the community should collaborate in establishing the association of the dialect conservator and determining a respectable person, e.g. the community leader, to be a mainstay. It makes the association more reliable and resulting in the increasing numbers of people who are interested in local language learning. It was supported by Kaewseenual (2012) that the most reliable media was a person especially, the community leader or religion leader. In addition, the community should make continuous collaboration with education institutes and grant them to be a coach or an academic consultant on how to conserve the identity of using dialects as communicative language as teaching and learning or publishing through

printed medias, such as book, magazine, and journal, and other alternative e-channels, for example, television and radio as well as online medias such as Facebook and Youtube. Besides, the government and private sector should give opportunities to villagers for representing their distinctive points of dialects in the annual fairs. The exhibition or a contest of short-film that uses the dialect in such activities is also interesting and they are expected to motivate adolescences to realize the importance of dialect learning and conservation.

Limitation

The area of research is the area that has been affected by the unrest in both areas

Recommendation

For the model of dialect conservation of these two languages, every single units including family, community, governmental sector especially sub-district administration organization, education institutes as well as private sectors need to collaborate each other in order to campaign and maintain the use of own dialects for people in the community by setting up the association of dialect conservation, advertising through various channels particularly, online media. Moreover, the dialects should be added in the curriculum to maintain and sustain it as a cultural heritage for a new generation to learn in the future.

Conclusion

The study of the dialects as a way of communication to build peaceful coexistence in a multicultural society in southern Thailand is an essential mechanism to understand how people with different religions and languages stay together in the community. It can be stated that each area has its own language such as Pithen language of Pithen sub-district, Tungyangdang district, Pattani province meanwhile Jehae language used in Bangkhuntong sub-district, Takbai district, Narathiwat province. The study can be summarized as follows; 1) Pithen language has an interesting point in using its vocabulary. Some words are similar and different from general Southern Thai language and standard Thai language. Furthermore, Pithen is the combination of standard Thai language and Pattani-local Malay language in terms of an accent and grammar structure. Also, some words of a royal language are adopted in Pithen language. As mentioned, it is the charm of dialect and locals, and 2) Jehae Language or Takbai accent-Southern Thai language has its own uniqueness in aspect of the mixed accent between Southern Thai language and Northern Thai language, as well as the softened voice at the end of sentence. It makes listeners to perceive the gentleness of the speaker.

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